

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT
February 22nd, 2026 – 9:30 AM

WELCOME



Today's gospel tells of Jesus' temptation in the desert. His forty-day fast becomes the basis of our Lenten pilgrimage. In the early church Lent was a time of intense preparation for those to be baptized at the Easter Vigil. This catechetical focus on the meaning of faith is at the heart of our Lenten journey to the baptismal waters of Easter. Hungry for God's mercy, we receive the bread of life to nourish us for the days ahead.

✝ Preacher – Chaplain Liz Lahti-Rosensaft

✝ Officiant – Pr. Rudy Schneider

CONFESSION & 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:

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

For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word:

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

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

For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition, and for disdaining the living water Christ offers: Gracious God, **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: Gracious God, **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: Gracious God, **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 your life and peace. **Amen.**

OPENING HYMN 1: For the Beauty of the Earth

1 For the beauty of the earth,
for the beauty of the skies,
for the love which from our birth
over and around us lies: **Refrain**

2 For the wonder of each hour
of the day and of the night,
hill and vale and tree and flow'r,
sun and moon and stars of light: **Refrain**

3 For each perfect gift of thine,
peace on earth and joy in heav'n;
for thyself, best gift divine,
to our world so freely giv'n: **Refrain**

Refrain

Christ, our God, to thee we raise
this our sacrifice of praise.

OPENING HYMN 2: Everything is in Your Hands

CHORUS: Everything is in Your Hands!
Everything is in Your Hands!
Everything is in Your Hands! O God!

1. My Past and my present and things yet to come.
My days are in your hands, each and everyone.
I know You can handle any challenge that I face.
You promised you'd be there every step that I take. (**Chorus**)
2. There's nothing too big, that You aren't bigger.
Remind us again Lord, that You are in control.
We know You can handle any challenge that we face.
You promised You'd be there every step that we take. (**Chorus**)

Prayer of the Day - Lord God, our strength, the struggle between good and evil rages within and around us, and the devil and all the forces that defy you tempt us with empty promises. Keep us steadfast in your word, and when we fall, raise us again and restore us 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.**

GOD'S HOLY WORD

FIRST READING: Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

¹⁵The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. ¹⁶And the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

^{3:1}Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden'?" ²The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, ³but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.' " ⁴But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die, ⁵for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." ⁶So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. ⁷Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves. The Word of the Lord...**Thanks be to God!**



Psalm 32

¹Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is put away!

²**Happy are they to whom the LORD imputes no guilt, and in whose spirit, there is no guile!**

³While I held my tongue, my bones withered away, because of my groaning all day long.



⁴ **For your hand was heavy upon me day and night; my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.**

⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not conceal my guilt. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD." Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.

⁶ **Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of trouble; when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.**

⁷ You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

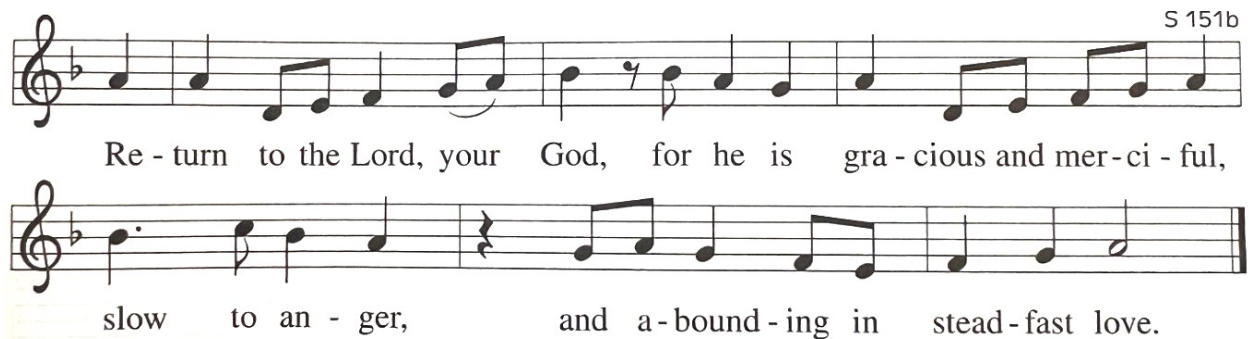
⁸ **"I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go; I will guide you with my eye.**

⁹ Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding, who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will not stay near you."

¹⁰ **Great are the tribulations of the wicked; but mercy embraces those who trust in the LORD.**

¹¹ Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the LORD;
shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



HOLY GOSPEL

A Reading from the Holy Gospel of Matthew 4: 1 - 11; **Glory to You, O Lord!**

¹ Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. ² He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. ³ The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread."

⁴ But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.' "

⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple,

⁶ saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.' "

⁷ Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.' "

⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, ⁹ and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me."

¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.' " ¹¹ Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him. The Gospel of the Lord... **Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ!**

SERMON – Chaplain Liz Lahti-Rosensaft

OFFERING HYMN: ELW#638 – Blessed Assurance

OFFERING & OFFERING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank you that you can satisfy our every desire and need. Your word says that we should give honor to you with the first fruits of our wealth. Accept our tithes and offerings as a gift of worship to you. Multiply what we give for the effective growth of your kingdom. May Christ dwell in our hearts through faith so that we, being rooted and grounded in love, may have the strength to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge. May we be filled with all the fullness of God. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

✝ We recognize those joining us via Facebook Live and give voice to any greetings or prayer requests submitted for our worship.

Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs. *A brief silence.*

God of all grace, grant faith to your church. Give to all the baptized the will to resist temptation and to worship and serve you alone. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of all creation, tend this earth. When human greed and disobedience threaten this planet and the life it contains, lead us by your Spirit into ways of reverence, awe, and gentleness. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of all nations, preserve us from trouble. Surround all living in places of violence with your steadfast love and give resilience to all who work for peace. Grant courage to those who challenge, especially around issues of racism and systemic oppression. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of all healing, mend our wounds. Bring wholeness to all who are sick, give peace to all who groan in grief, and send companions to all who are lonely or isolated. Grace those from our families and community that we now name silently in our hearts, or out loud, with our prayers and your blessings. *(Please name silently or out loud).* Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of all people, provide for our community. For any among us who hunger for bread, bring nourishment. For any among us who hunger for truth, speak your life-giving word. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of all life, bring us to you. We thank you for your free and abounding grace, and for those who, by that same grace, now rest eternally in you. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.** Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation. **Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

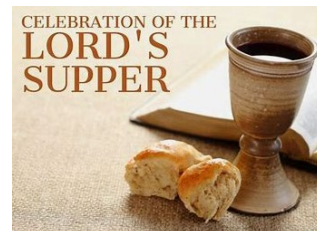
We give you thanks, Father, through Jesus the Christ, your beloved Son, whom you sent in this end of the ages, to save and to redeem us and to proclaim to us your will.

He is your Word, through whom you created all things, and in whom you take delight.

He fulfilled all your will. He stretched out his hands in suffering, in order to free from suffering those who trust in you. As he was born to die, you raised him from death to life, so that we too would know that we shall be raised from death to life.

We therefore remember; On the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread, and after breaking it and giving thanks to you, said, "Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this often for the remembrance of me."

And in the same way, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this often, for the remembrance of me."



Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory. And unto that time, we come before you praying;

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.

OUR TIME OF COMMUNION WITH THE LORD!

COMMUNION HYMN 1: Create in Me

Create in me a clean heart, Oh God,
And renew a right Spirit within me.
Create in me a clean heart, Oh God,
And renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence, Oh Lord,
And take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore unto me the joy of your salvation,
And renew a right Spirit within me.

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COMMUNION HYMN 2: Lord Be Glorified

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| 1 In my life, Lord, be glorified, be glorified;
In my life, Lord, be glorified today. | 3 In your church, Lord, be glorified, be glorified;
In your church, Lord, be glorified today. |
| 2 In our song, Lord, be glorified, be glorified;
In our song, Lord, be glorified today | 4 In your world, Lord, be glorified, be glorified;
In your world, Lord, be glorified today. |

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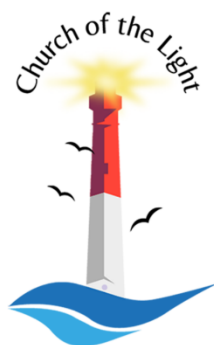
Closing Prayer - God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ,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

Blessing - 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.**

CLOSING HYMN: ELW#886 – O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing (stzs 1,2,6)

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| 1 Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing
my great Redeemer's praise,
the glories of my God and King,
the triumphs of his grace! | 6 To God all glory, praise, and love
be now and ever giv'n
by saints below and saints above,
the church in earth and heav'n. |
| 2 My gracious Master and my God,
assist me to proclaim,
to spread through all the earth abroad
the honors of your name. | |

Dismissal: Go in peace. Believe the good news. **Thanks be to God.**



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Notes:
