



SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT
MARCH 1, 2026 9:30 AM

Nicodemus came
to
Jesus
BY NIGHT

JOHN 3:2



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A congregation of the Montana Synod of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

*As we gather for worship and prepare our hearts, we would ask that you please
silence your cell phones for the duration of the service.*

INTRODUCTION

During Lent we journey with all those around the world who will be baptized at the Easter Vigil. In today's gospel Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born of water and Spirit. At the font we are given a new birth as children of God. As God made a covenant with Abraham, in baptism God promises to raise us up with Christ to new life. From worship we are sent forth to proclaim God's love for all the world.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

DEDICATION OF BANNERS

GATHERING SONG

W&P 39 For God So Loved The World

Em D

For God so loved the world that he gave his

C Bm7 Em

on - ly be - got - ten Son, that who - so - ev - er be -

D C Bm7 Em D7

lieves in him should not per - - - ish, but

G D7 Em

have life ev - er - last - ing, have life ev - er -

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For God So Loved

P. 2

D G D7

last - ing, have life ev - er - last - ing,

Em B7 Em

have life ev - er - last - ing. For God so loved the world that he

D C Bm7 Em

gave his on - ly be - got - ten Son.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God,
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

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

For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word:
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For failing to recognize your coming reign,
and for hindering the work of the Spirit:
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition,
and for disdain the living water Christ offers:
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For disregarding voices from the margin,
and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world:
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent,
and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life:
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

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. **Amen.**

KYRIE

ELW 152

Kyrie (Schubert)

Music: Franz Schubert



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GREETING

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

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. O God, our leader and guide,
**in the waters of baptism you bring us to new birth to live as
your children. Strengthen our faith in your promises, that by
your Spirit we may lift up your life to all the world through
your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and
reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.**

FIRST READING: GENESIS 12:1-4A

God's call of Abram and Sarai has a clear purpose—that through them all the families of the earth would gain a blessing. As they set out on their journey, they are accompanied by promises of land, nation, and a great reputation.

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. 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. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

So Abram went, as the Lord had told him, and Lot went with him.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.



PSALM 121

I lift up my eyes | to the hills;
from where is my | help to come?

**My help comes | from the Lord,
the maker of heav- | en and earth.**

The Lord will not let your | foot be moved
nor will the one who watches over you | fall asleep.

**Behold, the keep- | er of Israel
will neither slum- | ber nor sleep;**

the Lord watches | over you;
the Lord is your shade at | your right hand;

**the sun will not strike | you by day,
nor the | moon by night.**

The Lord will preserve you | from all evil
and will | keep your life.

**The Lord will watch over your going out and your | coming in,
from this time forth for- | evermore.**

SECOND READING: ROMANS 4:1-5, 13-17

In the person and example of Abraham we discover that a right relationship with God does not involve earning a reward from God but entails trusting God's promises. Abraham is the forebear and model for both Jews and Gentiles, because we too trust that ours is a God who gives life to the dead.

What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. But to one who does not

work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law, neither is there transgression.

For this reason the promise depends on faith, in order that it may rest on grace, so that it may be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (who is the father of all of us, 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.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

LH 119

Return To God



The holy gospel according to John the third chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: JOHN 3:1-17

A curious Pharisee visits Jesus by night to learn from the teacher his friends reject. Jesus speaks to him about life in the Spirit and the kingdom of God.

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with that person." Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" Jesus answered him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?"

"Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

"Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE AND SERMON

Rev. Dawn Busch

HYMN OF THE DAY

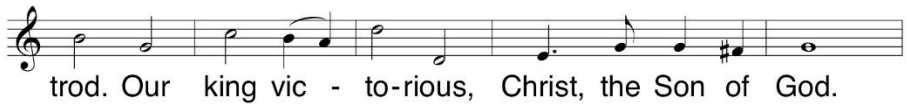
ELW 660 *Lift High The Cross [1,3,4]*

ELW 660

Lift High The Cross

©Text: George W. Kitchin
©Tune: Sydney H. Nicholson

Refrain:



ELW 660

Lift High The Cross

P 3

Refrain:



Refrain:

Musical notation for the refrain of 'Lift High The Cross'. The music is written on a single treble clef staff. The lyrics are: 'Lift high the cross, the love of Christ pro - claim. Till all the world a-dore his sa - cred name. 4. O Lord, once lift - ed on the glo-rious tree, as thou hast prom - ised, draw us all to thee.'

INSTALLATION OF 2026 CHURCH COUNCIL

PROFESSION OF FAITH

Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

**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 THE CHURCH

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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

THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

OFFERING

One of the ways we worship God is through the giving of our offerings. We receive from God the gifts of forgiveness and grace. We worship God when we give our hearts back to God through singing, through prayer, and through our offerings. Please take a moment to prayerfully consider how God is encouraging you to share your gifts. You may also give online at bethelmt.org and click on 'online giving' or scan the QR Code. We give thanks for the gifts you offer.



OFFERTORY

ELW 186

Create In Me A Clean Heart

Music: Richard W. Hillert



Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God,
and re - new a right spir - it with - in me.
Cast me not a - way from your pres - ence,
and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me.
Re-store to me the joy of your sal - va - tion,
and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

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. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give our thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give God thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,...and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

W&P 60

Holy, Holy

Jimmy Owens

1 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly,
ho - ly, Lord God Al - might - y; and we
lift our hearts be - fore you as a to - ken of our love, ho - ly,
ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - - - ly.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus first taught us:

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

Come to the table. Feast on God's goodness and mercy.

All are welcome to receive Holy Communion. We believe that Christ is present in the bread and wine, bringing forgiveness and new life. When you come forward, please hold out your hands in the shape of a cross or cradle to receive the body of Christ. Gluten-free wafers are available, and you may choose red wine or white grape juice. If you receive only one element, know that the fullness of Christ is present in each. If you prefer a blessing, please come forward with your hands folded or arms crossed. If it is difficult to come forward, please let an usher know and Communion will be brought to you.

LAMB OF GOD

Dakota Road

Lamb Of God

Larry Olson

Musical notation for "Lamb of God" in G minor, 4/4 time. The melody is written on a treble clef staff. The lyrics are: "Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world." The chords are: F (first measure), Gm7 (second measure), Bb (third measure), C (fourth measure). The melody consists of quarter notes and eighth notes.

Lamb of God, you
take a - way the sin of the world.

Lamb of God, you
take a - way the sin of the world.

B \flat F/A Gm

Have mer - cy on us. Have mer - cy on

F/A B \flat F/A

us. Have mer - cy on us and

Gm C F

grant us your peace, Lamb of God,

B \flat Gm7 C F

Lamb of God, Lamb of God.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

ELW 479

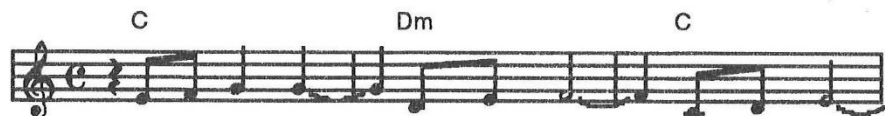
We Come to the Hungry Feast

1 We come to the hun - gry feast hun - gry for a word of peace.
 2 We come to the hun - gry feast hun - gry for a world re - leased
 3 We come to the hun - gry feast hun - gry that the hun - ger cease,

To hun - gry hearts un - sat - is - fied the love of God is
 from hun - gry folk of ev - 'ry kind, the poor in bod - y,
 and know - ing, though we eat our fill, the hun - ger will stay

not de - nied. We come, we come to the hun - gry feast.
 poor in mind. We come, we come to the hun - gry feast.
 with us; still we come, we come to the hun - gry feast.

I See Jesus (In This Place) 547



chorus I see Je- sus in this place, in your face,



in this place. I see Je- sus in this place.



Do you see Him, too? Do you see Him, too?



1.He said to me now, "Break this bread, eat this bread,
2.He said to me now, "Take this cup, drink it up,
3.He said to me now, "Feed my sheep, feed my sheep,



break this bread." He said to me now,
take this cup." He said to me now,
feed my sheep." He said to me now,



"Break this bread, that was broken for
"Take this cup, that was shed for
"Feed my sheep, as I have fed



you, that was bro - ken for you."
you, that was shed for you."
you, as I have fed you."

546 Let Us Break Bread Together

A7 D G A7 D G



Let us break bread to-gether on our knees.

D F#m Bm E7 A7



Let us break bread to-gether on our knees.

D D7 G



When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising

Gm D Bm Gm A7 D G D



sun, O Lord, have mercy on me.

Let us drink wine together on our knees . . .

Let us praise God together on our knees . . .

Do this in re - mem - brance of Me.

Do this in re - mem - brance of Me. This is my

bod - y, this is My blood. Do this in re - mem - brance of

Me. This is My bod - y giv - en for you.

Do this in re - mem - brance of Me. This

cup's the new cov - en - ant, sealed in My blood.

Do this in re - mem - brance of Me. For when - ev - er you

eat this bread and when - ev - er you drink

this cup, as you do you pro - claim the Lord's

death un - til He comes. - - - - Do this in re -

mem - brance of Me. Do this in re - mem - brance of

Me. This is my bod - y, this is My blood.

Do this in re - mem - brance of Me.

COMMUNION BLESSING

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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. Amen.**

BENEDICTION

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. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

ELW 543 Go My Children With My Blessing



1 "Go, my chil - dren, with my bless - ing, nev - er a - lone.
2 "Go, my chil - dren, sins for - giv - en, at peace and pure.
3 "Go, my chil - dren, fed and nour - ished, clos - er to me.



Wak - ing, sleep - ing, I am with you, you are my own.
Here you learned how much I love you, what I can cure.
Grow in love and love by serv - ing, joy - ful and free.



In my love's bap - tis - mal riv - er I have made you mine for - ev - er.
Here you heard my dear Son's sto - ry, here you touched him, saw his glo - ry.
Here my Spir - it's pow - er filled you, here my ten - der com - fort stilled you.



Go, my chil - dren, with my bless - ing, you are my own."
Go, my chil - dren, sins for - giv - en, at peace and pure."
Go, my chil - dren, fed and nour - ished, joy - ful and free."

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SERVING TODAY

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Accompanist | Lynn Ryan, piano |
| Lay Assistant | Laura Kupfner |
| Ushers | Walt Nuessle |
| Tech | Gabe Smith |
| Children's Church | Hailey Marr, Kendall Ryan |
| Hospitality | Laurie Turner |
| Altar Guild | Sue Hesse, Laurie Turner |
| Counters | Patty Braget, Shannon Marr |

Bethel Flowers are given to the glory of God, in gratitude for God's saving love in Christ, who came not to condemn the world, but to bring eternal life.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today we celebrate **The Second Sunday in Lent.**

Today the church council elected at our annual meeting in January is installed to serve as God has called them at this time and place. Please hold them in prayer: Tammy Good (President), Dan Morris (Vice President), Randy Gilbertson (Treasurer), Shannon Marr (Secretary), Chris Gleason, Bob Norbie, Terry Korpela, Jeanne Price, and Kendall Ryan.

Adult Forum, Luther's Lessons: The Apostles' Creed will meet in the Fellowship Hall following worship.

Mid-Week Lenten Soup Suppers (6:15 pm) & Worship (7:00 pm) Thursday evening, March 5th and will be held in the Fellowship Hall and Sanctuary. Lenten worship ***Conversations with Jesus: Services of Word and Healing for Lent.*** All are welcome.

THIS WEEK

Monday 3/2

- Jeremiah Bible Study - 6:30 pm (Fellowship Hall) *

Tuesday 3/3

- Electric City Bible Study — 7:00 am (Zoom)
- Men's Breakfast — 7:00 am (Fellowship Hall)

- Aitz Chaim - 5:00 pm (Fellowship Hall)
- Exec Board meeting - 6:00 pm (Zoom)

Wednesday 3/4

- LOGOS Youth Ministry 5:30 pm
- High School Youth Ministry 6:30 pm

Thursday 3/5

- Jeremiah Bible Study 10:00 am (Sunshine Room) *
- Lenten Soup Supper, Church Council hosting – 6:15 pm (Fellowship Hall)
- Lenten Worship - 7:00 pm (sanctuary)

Friday 3/6

- Bethel Office closed
- Aitz Chaim Friday worship - 6:00 pm

Saturday 3/7

- Jubilate Choir retreat 9:00 am (sanctuary)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday 3/8

- Worship — 9:30 am (in person & live stream)
- World Hunger Sunday
- Adult Forum, Luther's Lessons: The Lord's Prayer – 11:00 am (Fellowship Hall)
- Great Divide 4H – 2:00pm (Fellowship Hall)
- Running Free 4H – 4:00pm (Fellowship Hall)

Monday 3/9

- Jeremiah Bible Study - 6:30 pm (Fellowship Hall) *

Tuesday 3/10

- Electric City Bible Study — 7:00 am (Zoom)
- Men's Breakfast — 7:00 am (Fellowship Hall)
- Council meeting - 6:30 pm (Fellowship Hall)*

Wednesday 3/11

- LOGOS Youth Ministry 5:30 pm
- High School Youth Ministry 6:30 pm

Thursday 3/12

- Jeremiah Bible Study 10:00 am (Sunshine Room) *
- Lenten Soup Supper, Hope Circle hosting – 6:15 pm (Fellowship Hall)

- Lenten Worship - 7:00 pm (sanctuary)

Friday 3/13

- Bethel Office closed
- Great Falls Music Teachers Association Spring Festival

Saturday 3/14

- Great Falls Music Teachers Association Spring Festival
- Handbell Choir Rehearsal TBD

*Zoom option available, please email the Bethel Office at bethelgf.church@gmail.com to receive a link.

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