

# HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH



## FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT MARCH 15, 2026

*Baptism is sometimes called enlightenment. The gospel for this Sunday is the story of the man born blind healed by Christ. "I was blind, now I see," declares the man. In baptism God opens our eyes to see the truth of who we are: God's beloved children. As David was anointed king of Israel, in baptism God anoints our head with oil, and calls us to bear witness to the light of Christ in our daily lives.*

# Weekly Update



1090 Sterling Road, Herndon, VA 20170  
www.HolyCrossHerndon.org

Sunday, March 15, 2026

**VISITORS:** It is a joy to have you with us this morning. If you are looking for a church family, we hope you will consider Holy Cross. For more information, you can fill out a visitor form in the narthex, speak to an usher, or scan the QR code to the right.



**FAMILIES:** Children are always welcome at our worship services! There's also a small play area in the Narthex where you can hear the broadcasted service.

## WEEKLY PRAYER LIST

### OUR CONGREGATION

Juliana Roe Beck | Bonnie Burton | Terry & Linda Butler | Joy Caveney  
Joel Flegal | Roy Geiger | Otto Jacobson | Reed Morgan | Mike Muller  
Craig Reichow | Jeremy Shoop | Tuula Toney | Cherie Weatherhead

### THOSE SERVING IN THE MILITARY

Riley Morgan | Thomas Newcomb | Collin Reichow  
Friends of Thomas Newcomb currently serving in Iran

### RELATIVES AND FRIENDS OF THE CONGREGATION

Erin Barden (sister of Andrew Barden)  
Debbie Bowman (niece of Betty Skelton)  
Joy Brown (friend of Kate Flegal)  
Symphony Calvillo & her two boys (friend of Kate Flegal)  
Jane Campbell (friend of Cheryl Smith)  
Gianna Carter (granddaughter of Sam & Sharon Carter)  
Bruce Dudziak (friend of Jared Lem)  
Don and Liz Gober (friends of Craig Reichow)  
Jason Greenwalt (friend of Cheryl Smith)  
Madilyn Gross (cousin of Desirae Peral)  
Uwe Gutschmidt (nephew of Ellen Atwell)  
Roseanne Heim (family member of Suzanne Flegal)  
Matt Kim (friend of John & Tammy Breene)  
Michael Levrini (friend of Jared Lem)  
Georgia Kirby and Cain Mason (friends of Cherie Weatherhead)  
Phyllis Krapf (wife of Dick Krapf)  
Don Kress (friend of Helen and Gary Wolfe)  
Dale, John, and Jeff MacPherson (friends of Jared Lem)  
Sue Mason (sister of Pam Darby)  
Sharon Massen & Dorie Miller (friends of Craig Reichow)  
Lisa Nolf and Laizu (friends of Jared Lem)  
Jim Pollock (godfather of Andrew Barden)  
Anne Marie Berardi Rabinowitz (friend of Tonya Elliott)  
Tracy Radican (daughter of former HCLC pastor, Pastor Harper)  
Dylan Roe (nephew of Mark & Jo Roe)  
John Smith (brother-in-law of Cheryl Smith)  
Nancy and Steven Swancutt (sister and brother of Lynn Russo)  
Dianna and Bill Tilton (friends of Jared & Nannette Lem)  
Diana Todd (friend of the Russos)  
Michelle White (friend and coworker of Kate Flegal)  
Bernadette Stevenson Williams (friend of the Roe family)

### THOSE IN MOURNING

Family & friends of Jan Minatre (cousin of Craig Reichow)

## SERVING IN WORSHIP

Supply Pastor: Rev. Pam Mitcham  
Director of Music and Liturgy: Jeremy Shoop  
Sound Technician: Bob Thompson  
Video Technician: Sylvia Moran

### Serving March 15<sup>th</sup>: Fourth Sunday in Lent

Assisting Minister: Anne Geiger  
Reader: Helen Wolfe  
Acolyte: Gary Wolfe  
Greeter: Jared Lem

### Serving March 22<sup>nd</sup>: Fifth Sunday in Lent

Assisting Minister: Rob Coffman  
Reader: Craig Swanson  
Acolyte: Diana Virgo  
Greeter: TBD

## THIS WEEK'S SCHEDULE: MAR 15 – MAR 22

SU 15	9:00 am	Kingdom Kids & Angels ~ Choir Stall
	9:00 am	Adult Sunday School ~ Conference Rm
	10:00 am	Worship – Fourth Sunday in Lent
	11:00 am	Fellowship & Coffee ~ FH
	1:00 pm	Bldg. Use: Christian Missionary ~ FH
TU 17	6:30 pm	Bldg. Use: Boy Scouts Troop 12
W 18	11:30 am	Lunch for the Soul ~ FH
	6:00 pm	Lent Midweek Dinner ~ FH
	7:00 pm	Lent Midweek Worship ~ Sanctuary
	7:00 pm	ELL ~ Education Wing
TH 19	7:00 pm	Choir Rehearsal ~ Sanctuary
	8:00 pm	Bell Rehearsal ~ Sanctuary
F 20	9:00 am	LINK Food Distribution Prep, 9 am-9 pm
SA 21	8:00 am	LINK Food Distribution, 8-11 am
	8:00 am	Bldg. Use: Herndon's Women AA ~ Rm 204
SU 22	9:00 am	Kingdom Kids & Angels ~ Choir Stall
	9:00 am	Adult Sunday School ~ Conference Rm
	10:00 am	Worship – Fifth Sunday in Lent
	11:00 am	Fellowship & Coffee ~ FH
	12:00 pm	Council Meeting ~ Conference Rm
	1:00 pm	Bldg. Use: Christian Missionary ~ FH

# HYMN MADNESS 2026



**Voting for our 2026 Hymn Madness is underway!** Each Sunday, the congregation will vote on hymn matchups as we sing our way toward crowning a *Champion* hymn on Easter Sunday, April 5. The participant with the most points will earn the honor of choosing the hymns for a Sunday this summer—plus musical bragging rights for the year! As we continue working toward our **Transition Fund goal**, we're adding an extra layer of fun: **for every \$10 donated, you'll receive an extra ballot vote that week.** Online voting will also be available each week under **"Current Links" on our website.**

## LINK MOBILE FOOD PANTRY – MARCH

Holy Cross is hosting a LINK Food Distribution Event to support 300 families in the Herndon area on Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup>. Lots of help is needed with unloading and packing the

food on Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup>. Additional help is needed on Saturday with directing traffic, moving food bags from inside the church to the front walk, and loading bags into clients' automobiles. To sign up to help, go here: [tinyurl.com/34rmvr44](https://tinyurl.com/34rmvr44)



### Time slots include:

Friday, 3/20 | 9 am-12 pm, 3-5 pm, 7-9 pm

Saturday, 3/21 | 8-11 am

## ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL – LENT SESSION

Each Sunday throughout Lent, the adult Sunday School class will focus on the events leading up to and including the death of Jesus on the cross as described in the Gospel of John. The class meets at 9:00 in the Conference Room—all are welcome.

## LENT MIDWEEK DINNER CHURCH SERVICES WEDNESDAYS @ 6:00 PM (THROUGH MAR. 25)

You're invited to join us for midweek Lenten worship and fellowship! We will gather each Wednesday through March 25. The evening begins with **dinner and fellowship at 6:00 pm** in the Fellowship Hall, followed by **worship at 7:00 pm** in the Sanctuary. All are welcome as we share this meaningful season together.

2026 Lenten Appeal  
Fellowship House  
A Ministry Close to Home



## Fellowship Square

## LENTEN APPEAL – FELLOWSHIP SQUARE



This year's Lenten Appeal will be donated to Fellowship House, which is one of the leading providers of affordable housing and services to low-income seniors, owning 670 units (240 of them jointly) in the DC Metro region serving more than 850 older adults.

To donate: <https://tinyurl.com/38nx93ma>

## EASTER BRUNCH POTLUCK



An Easter Brunch Potluck will follow the service on Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup>. Feel free to bring your favorite brunch food to share. Holy Cross will provide ham, a vegan option, and rolls for sandwiches.

## NOTARY SERVICES

Marie (one of our Church Administrators) is now providing notary services for members of the congregation. If you are in need of a document notarized, please contact the office to make arrangements ([Admin@HolyCrossHerndon.org](mailto:Admin@HolyCrossHerndon.org) or 703-437-1883). She is happy to assist!



**It's Time to Order  
Easter Flowers!**

Lilies and hydrangeas will adorn our Sanctuary on Easter! To have your Flower Dedication included in the bulletin on Easter Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, the completed form and contribution must be received by the church office no later than Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup>. Forms can be left in the offering plate or emailed to [Admin@HolyCrossHerndon.org](mailto:Admin@HolyCrossHerndon.org). Contributions can be made by check (note "Easter Flowers" in the memo line) or through Vanco.



***It's time to order Easter Flowers!***

Lilies and Hydrangeas will adorn our Sanctuary on Easter! To have your Flower Dedication included in the bulletin on Easter, April 5<sup>th</sup>, the completed form and your contribution must be received in the church office no later than Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup>. Thank you!

***PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY—Thank you!***

**Your Name:** (As you would like it to appear in the bulletin)

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**In Memory Of:**

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**In Honor Of:**

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***Forms can be emailed to [Admin@HolyCrossHerndon.org](mailto:Admin@HolyCrossHerndon.org)  
Donations can be made by check/cash (note "Easter Flowers")  
or through Vanco at [secure.myvanco.com/YH77](https://secure.myvanco.com/YH77)***

## **Holy Cross Lutheran Church Welcomes ALL!**

Holy Cross Lutheran Church joyfully affirms and celebrates that every person is a beloved child of God. We welcome all who are seeking God's boundless love and sustaining grace into full community with us at Holy Cross. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we commit ourselves to breaking down barriers and systems that divide God's children working to be a space committed to racial equality for God's people and to building a community where all are recognized as part of Christ's new creation.



We welcome you, and you are safe with us...  
 Whatever your race, ethnicity, or heritage;  
 Whatever your relationship status;  
 We welcome you, and you are safe with us...

Whatever your sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or gender expression;  
 Whatever your socio-economic status;  
 We welcome you, and you are safe with us...

Whatever your age and life circumstance;  
 Whatever your physical and mental ability.  
 You are a beloved child of God, you are valued, and you are welcome here.

### **What to Expect in Worship**

Worship services can be intimidating for newcomers. While we try to make worship as accessible as possible for everyone, we know that some aspects can be confusing. Feel free to ask an usher or someone near you for help if you have any questions today. We are happy to help and want all voices to be included in praise to God.

Our worship style is traditional at Holy Cross. A full liturgy is used to focus our praise and prayers to God. Notes are included in the side gutter of the bulletin to explain why we use the various liturgical elements. Communion is celebrated every Sunday at Holy Cross. The table (altar) is not our table, but Christ's table. Just as Christ welcomes all, all are welcome to receive communion at Holy Cross. Pastor will give instructions on how we celebrate communion at that part of the service. Written instructions are also included at that point in the bulletin.

Throughout the year we emphasize each liturgical season differently to mark the passage of time. Liturgical texts change to reflect aspects of that season, some elements are removed or added to reflect the mood of that season, and colors used to decorate the chancel are changed to provide visual reminders of the current season.

# Holy Cross Lutheran Church

*Transforming the world & ourselves, together in community, fellowship, and faith.*

Fourth Sunday in Lent  
March 15, 2026 ~ 10:00 AM

*The fourth Sunday in Lent continues the focus on baptism as a key to the Christian life. During Lent, as we prepare candidates for baptism, we remember our own baptism, and we renew our lives to live more fully in the light of baptismal grace.*

*The petitions in this confession follow the progression of this year's Lent Gospel readings, tracing the spiritual journey that unfolds through the season, and inviting us to see our own lives within these stories of encounter with Christ.*

**Lent I: Temptation of Jesus (Matthew 4:1–11)**  
*As Christ resists the allure of worldly power and satisfaction, we confess our own tendency to seek delights that deceive and draw us away from God.*

**Lent II: Nicodemus (John 3:1–17)**  
*Nicodemus struggles to understand the mystery of being "born from above," and we confess our inclination toward self-reliance rather than trusting in God's renewing word and Spirit.*



**WE GATHER**



## GREETING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### PRELUDE

*Please stand as you are able.*

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

**Pastor:** Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

**Assembly:** **Amen.**

**Pastor:** Let us confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt and blots out all offenses.

**Assembly:** For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you: Gracious God,  
**have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

**Pastor:** For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word: Gracious God,

**Assembly:** **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

**Lent III: Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:5-42)** Jesus offers living water that becomes a spring of eternal life, while we confess how often we draw instead from wells of self-interest and ambition.

**Lent IV: Healing a blind man (John 9:1-41)** While Jesus restores sight to the marginalized man, the religious leaders refuse to see the sign before them. We confess our own blindness to voices from the margins and to signs of God's healing work in the world.

**Lent V: Raising of Lazarus (John 11:1-45)** As Jesus calls Lazarus out of the tomb into new life, we confess the ways we remain trapped in tombs of despair, self-pity, or complacency rather than responding to Christ's call to live.

Taken together, these petitions follow the Lenten journey from temptation to new birth, from thirst to sight, from death to life, preparing the church to enter Holy Week with honest confession and renewed hope in Christ's saving work.

- Pastor:** For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition, and for disdaining the living water Christ offers: Gracious God,
- Assembly:** **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**
- Pastor:** For disregarding voices from the margin, and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world: Gracious God,
- Assembly:** **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**
- Pastor:** For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent, and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life: Gracious God,
- Assembly:** **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**
- Pastor:** God's steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness abound. Through faith, the free gift of God, you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. The Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead dwells in you, pours God's love into your hearts, and gives you life and peace.
- Assembly:** **Amen.**



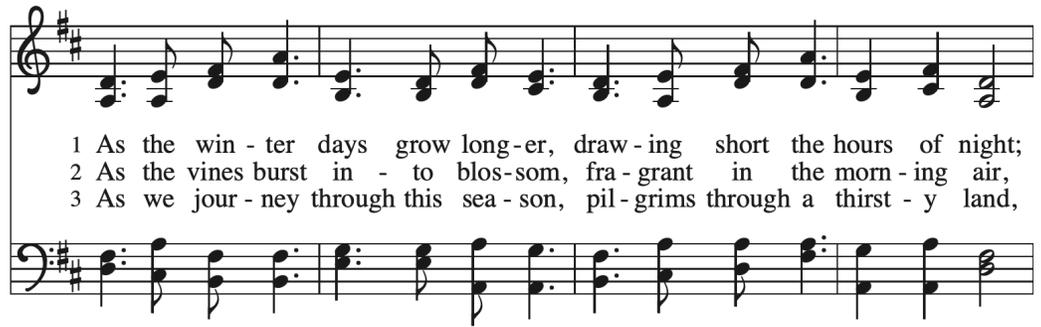
Today's readings move from darkness into light. In John 9, Jesus heals the man born blind and declares, "I am the light of the world." The man's sight grows not only physically but spiritually as he comes to recognize who Jesus truly is. Paul echoes this in Ephesians 5, urging believers to live as "children of light."

"As the Winter Days Grow Longer" captures this same movement. The hymn acknowledges seasons of waiting and dimness but anticipates the returning light of Christ. Just as winter gradually yields to spring, the gospel reminds us that Christ opens our eyes and leads us from darkness into the brightness of God's grace.

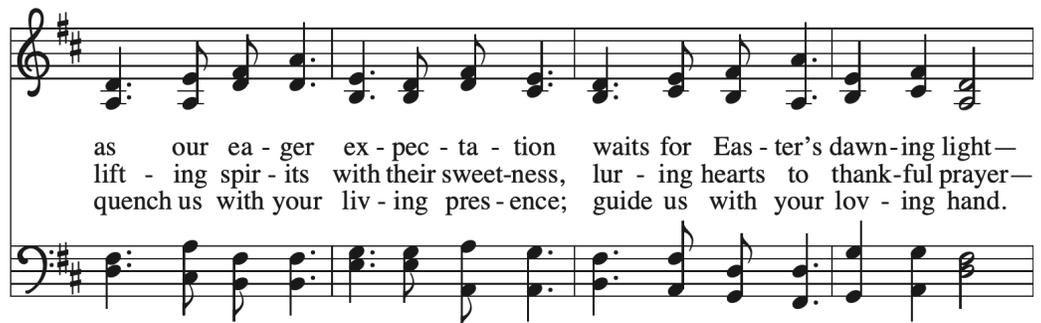
## GATHERING HYMN

(ACS 924)

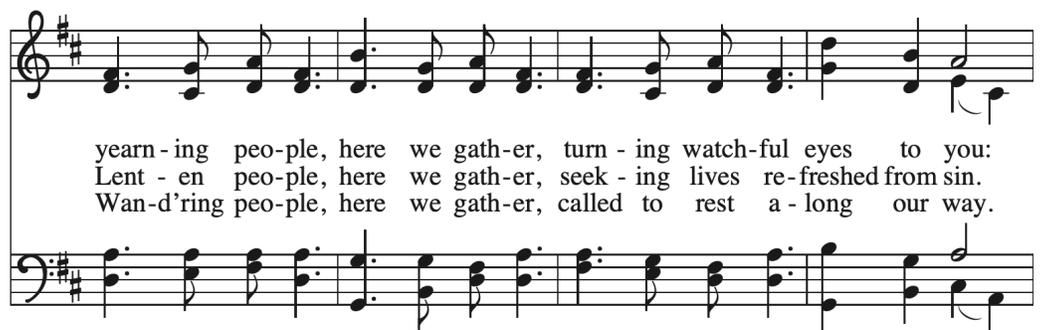
### As the Winter Days Grow Longer



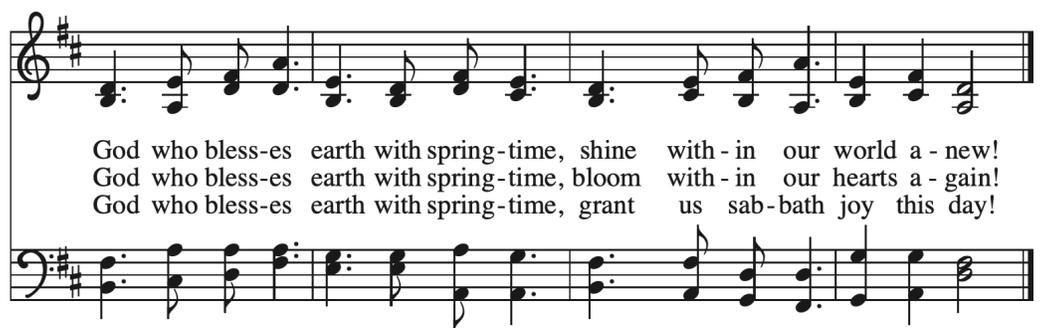
1 As the win - ter days grow long - er, draw - ing short the hours of night;  
2 As the vines burst in - to blos - som, fra - grant in the morn - ing air,  
3 As we jour - ney through this sea - son, pil - grims through a thirst - y land,



as our ea - ger ex - pec - ta - tion waits for Eas - ter's dawn - ing light —  
lift - ing spir - its with their sweet - ness, lur - ing hearts to thank - ful prayer —  
quench us with your liv - ing pres - ence; guide us with your lov - ing hand.



yearn - ing peo - ple, here we gath - er, turn - ing watch - ful eyes to you:  
Lent - en peo - ple, here we gath - er, seek - ing lives re - fresh - ed from sin.  
Wan - d'ring peo - ple, here we gath - er, called to rest a - long our way.



God who bless - es earth with spring - time, shine with - in our world a - new!  
God who bless - es earth with spring - time, bloom with - in our hearts a - gain!  
God who bless - es earth with spring - time, grant us sab - bath joy this day!

Text: Mary Louise Bringle, b. 1953  
Music: SUO GÂN, Welsh melody; arr. hymnal version  
Text © 2006 GIA Publications, Inc., giamusic.com. All rights reserved.  
Arr. © 2020 Augsburg Fortress

## GREETING

**Pastor:** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**Assembly:** And also with you.

## KYRIE

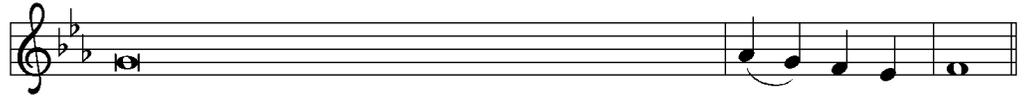
(Setting 1)



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



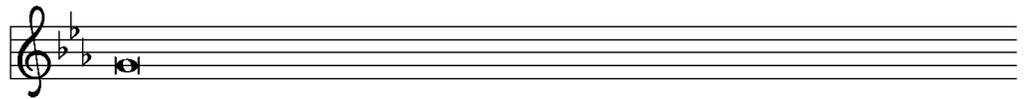
Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



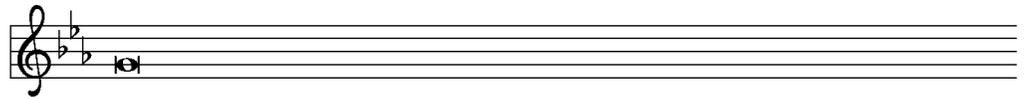
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men, a - men.

*The prayer of the day is inspired by #1137 in the seventh-century Gelasian Sacramentary. We pray to be anointed by the Spirit of God, as was the boy David, and we ask the Son of God to “bend [an] ear” to us and bring us light, as Jesus did to the man born blind.*

*The boy David was anointed by the prophet and then received the Spirit of God. In the early church, baptisms usually included an anointing with oil. So in baptism, we too are anointed, either metaphorically or literally, and having received the Spirit, we too reign in God’s kingdom. The title “Christ” means “the anointed one,” and Christians are those anointed with Jesus Christ to live a transformed life. This story parallels John 9 as a picture about baptism.*

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

**Pastor:** Let us pray. Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Assembly:** Amen.

*Please sit.*



## WE HEAR GOD’S WORD



### ANTHEM

*Gospel Grace*  
Joyful Ringers

arr. Joel Raney

### LISTENING WITH CHILDREN’S EARS

#### FIRST READING

1 Samuel 16:1-13

*Samuel anointed David even though he was the eighth-oldest son of Jesse and did not match his brothers in height or other physical characteristics. With the anointing came endowment with the Spirit of the Lord, designating David as the Lord’s chosen successor to Saul.*

**Reader:** A reading from the first book of Samuel.

<sup>1</sup> The LORD said to Samuel, “How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.” <sup>2</sup> Samuel said, “How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me.” And the LORD said, “Take a heifer with you and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.’” <sup>3</sup> Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do, and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you.” <sup>4</sup> Samuel did what the LORD commanded and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling and said, “Do you come peaceably?” <sup>5</sup> He said, “Peaceably. I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.” And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

<sup>6</sup> When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, “Surely his anointed is now before the LORD.” <sup>7</sup> But the LORD said to Samuel,

“Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him, for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.”<sup>8</sup> Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. He said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.”<sup>9</sup> Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.”<sup>10</sup> Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, “The LORD has not chosen any of these.”<sup>11</sup> Samuel said to Jesse, “Are all your sons here?” And he said, “There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep.” And Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him, for we will not sit down until he comes here.”<sup>12</sup> He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. The LORD said, “Rise and anoint him, for this is the one.”<sup>13</sup> Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

Reader: Word of God, word of life.  
**Assembly: Thanks be to God.**

*Interrupting our Lenten reading of Romans, the passage from Ephesians readies us to hear about the man born blind. Christ shines also on us; we too are to live no longer in darkness, but rather as lights in the world.*

#### SECOND READING

Ephesians 5:8-14

*Because we now live in the divine light which is Jesus Christ, we conduct our lives in ways that reflect the light of Christ, so that our activity is truly pleasing to God.*

Reader: A reading from Paul’s letter to the Ephesians.

<sup>8</sup> Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Walk as children of light, <sup>9</sup> for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. <sup>10</sup> Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. <sup>11</sup> Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness; rather, expose them. <sup>12</sup> For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly, <sup>13</sup> but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, <sup>14</sup> for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

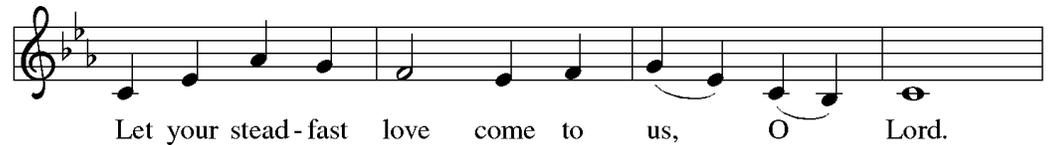
“Sleeper, awake!  
 Rise from the dead,  
 and Christ will shine on you.”

Reader: Word of God, word of life.  
**Assembly: Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand as you are able.*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

(Setting 1)



*At least since the fourth century, the church has used the narrative of the man born blind as a picture of every believer's baptism, which in early centuries was commonly called "enlightenment." Our baptism has given us the light of Christ, by which we live, and with which we illumine the darkness in and outside ourselves. Along with the seeing man, we affirm our Lenten faith, "Lord, I believe." We too are sent by baptism to live a new life.*

## GOSPEL

John 9:1-41

*Jesus heals a man born blind, provoking a hostile reaction that he regards as spiritual blindness to the things of God.*

Pastor: The Gospel according to John the 9<sup>th</sup> chapter.  
 Assembly: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup> As [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. <sup>2</sup> His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" <sup>3</sup> Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. <sup>4</sup> We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. <sup>5</sup> As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." <sup>6</sup> When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, <sup>7</sup> saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. <sup>8</sup> The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" <sup>9</sup> Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am he." <sup>10</sup> But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" <sup>11</sup> He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." <sup>12</sup> They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

<sup>13</sup> They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. <sup>14</sup> Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. <sup>15</sup> Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." <sup>16</sup> Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the Sabbath." Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. <sup>17</sup> So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

<sup>18</sup> The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight <sup>19</sup> and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” <sup>20</sup> His parents answered, “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind, <sup>21</sup> but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” <sup>22</sup> His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. <sup>23</sup> Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

<sup>24</sup> So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, “Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.” <sup>25</sup> He answered, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.” <sup>26</sup> They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” <sup>27</sup> He answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?” <sup>28</sup> Then they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. <sup>29</sup> We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.” <sup>30</sup> The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. <sup>31</sup> We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. <sup>32</sup> Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. <sup>33</sup> If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” <sup>34</sup> They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?” And they drove him out.

<sup>35</sup> Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” <sup>36</sup> He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.” <sup>37</sup> Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” <sup>38</sup> He said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him. <sup>39</sup> Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment, so that those who do not see may see and those who do see may become blind.” <sup>40</sup> Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are we?” <sup>41</sup> Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.”

Pastor: The Gospel of the Lord.  
 Assembly: Praise to you, O Christ.

*Please sit.*

## SERMON

*Please stand as you are able.*

*In 1 Samuel 16, God instructs Samuel to anoint David, the unlikely youngest son of Jesse. While others see outward appearances, God sees the heart. Grace often works this way; unexpected, surprising, and given where the world least expects it. "Amazing Grace" reflects the same story of transformation. John Newton's famous hymn celebrates the mercy that finds us when we are lost and opens our eyes to God's work. The line "I once was blind, but now I see" resonates especially strongly with the gospel reading of the man whose sight and faith are restored by Jesus.*

## HYMN OF THE DAY

(ELW 779)

### Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound

1 A - maz - ing grace!— how sweet the sound— that  
 2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and  
 3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares I  
 4 The Lord has prom - ised good to me; his  
 5 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright

saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but  
 grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that  
 have al - read - y come; 'tis grace has brought me  
 word my hope se - cures; he will my shield and  
 shin - ing as the sun, we've no less days to

now am found; was blind, but now I see.  
 grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!  
 safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.  
 por - tion be as long as life en - dures.  
 sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

Text: John Newton, 1725–1807, alt., sts. 1–4; anonymous, st. 5  
 Music: NEW BRITAIN, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835; arr. Edwin O. Excell, 1851–1921, alt.

## APOSTLES' CREED

Assisting Minister: With the whole church let us profess our faith,  
**Assembly:** **I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
 creator of heaven and earth.  
 I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our  
 Lord,  
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
 born of the virgin Mary,  
 suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
 was crucified, died, and was buried;  
 he descended to the dead.  
 On the third day he rose again;  
 he ascended into heaven,  
 he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
 and he will come to judge the living and the  
 dead.  
 I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
 the holy catholic Church,  
 the communion of saints,  
 the forgiveness of sins,  
 the resurrection of the body,  
 and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Assisting Minister: Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by  
 God's presence, let us pray for the world and  
 its needs.

*We pray for the greater  
 church.*

Assisting Minister: God, our shepherd, we pray that you guide the  
 church. Lead Christians in our community and  
 across the globe in right paths for your name's  
 sake. Hear us, O God.

**Assembly: Your mercy is great.**

*We pray for creation.*

Assisting Minister: God our provider, we cry out for this planet  
 and the life it holds. Rescue endangered  
 animals and plants, preserve threatened  
 ecosystems, and save creatures from natural  
 disasters. Hear us, O God.

**Assembly: Your mercy is great.**

*We pray for justice.*

Assisting Minister: God our sovereign, we plead for your peace on  
 earth. Bring an end to war and violence, and  
 raise up leaders in governments, courts,

*We pray for those in need.*

**Assembly:**

businesses, schools, and community organizations who seek goodness and mercy. Surround all who have lost loved ones in the Middle East conflict with your Spirit of grace. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Assisting Minister:

God our healer, we call to you in our need. Uplift all who are made to feel unimportant, and transform the hearts of all infected by bigotry and prejudice. Care for all in special need this day, including those we name before you now (*the assembly offers names*). Hear us, O God.

**Assembly:**

**Your mercy is great.**

*We pray for this congregation.*

Assisting Minister:

God our friend, we praise you for the diversity of people among us. Awaken us to share and receive the gifts we each possess, and stir up a spirit of understanding, celebration, and welcome for all. Hear us, O God.

**Assembly:**

**Your mercy is great.**

*We pray for guidance.*

Assisting Minister:

Lord of the church, you call your people into new seasons of ministry. As we prepare for our Call Sunday on April 12, guide and sustain the pastoral candidate who is discerning this call. Bless the people of this congregation as we pray, listen, and prepare for the future you are unfolding among us. Unite us in your Spirit and lead us with wisdom and hope. Hear us, O God.

**Assembly:**

**Your mercy is great.**

*We remember the saints.*

Assisting Minister:

God our home, we thank you for all who have died and completed their baptismal journeys. Grant us faith to live until we too dwell in your house forever. Hear us, O God.

**Assembly:**

**Your mercy is great.**

Pastor:

Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation.

**Assembly:**

**Amen.**

*The sharing of THE PEACE is an ancient ritual that puts us right with our neighbors before we offer our gifts to God.*

## THE PEACE

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
 Assembly: **And also with you.**

*Please sit.*

## OFFERING

### MUSICAL OFFERING

*O Lord, I Call to You*  
 Sanctuary Choir

by Jayne Southwick Cool

*Please stand as you are able.*

## OFFERTORY

### When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

4 Were the whole realm of na - ture mine, that were a  
 pres - ent far too small; love so a - maz - ing,  
 so di - vine, de - mands my soul, my life, my all.

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of three systems of music. Each system has a vocal line on a treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on a bass clef staff. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are printed below the vocal line.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748  
 Music: HAMBURG, Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

Assisting Minister: Let us pray. O God, maker of heaven and earth, your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus' name.

Assembly: **Amen.**



## WE COME TO GOD'S TABLE



## GREAT THANKSGIVING

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

Assembly: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

Assembly: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Assembly: **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

## PREFACE

Pastor: It is our duty and delight...  
...and join their unending hymn.

## SANCTUS

(Setting 1)

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of  
pow - er and might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -  
san - na in the high - est. Blessed is he who comes in the  
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

### LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor: Let us pray with confidence the prayer Jesus taught us.

Assembly: **Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.**

### INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Pastor: All who are hungry, come! The feast of grace is spread.

Assembly: **Thanks be to God.**

*Please sit.*

### DISTRIBUTION

*This is Christ's table of welcome. Jesus invites **all** who are hungry and thirsty for unconditional love and acceptance to come to God's banquet. The ushers will direct you forward at the appropriate time. Communion will be by station. The pastor will be in the center with the bread. All the bread we use here is gluten free. On either side will be someone with a tray of red wine and white grape juice. Empty cups can be placed in the basket on either side of the aisle. If you wish to receive a blessing instead of communion, cross your arms on your chest. The ushers will direct you forward.*

### AGNUS DEI

(Setting 1)



*Today's communion hymns draw us deeper into the Lenten journey.*

*"The Glory of These Forty Days" recalls the biblical figures who fasted and sought God in the wilderness: Moses, Elijah, and Jesus himself. Lent invites the church into that same season of reflection and renewal.*

*"Restore in Us, O God" is a brief but powerful prayer for transformation. In light of Ephesians 5, it asks that Christ's light shine through our lives so that we may live as people renewed by grace.*

*"Jesus, Remember Me" echoes the cry of the thief on the cross. Its simple Taizé refrain becomes a prayer of trust as we approach the table: even in our weakness and need, Christ receives us and promises his kingdom.*

*Together these hymns frame communion as a moment of repentance, restoration, and hope; God feeding us on the journey of faith.*

world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a -  
way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

## DISTRIBUTION HYMN

(ELW 320)

### The Glory of These Forty Days

1 The glo - ry of these for - ty days we cel - e -  
2 A - lone and fast - ing Mo - ses saw the lov - ing  
3 So Dan - iel trained his mys - tic sight, de - liv - ered  
4 Then grant, O God, that we may, too, re - turn in

brate with songs of praise; for Christ, through whom all  
God who gave the law; and to E - li - jah,  
from the li - ons' might; and John, the Bride - groom's  
fast and prayer to you. Our spir - its strength - en

things were made, him - self has fast - ed and has prayed.  
fast - ing, came the steeds and char - i - ots of flame.  
friend, be - came the her - ald of Mes - si - ah's name.  
with your grace, and give us joy to see your face.

Text: Latin hymn, 11th cent.; tr. Maurice F. Bell, 1862–1947, alt.  
Music: ERHALT UNS, HERR, J. Klug, *Geistliche Lieder*, 1543  
Outside USA: Text from *The English Hymnal*, © Oxford University Press 1906. All rights reserved.

## DISTRIBUTION HYMN

(ELW 328)

## Restore in Us, O God



1 Re - store in us, O God, the splen - dor of your love; re -  
 2 O Spir - it, wake in us the won - der of your pow'r; from  
 3 Bring us, O Christ, to share the full - ness of your joy; bap -  
 4 Three - per - soned God, ful - fill the prom - ise of your grace, that



new your im - age in our hearts, and all our sins re - move.  
 fruit - less fear un - furl our lives like spring - time bud and flow'r.  
 tize us in the ris - en life that death can - not de - stroy.  
 we, when all our search - ing ends, may see you face to face.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944  
 Music: BAYLOR, Hal H. Hopson, b. 1933  
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## DISTRIBUTION HYMN

(ELW 616)

## Jesus, Remember Me



Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.



Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.



Text: Luke 23:42; Taizé Community  
 Music: REMEMBER ME, Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994  
 Text and music © 1981 Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications, Inc., agent, 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638.  
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*Please stand as you are able.*

## POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

**Pastor:** May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

**Assembly:** Amen.

## POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

**Assisting Minister:** Let us pray. God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Assembly:** Amen.



*“Through the Night of Doubt and Sorrow” portrays the church as pilgrims moving forward in faith. The hymn recognizes that the path of discipleship often leads through uncertainty and darkness, yet the people of God continue onward together toward Christ’s light.*

*In today’s gospel, the man born blind gradually moves from confusion to clarity while others remain in spiritual darkness. The hymn echoes this journey, reminding us that faith is sometimes a long road walked step by step.*

*In the final stanza, the music itself becomes part of the story. The accompaniment takes on a lively, almost galloping rhythm, suggesting pilgrims pressing forward with renewed energy. It’s a musical picture of the text: God’s people marching onward together, sustained by hope and guided by Christ, the light of the world.*



## WE ARE SENT FORTH TO SERVE



### SENDING HYMN

#### Through the Night of Doubt and Sorrow



1 Through the night of doubt and sor - row, on - ward  
 2 One the light of God’s own pres - ence on the  
 3 One the strain that lips of thou - sands lift as  
 4 On - ward, there - fore, sis - ters, broth - ers; on - ward,



goes the pil - grim band, sing - ing songs of ex - pec -  
 ran - somed peo - ple shed, chas - ing far the gloom and  
 from the heart of one; one the con - flict, one the  
 with the cross our aid. Bear its shame, and fight its



ta - tion, march - ing to the prom - ised land. Clear be -  
 ter - ror, bright - ’ning all the path we tread. One the  
 per - il, one the march in God be - gun. One the  
 bat - tle till we rest be - neath its shade. Soon shall



fore us through the dark - ness gleams and burns the  
 ob - ject of our jour - ney, one the faith which  
 glad - ness of re - joic - ing on the far e -  
 come the great a - wak - ’ning; soon the rend - ing



guid - ing light; pil - grim clasps the hand of  
 nev - er tires, one the ear - nest look - ing  
 ter - nal shore, where the one al - might - y  
 of the tomb! Then the scat - ’ring of all



pil - grim step - ping fear - less through the night.  
 for - ward, one the hope our God in - spires.  
 Fa - ther reigns in love for - ev - er - more.  
 shad - ows, and the end of toil and gloom.

**BENEDICTION**

Pastor: Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity:  
God, who calls all things into existence,  
Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy  
Spirit, whose breath sustains creation,  
✠ bless you now and always.

**Assembly: Amen.**

**DISMISSAL**

Assisting Minister: Go in peace. Believe the good news.

**Assembly: Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE**

*As part of our continuous efforts to make worship  
more inclusive and sensory friendly, we ask that you  
refrain from applauding during worship and after the  
postlude.*

## FROM THE CLOUD OF WITNESSES

*[Catherine of Siena, The Prayers of Catherine of Siena, ed. Suzanne Noffke, OP (NY: Paulist, 1983), 121.]*

One thing I see in your light:  
 this will, which you have given us as free,  
 seems to receive its strength  
 from the light of faith,  
 for by this light  
 we come in your light to know your eternal will,  
 and we see that your will wants nothing else  
 but that we be made holy.  
 You, light, are also the fuel for the fire,  
 since it is you  
 that makes the fire grow in the soul.

—*Catherine of Siena*

*A contemporary photo of a man who is blind navigating through a mall shows him assisted by a guide dog. We might think about one another in the baptized community as each other's service animals: we need one another, we lead one another.*



## **THIS WEEK'S COMMEMORATIONS**

### **Patrick, bishop, missionary to Ireland, died 461**

**Tuesday, March 17, 2026**

A native of Britain, Patrick was kidnapped by pirates at age sixteen and sold into slavery in Ireland. After a few years, he escaped, returned home, and entered the ministry. Returning to Ireland, he successfully served as a bishop and missionary there.

### **Joseph, Guardian of Jesus**

**Thursday, March 19, 2026**

Though the Bible tells us little about the husband of Jesus' mother Mary, we know that he was a carpenter or builder by trade. He is also shown as being devoted both to God and to Mary and Jesus. It is assumed that he died before Jesus became an adult.

### **Thomas Cranmer, Bishop of Canterbury, martyr, died 1556**

**Saturday, March 21, 2026**

Cranmer's lasting achievement is contributing to and overseeing the creation of the Book of Common Prayer, which remains (in revised form) the worship book of the Anglican Communion. He was burned at the stake under Queen Mary for his support of the Protestant Reformation.

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There is a hearing-assistance system (induction loop) in the Sanctuary for those with hearing impairments. Please ask an usher for instructions.

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