

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT
Born Anew from Above
February 28 & March 1, 2026

AS WE GATHER

“Born again” has become a catch phrase in our age. It is not merely that Jesus says one must be born again but born from above. This new birth happens not from human will or desire but solely from the love and act of God working by the Spirit. Baptismal water is the womb through which we are born again and born from above to the life that death cannot overcome and is eternal. As we make our way through Lent, we are constantly reminded of the truth of Luther’s explanation: we cannot by our own reason or strength believe in Christ, our Lord, or come to Him. The Spirit calls us to the font, gathers the baptized around His Word and Table, delivers us from the darkness of unbelief, and makes holy those who belong to the Lord. Thanks be to God!

Reception of Holy Communion: If you are planning to receive Christ's supper today, please read through the words of exhortation in the fellowship folder. For members, it is a good review of important spiritual matters for gathering at the table. For guests, it explains our stance on confession of faith, doctrinal unity, and proper spiritual preparation to receive the Supper for your benefit.

9:00 PRE-SERVICE MUSIC *“O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee”* arr. Paul Curnow

WELCOME

VERSE

For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; ¹⁵and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised. **2 Corinthians 5:14-15**

HANDSHAKES & HUGS

✠ PREPARATION ✠

OPENING HYMN #645 “Built on the Rock” 5:00 All Sing

9:00 Congregation sings stanzas 1 and 3 – Choir will sing stanza 2

Built on the Rock the Church shall stand Even when steeples are falling.
Crumbled have spiers in ev’ry land; Bells still are chiming and calling,
Calling the young and old to rest, But above all the souls distressed,
Longing for rest everlasting.

Surely in temples made with hands God, the Most High, is not dwelling;
High above earth His temple stands, All earthly temples excelling,
Yet He who dwells in heav’n above Chooses to live with us in love,
Making our bodies His temple.

We are God’s house of living stones, Built for His own habitation.
He through baptismal grace us owns Heirs of His wondrous salvation.
Were we but two His name to tell, Yet He would deign with us to dwell
With all His grace and His favor.

(Rise)

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

Pastor: From where does my help come?

People: My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

Pastor: The LORD will preserve your going out and your coming in,

People: from this time forth and forevermore.

Silence for meditation and reflection.

Pastor: O almighty God, merciful Father,

People: I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto you all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended you and justly deserved your punishment now and forever. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray you of your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being. Forgive me all my sins and grant me the power of your Holy Spirit that I may amend my sinful life.

Pastor: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Pastor: May He who began this good work within you bring it to completion on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

People: Amen.

SALUTATION & PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray. O God, you see that of ourselves we have no strength. By your mighty power defend us from all adversities that may happen to the body and from all evil thoughts that may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

(Be seated)

9:00 *"All Praise to Thee"* by Thomas Tallis arr. by Marie Pooler

☩ WORD ☩

OLD TESTAMENT READING *Genesis 12:1–9* (God's call to Abraham and His promise that Abraham would become the father of a great nation) Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's

house to the land that I will show you. ² And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." ⁴ So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. ⁵ And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people that they had acquired in Haran, and they set out to go to the land of Canaan. When they came to the land of Canaan, ⁶ Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. ⁷ Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built there an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. ⁸ From there he moved to the hill country on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. And there he built an altar to the LORD and called upon the name of the LORD. ⁹ And Abram journeyed on, still going toward the Negeb.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE *Romans 4:1–8, 13–17* (Abraham and his heirs are declared righteous by grace through faith.) What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? ² For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³ For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness." ⁴ Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. ⁵ And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, ⁶ just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: ⁷ "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; ⁸ blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin." ¹³ For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴ For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵ For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression. ¹⁶ That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed

to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, ¹⁷ as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

9:00 *“Rejoice in the Lord”* by Georg Philipp Telemann, arr. by James McKelvy

(Rise)

HOLY GOSPEL *John 3:1–17* (Except a man be born anew, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.)

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the third chapter.

People: Glory to you, O Lord.

Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. ²This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.” ³Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” ⁴Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?” ⁵Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ ⁸The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” ⁹Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” ¹⁰Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things? ¹¹Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony. ¹²If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? ¹³No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever

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believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Be seated)

CHILDREN’S SONG & CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

HYMN #588

“Jesus Loves Me”

Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so.

Little ones to Him belong; they are weak, but He is strong.

Refrain: Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

Jesus loves me He who died Heaven’s gates to open wide.

He has washed away my sin, Lets His little child come in. Refrain

SERMON HYMN #571 “God Loved the World So That He Gave”

God loved the world so that He gave His only Son the lost to save,
That all who would in Him believe Should everlasting life receive.

Christ Jesus is the ground of faith, Who was made flesh and suffered death;
All then who trust in Him alone Are built on this chief cornerstone.

God would not have the sinner die; His Son with saving grace is nigh;
His Spirit in the Word declares How we in Christ are heaven’s heirs.

Be of good cheer, for God’s own Son Forgives all sins which you have done;
And, justified by Jesus’ blood, Your Baptism grants the highest good.

If you are sick, if death is near, This truth your troubled heart can cheer:
Christ Jesus saves your soul from death; That is the firmest ground of faith.

(Rise) Glory to God the Father, Son, And Holy Spirit, Three in One!
To You, O blessed Trinity, Be praise now and eternally!

SERMON

“The Desire to See the Kingdom of God”

John 3:1-17

(Rise)

OFFERTORY

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Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.
Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free spirit.
Amen.

NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.

And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life ☩ of the world to come.

Amen.

(Be seated)

5:00 HYMN DURING OFFERING #422 “On My Heart Imprint Your Image”

On my heart imprint Your image, Blessed Jesus, King of grace,
That life’s riches, cares, and pleasures Never may Your work erase;
Let the clear inscription be: Jesus, crucified for me,
Is my life, my hope’s foundation, And my glory and salvation!

OFFERING As your offering is collected, **please sign our fellowship folder** located at the end of the pew. If you are a visitor, please leave your address and phone. After you are finished, please pass the folder along to others in your pew, and return it to the center aisle. You may check the folder to see names of those to greet after the service.

9:00 SONG DURING OFFERING “Holy, Holy, Holy” arr. Stephen Bulla

(Rise)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

O God, you have graciously given us a new birth in the waters of Holy Baptism. Sustain our faith in you and turn us from the old things of the flesh, that we would fix our eyes on the Son of Man through faith. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Merciful Lord, your Son, Jesus, came to teach us the way of truth. Sustain all pastors in this sacred calling. Give them patience to teach the faith to all who question the way of salvation, and raise up teachers of righteousness in every generation. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Lord of the Church, you graciously provide pastors to lead your people into the Truth. Bless our congregation as they seek to call a new senior pastor. Guide us by your Spirit and lead us to call the man you have elected to serve St. Paul’s for the years to come. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Heavenly Father, you made your servant Abraham the father of us all through faith, and you have given all fathers the calling of Abraham to hand down the Gospel of Christ. Fill fathers and mothers’ hearts with the words of Christ, that they may teach their children. Remember them according to your great mercy. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: O Lord, you have established rulers and earthly authorities to protect us. Bless Donald, our president; Tony, our governor; the Congress of the United States; the legislature of this state; and all who make, administer and judge our laws. Help us to preserve our liberty and move us all to pursue justice and care for the welfare of all people. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Lord, of life, we give you thanks and praise for the gift of life given to us. We especially rejoice with Amanda Weil, as she celebrates her birthday. Help us all to treasure the people in our lives and to love and cherish them in Christ. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Almighty God, you sent forth your own Son to heal and give everlasting life. By your Word and Spirit, lift up your people from their sorrows. Heal them according to your gracious will, and deliver them from the pain of death to eternal life. Hear us, we pray, especially for Pastor Schumacher, Barb, Marlene, Katherine, Zach, Carole, Kathy, Dan, Maxine, Pam, Marilyn, Dorothy, Janet, Jerry, Paula, Rhonda, Harland, June, Sharon, John, Debbie, Janice, David, Helga, Dick, Margie, Anna, Charlene, Guy, Jill, Cathy and Sarah. Sustain them in their afflictions, comfort them in the hour of death and raise up the dead according to your gracious promise. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Righteous Lord, Nicodemus was led by the word of Jesus to the cross, and from the cross he received God's grace. Grant us faith like his to trust your Word and receive Christ's body and blood in the Holy Sacrament for forgiveness, life and salvation. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: Lord, you gave Abraham the promise of many descendants. Give us faith, that we may delight in this promise, delivered through the ages and kept in Christ, our Savior. Equip us with your Spirit to be bold and unwavering witnesses, carrying your name and your Gospel to every place and people. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: All these things and whatever else you know that we need, grant us, Father, for the sake of Him who died and rose again and now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever.

People: Amen.

✠ SACRAMENT ✠

PREFACE

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

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

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

PROPER PREFACE

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who accomplished the salvation of mankind by the tree of the cross that, where death arose, there life also might rise again and that the serpent who overcame by the tree of the garden might likewise by the tree of the cross be overcome. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify your glorious name, evermore praising you and singing:

SANCTUS

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Holy, holy, holy Lord God of pow'r and might:
Heaven and earth are full of Your glory,
Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

PAX DOMINI

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: **Amen.**

AGNUS DEI

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Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

(Be seated)

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

HYMN #433

“Glory Be to Jesus”

Glory be to Jesus, Who in bitter pains
Poured for me the life blood From His sacred veins!

Grace and life eternal In that blood I find;
Blest be His compassion, Infinitely kind!

Blest through endless ages Be the precious stream
Which from endless torment Did the world redeem!

Abel’s blood for vengeance Pleaded to the skies;
But the blood of Jesus For our pardon cries.

Oft as earth exulting Wafts its praise on high,
Angel hosts rejoicing Make their glad reply.

Lift we, then, our voices, Swell the mighty flood;
Louder still and louder Praise the precious blood!

HYMN #542

“When I Behold Jesus Christ”

When I behold Jesus Christ, True God who died for me,
I wonder much at His love As He hung on the tree.

Refrain

**What kind of love is this? What kind of love is this?
You showed Your love, Jesus, there To me on Calvary.
What kind of love is this? What kind of love is this?
You showed Your love, Jesus, there To me on Calvary.**

11 continued

For me You gave all Your love, For me You suffered pain;
I find no words, nothing can Your selflessness explain. **Refrain**

You had no sin, holy Lord, But You were tortured, tried;
On Golgotha there for all My sins You bled and died. **Refrain**

What love is this? Greater love No one has ever known.
My life with God--This I owe To You, and You alone. **Refrain**

HYMN #798

“The God of Abraham Praise”

Stanzas 1-6, 9

The God of Abr’ham praise, Who reigns enthroned above;
Ancient of everlasting days And God of love.
Jehovah, great I AM! By earth and heav’n confessed;
I bow and bless the sacred name Forever blest.

The God of Abr’ham praise, At whose supreme command
From earth I rise and seek the joys At His right hand.
I all on earth forsake, Its wisdom, fame and pow’r,
And Him my only portion make, My shield and tow’r.

The God of Abr’ham praise, Whose all sufficient grace
Shall guide me all my pilgrim days In all my ways.
He deigns to call me friend; He calls Himself my God.
And He shall save me to the end Through Jesus’ blood.

He by Himself has sworn; I on His oath depend.
I shall, on eagle wings upborne, To heav’n ascend.
I shall behold His face; I shall His pow’r adore
And sing the wonders of His grace Forevermore.

Though nature’s strength decay, And earth and hell withstand,
To Canaan’s bounds I urge my way At His command.
The wat’ry deep I pass, With Jesus in my view,
And through the howling wilderness My way pursue.

The goodly land I see, With peace and plenty blest:
A land of sacred liberty And endless rest.
There milk and honey flow, And oil and wine abound,
And trees of life forever grow With mercy crowned.

(Rise) The whole triumphant host Give thanks to God on high.
“Hail, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!” They ever cry.
Hail, Abr’ham’s God and mine! I join the heav’nly lays:
All might and majesty are Thine And endless praise!

COMMON DISMISSAL

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

Pastor: Let us pray. Gracious God, our heavenly Father, you have given us a foretaste of the feast to come in the Holy Supper of your Son’s body and blood. Keep us firm in the true faith throughout our days of pilgrimage that, on the day of His coming, we may, together with all your saints, celebrate the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which has no end; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

BENEDICAMUS & BENEDICTION

Pastor: Let us bless the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

People: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN #685 “Let Us Ever Walk With Jesus”

Let us ever walk with Jesus, Follow His example pure,
Through a world that would deceive us And to sin our spirits lure.
Onward in His footsteps treading, Pilgrims here, our home above,
Full of faith and hope and love, Let us do the Father’s bidding.
Faithful Lord, with me abide; I shall follow where You guide.

Let us suffer here with Jesus And with patience bear our cross.
Joy will follow all our sadness; Where He is, there is no loss.
Though today we sow no laughter, We shall reap celestial joy;
All discomforts that annoy Shall give way to mirth hereafter.
Jesus, here I share your woe; Help me there your joy to know.

Let us gladly die with Jesus. Since by death He conquered death,
He will free us from destruction, Give to us immortal breath.
Let us mortify all passion That would lead us into sin;
And the grave that shuts us in Shall but prove the gate to heaven.
Jesus, here with You I die, There to live with You on high.

Let us also live with Jesus. He has risen from the dead
That to life we may awaken. Jesus, You are now our head.
We are Your own living members; Where You live, there we shall be
In your presence constantly, Living there with You forever.
Jesus, let me faithful be, Life eternal grant to me.

POSTLUDE

“Fanfare” by William Duncombe

Preacher & Liturgist
Lectors
Organist
Special Music Sunday

Pastor Harold Bender
Russell Hurst, Miriam Richardson
Deaconess Carole King
Martin Luther Bands and Choirs
Jessica Kindschi Walter, Ernest Brusubardis

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