

Faith Lutheran Church

First Sunday in Lent

February 22nd, 2026

Introduction

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.



Gathering

Gathering Hymn

ELW 319 "O Lord, Throughout These Forty Days"

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:

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 you life and peace.

Amen.

Hymn

ACS 1084 "God, Be the Love to Search and Keep Me"



1 God, be the love to search and keep me; God, be the prayer to
2 Bind to my-self the name of Ho - ly, great cloud of wit - ness -
3 Bright-ness of sun and glow of moon-light, flash - ing of light - ning,
4 Walk - ing be-hind to hem my jour - ney, go - ing a - head to
5 Christ in the eyes of all who see me, Christ in the ears that



move my voice; God, be the strength to now up - hold me:
es en - fold; proph - ets, a - pos - tles, an - gels wit - ness:
strength of wind, depth of the sea to soil of plan - et:
light my way, and from be - neath, a - bove, and all ways:
hear my voice, Christ in the hearts of all who know me:



O Christ, sur - round me; O Christ, sur - round me.

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

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.**

Children's Sermon & Sunday School

Word

First Reading *Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7*

Human beings were formed with great care, to be in relationship with the creator, creation, and one another. The serpent's promise to the first couple that their eyes would be opened led, ironically, to the discovery only that they were naked.

¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but 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'?" ² The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, ³ but 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.'" ⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die, ⁵ for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." ⁶ So 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. ⁷ Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

Word of God, word of life. Thanks be to God.

Psalm 32

Mercy embraces those who trust in the LORD. (Ps. 32:10)

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

² **Happy are they to whom the LORD im- ¹ putes no guilt,
and in whose spirit there ¹ is no guile!**

³ While I held my tongue, my bones with- ¹ ered away,
because of my groaning ¹ all day long.

⁴ **For your hand was heavy upon me ¹ day and night;
my moisture was dried up as in the ¹ heat of summer. R**

⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not con- ¹ ceal my guilt.

I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD." Then you forgave me the guilt ¹ of my sin.

⁶ **Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in ¹ time of trouble;
when the great waters overflow, they ¹ shall not reach them.**

⁷ You are my hiding-place; you preserve ¹ 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. R**

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. **R**

Second Reading *Romans 5:12-19*

Through Adam’s disobedience, humanity came under bondage to sin and death, from which we cannot free ourselves. In Christ’s obedient death, God graciously showers on us the free gift of liberation and life.

¹² Just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned ¹³ for sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. ¹⁴ Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who did not sin in the likeness of Adam, who is a pattern of the one who was to come.

¹⁵ But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man’s trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. ¹⁶ And the gift is not like the effect of the one man’s sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the gift following many trespasses brings justification. ¹⁷ If, because of the one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

¹⁸ Therefore just as one man’s trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man’s act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. ¹⁹ For just as through the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so through the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous.

Word of God, word of life. Thanks be to God.

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew the 4th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel *Matthew 4:1-11*

Jesus experiences anew the temptations that Israel faced in the wilderness. As the Son of God, he endures the testing of the evil one.

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, O Christ.

Sermon & Silent Reflection

Hymn of the Day

ACS 922 “When We are Tested”

- 1 When we are tested and wrestle alone, famished for bread when the world Offers stone, nourish us, God, by your word and your way, food that sustains us by night and by day.
- 2 When in the desert we cry for relief, pleading for paths marked by certain belief, lift us to love you beyond sign and test, trusting your presence, our only true rest.
- 3 When we are tempted to barter our souls, trading the truth for the pow'r to control, teach us to worship and praise only you, seeking your will in the work that we do.
- 4 When we have struggled and searched through the night, sorting and sifting the wrong from the right, Savior, surround us with circles of care, angels of healing, of hope, and of prayer.

Prayers of Intercession

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

The prayers conclude:

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

Amen.

Meal

Peace

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

Offering

“For Jesus, the quality of the gift is not how large it is, but the proportion you give and the heart with which you give it.” There are many options for giving including plate giving, text to give (833-686-4752) or through our website.



Offertory Hymn

ACS 1068 *“The Earth Adorned in Verdant Robe”*

- 1 The earth adorned in verdant robe sends praises upward surging,
while soft winds breathe on fragrant flow'rs from winter now
emerging. The sunshine bright gives warmth and light to budding
blossoms tender, proclaiming summer splendor.
- 3 O God, amid these joys of life, creation's glory beaming, grant us the grace to keep
your word and live in love redeeming. All flesh is grass, the flowers fade, and time is
fleeting ever; God's word remains forever.

Offering Prayer

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

Holy Communion

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

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

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

Holy, Holy, Holy

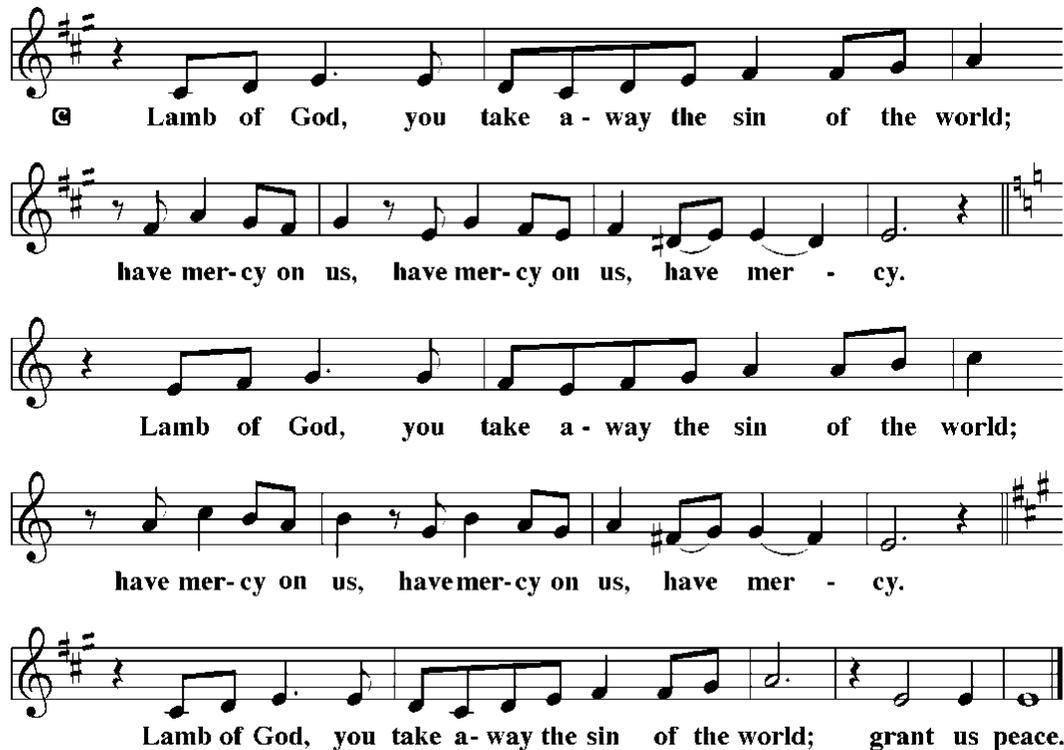
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord,
Lord God of pow'r and might, heav-en and earth are
full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed, bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the
Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

The musical score is written on five staves in treble clef with a common time signature. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics printed below the notes. The first staff begins with a common time signature 'C'. The second staff has a triplet of eighth notes marked with a '3'. The third staff has a fermata over a half note. The fourth and fifth staves conclude the piece with a double bar line.

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.

Lamb of God



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

Distribution Hymn

ELW 613 "Thy Holy Wings"

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the gifts of his body and blood strengthen, keep and unite us, now and forever. **Amen.**

Prayer after Communion

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.

Sending

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.

Dismissal

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

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Faith Lutheran Church is a community living in God's love which embraces and welcomes every person as part of God's Beloved Community. We celebrate each person created in God's image as we strive for justice, peace, and racial equity in our community and the wider world. We openly welcome and affirm all persons of every race, age, socioeconomic class, culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, physical and mental ability, marital and family status, background, and experience. We seek to live as a community of God's people that values each person's voice, gifts, and full participation in all areas of the congregation's life and worship. We embrace the work of the Holy Spirit moving in and through us as we care for the earth and all of God's people.

FAITH ACTIVE IN LOVE

**Gathered as a community living in God's love we serve all people, care
for the earth and embrace the work of the Holy Spirit.**

*Faith Lutheran Church will be recognized as a community of spiritual growth, a place of
acceptance and inclusion, a gateway for environmental stewardship, a creator of partnerships
and an advocate for social justice and peace.*

WORSHIP LEADERSHIP this Sunday includes:

Presiding	<i>Rev. John C. Norquist</i>
Organist/ Pianist	<i>Stephen V. Hibbard</i>
Reader	<i>Joyce Caldwell</i>
Communion Assistant	<i>Joyce Caldwell</i>
Cup Deacons	<i>Cory Schoofs</i>
Sunday School Instructor(s)	<i>Laura Kinnunen</i>
Greeter	<i>Bev Yurske</i>
Ushers	
Communion Set-up	<i>Esther Rusch, Carol Bury & Sandy Stelter</i>
Live Stream	<i>Tom & Kelly Dennison</i>

February Mission of the Month: Mt. Meru Coffee Project
See Joe and Dottie Dorr for more information or how to order coffee!

Trust Funds: Trust Funds will be taking applications for scholarships and grants until February 28th. If you need more information, please see Hollie Milam or email her at trustfunds@faithlutherancedarburg.com

Community Book Club: The Jesus Cow. See Cory Schoofs if you would like more information and when they are meeting.

Bulletins: You might have noticed a change in the bulletin and amount printed. Any thoughts? Have suggestions on a new format? See Tom.

Forty Days of Humility

The devil gives Jesus three opportunities to assert himself as powerful and exceptional: to turn rocks into bread, to be saved by the angels, and to rule over all the earth. Three times Jesus rebuffs the devil, turning his attention to God and refusing to take the bait.

Anthony the Great, a desert father whose life mirrored the experience of Jesus in this text, once said, "I saw the snares that the enemy spreads out over the world and I said groaning, 'What can get through from such snares?' Then I heard a voice saying to me, 'Humility'" (Benedicta Ward, trans., *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers*, Cistercian, 1975). This is exactly how Jesus responds to the temptations offered by the devil: turning his attention back to God in humility, refusing the temptation to prove himself through miracles and acts of power.

During Lent, we are invited to engage in practices like fasting, almsgiving, and prayer to discipline our minds and bodies so we can return our full attention to the abiding love of God in Jesus. There will be a temptation to engage these practices as ways of puffing ourselves up, performing, or proving our worth. But Jesus calls us back to a Lent rooted in humility, engaging practices not for the sake of proving ourselves, but for deepening our trust in God.

Where might we be experiencing that temptation to puff ourselves up, perform, or prove our greatness? What practices might support a posture of humility, reminding us that God is the author of all good things, and that we are loved and sustained by a God who humbly took on flesh for the sake of the world?

May these forty days teach us to embrace humility and to trust that God walks with us, making all things new.

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

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