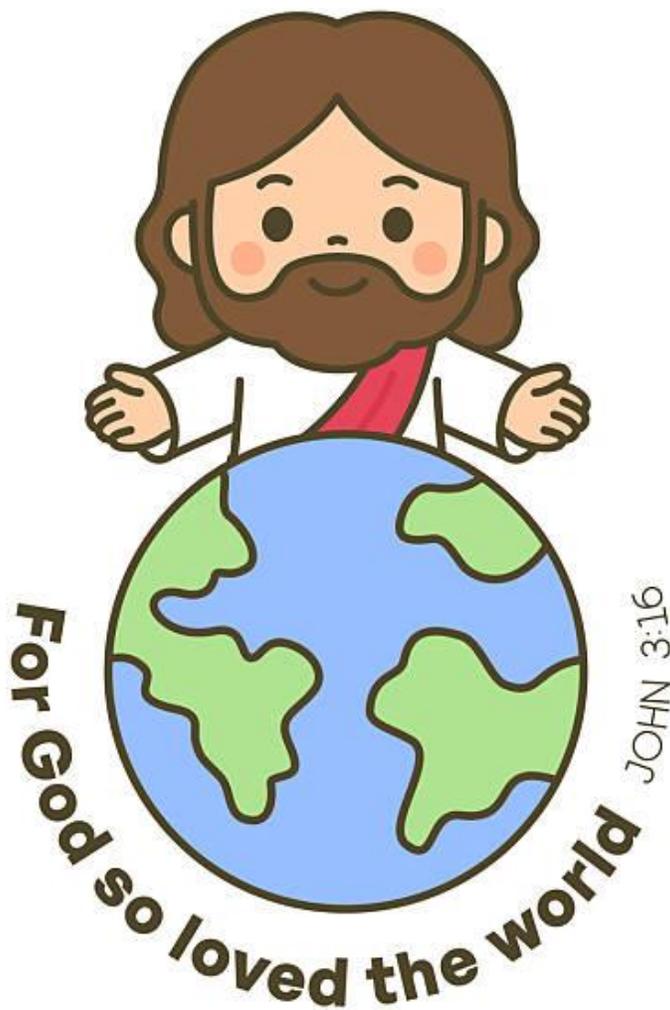


# SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

+ March 1, 2026 +  
10:00 am



*Redeemer Lutheran Church*

*300 O'Neal Road  
Greer, South Carolina  
Office (864) 877-5876*

## Questions Come to Light

What is it about the night that invites questions? As our head rests on the pillow and shadows stretch out on the bedroom wall, questions, like field mice, begin to emerge from the nooks and crannies of our mind. At first, the questions are utilitarian: Did someone let the dog out this evening? Are the kids' lunches packed for school? When am I going to get to the grocery store this week? And then, without warning, the questions morph: Is Grandma going to recover from this illness? Why are my prayers so short these days? Does Jesus really care about us – about me? At this point we know that night has truly descended. Truth uttered in darkness. Naked honesty feels much safer, much less exposed when light's reach seems a day away.

Maybe that is why we can relate to Nicodemus. For when did Nicodemus come to Jesus? By night! Though we can easily skip over the setting's description in this gospel encounter, it is so very important. With shadows dancing in the torchlight, Nicodemus makes his way to Jesus, beset by questions he can ask only under cover of darkness. Though the darkness is Nicodemus' security blanket, he cannot help himself. Like a moth fluttering in the night sky, Nicodemus is irresistibly drawn to the light. Not just any light: Jesus, the light of the world, the light no darkness can overcome. As people filled with our own questions, we follow in the furtive footsteps of Nicodemus, falsely believing our naked honesty will remain hidden in the gloom of night. But the Spirit, through the light of Christ, calls us out from the shadows, and in fact, exposes us to the brilliance of God's love – a love that meets our questioning hearts with nothing less than life eternal.



Ministers  
Pastor  
Parish Administrator  
Director of Music Ministries

The People of Redeemer  
The Rev. Elise T. Stringer  
Mrs. Jackie Pitts  
Mrs. Donna Cotter

**Welcome to Redeemer Lutheran Church in the name of Christ our Lord.**

**WE WARMLY WELCOME ALL WHO WORSHIP WITH US** this Second Sunday of Lent. It is our hope and prayer that the God who destroyed death and made new life possible on this day will touch and transform your life for all the days to come. If you are a guest, please sign the Guest Register in the Narthex. If you have any questions, our ushers will be happy to help you.

**IF YOU ARE SEEKING A CHURCH HOME**, we invite you to consider making Redeemer that home. For more information about Redeemer Lutheran Church, becoming a member, and sharing your gifts in ministry, please speak with Pastor Elise or contact Jackie Pitts at (864) 877-5876. **We will receive new members again on Easter Sunday, April 5, and we invite you to join us! By the grace and love of God, this commitment will change your life and ours.**

**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.

**WE ENTER THIS SANCTUARY WITH REVERENCE FOR GOD  
AND RESPECT FOR THOSE WHO MAY BE IN PRAYER.  
PLEASE SILENCE ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES.**

*The prelude is a time for QUIET reflection and prayer.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF THE DAY

GATHERING

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the People of God.*

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*The assembly stands. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at Baptism.*

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 disdain 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.**

*Refrain*

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ pro - claim till

all the world a - dore his sa - cred name.

1 Come, Chris - tians, fol - low where our cap - tain trod,  
 2 All new - born ser - vants of the Cru - ci - fied  
 3 O Lord, once lift - ed on the glo - rious tree,  
 4 So shall our song of tri - umph ev - er be:

*Refrain*

our king vic - to - rious, Christ, the Son of God.  
 bear on their brows the seal of him who died.  
 as thou hast prom - ised, draw us all to thee.  
 praise to the Cru - ci - fied for vic - to - ry!

## 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.**

*We Sit*

## CHILDREN'S SERMON

Pastor Elise Stringer

## WORD

*God speaks to us in Scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

### 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.*

A reading from Genesis Chapter 12:

<sup>1</sup>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. <sup>2</sup>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. <sup>3</sup>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." <sup>4a</sup>So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

### Psalm: Psalm 121

*I lift up my eyes to the hills; my help comes from the Lord. (Ps. 121:1, 2)*

- <sup>1</sup> I lift up my eyes | to the hills;  
from where is my | help to come?  
<sup>2</sup> **My help comes | from the LORD,**  
**the maker of heav- | en and earth.**  
<sup>3</sup> The LORD will not let your | foot be moved  
nor will the one who watches over you | fall asleep.  
<sup>4</sup> **Behold, the keep- | er of Israel**  
**will neither slum- | ber nor sleep;**

<sup>5</sup> the LORD watches | over you;  
the LORD is your shade at | your right hand;  
<sup>6</sup> **the sun will not strike | you by day,**  
**nor the | moon by night.**  
<sup>7</sup> The LORD will preserve you | from all evil  
and will | keep your life.  
<sup>8</sup> **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.*

A reading from Romans Chapter 4:

<sup>1</sup> What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? <sup>2</sup> For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. <sup>3</sup> For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." <sup>4</sup> Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. <sup>5</sup> But to one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness. <sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. <sup>15</sup> For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law, neither is there transgression. <sup>16</sup> 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, <sup>17</sup> 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.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

ELW #142



Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and



mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in



stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

## **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.*

The Holy Gospel according to St. John the 3<sup>rd</sup> Chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup> Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. <sup>2</sup> 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." <sup>3</sup> Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." <sup>4</sup> 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?" <sup>5</sup> Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. <sup>6</sup> What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. <sup>7</sup> Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' <sup>8</sup> 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." <sup>9</sup> Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" <sup>10</sup> Jesus answered him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?"

<sup>11</sup> "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. <sup>12</sup> If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? <sup>13</sup> No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.

<sup>14</sup> And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup> that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

<sup>16</sup> "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.

<sup>17</sup> "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.**

**THE SERMON**

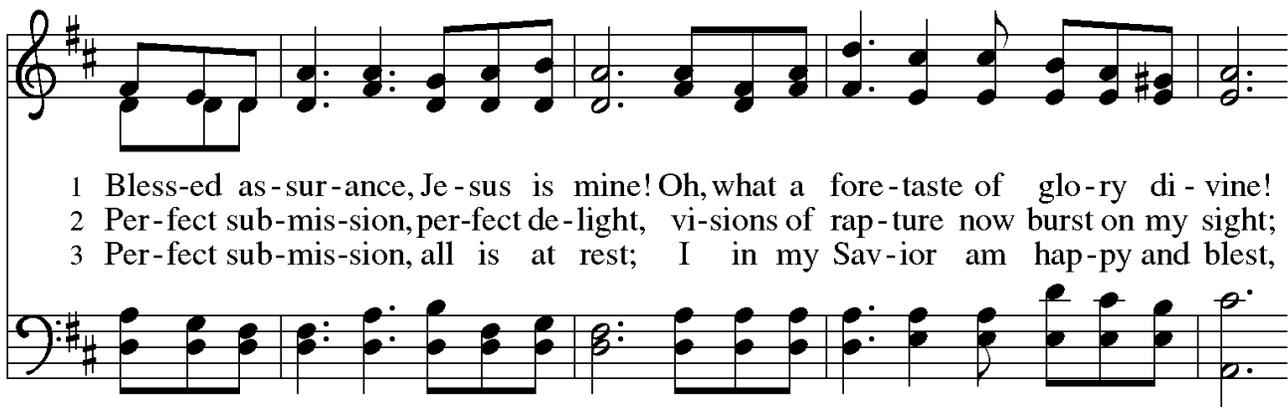
**Pastor Elise Stringer**

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

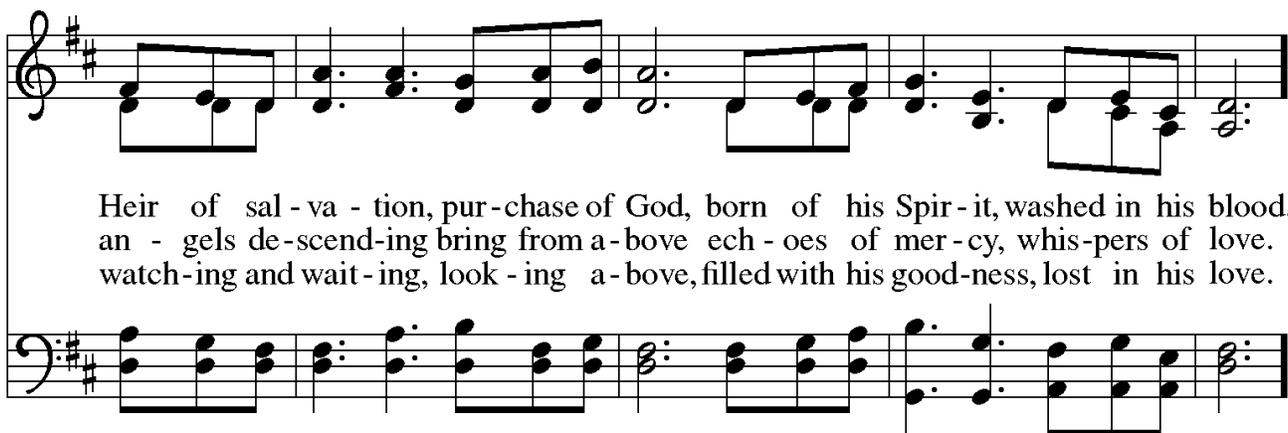
*BLESSED ASSURANCE*  
*(printed on next page)*

**ELW# 638**

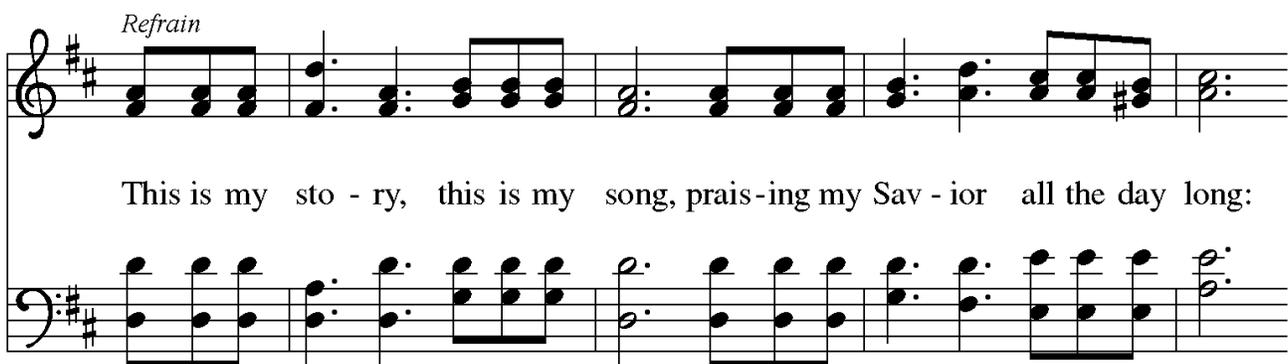
# Blessed Assurance



1 Bless-ed as-sur-ance, Je-sus is mine! Oh, what a fore-taste of glo-ry di-vine!  
2 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, per-fect de-light, vi-sions of rap-ture now burst on my sight;  
3 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, all is at rest; I in my Sav-ior am hap-py and blest,



Heir of sal-va-tion, pur-chase of God, born of his Spir-it, washed in his blood.  
an-gels de-scend-ing bring from a-bove ech-oes of mer-cy, whis-pers of love.  
watch-ing and wait-ing, look-ing a-bove, filled with his good-ness, lost in his love.



*Refrain*

This is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long:



this is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long.

## NICENE CREED

Let us confess our faith with the words of the Nicene Creed:

We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary  
and became truly human.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the Scriptures.  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

*Offered by the Assisting Minister*

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

*A brief silence.*

Faithful One, you renew us by grace. As you have inspired faith through the work of church artists and hymnwriters throughout the ages, give your church the means to praise your beauty today. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Living One, you delight in this world. The sun and moon, the wind and the water declare your goodness. Preserve this earth, and protect conservationists, scientists, and all who labor in service to creation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Ruling One, you bless us to be a blessing. Open the hearts of all leaders to seek the flourishing of every person and lend your help to all who wait for justice, deliverance, and peace. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Compassionate One, you send your Son to save. Declare your word of acceptance to any who feel condemned and lift up any brought low by hatred and exclusion. Tend to all who are struggling with illness or loss, especially those on our prayer board and those we name before you now. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Guiding One, you watch over our going out and coming in. Bless newcomers and new members in this congregation and accompany those who have recently left this community to journey elsewhere. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Eternal One, you neither slumber nor sleep. Be our keeper in life and in death. Thank you for our beloved who have died, and for your promise which saves this whole world by your love. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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

## PEACE

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

*We share a sign of peace with others as we are comfortable. We sit.*

# MEAL

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

**MUSICAL OFFERING**

*A LENTEN PRAYER*

**Redeemer Choir  
Thomas Cotter, Trumpet**

**OFFERING HYMN**

## Create in Me a Clean Heart *Offering Song*

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.

**OFFERING PRAYER**

*Offered by the Assisting minister and congregation.*

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 Presiding Minister greets the congregation and invites all present to give thanks.*

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.**

## PREFACE

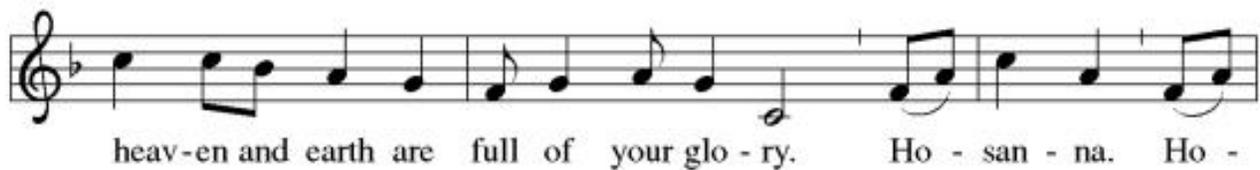
It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,  
that we should at all times and in all places  
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,  
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You call your people to cleanse their hearts  
and prepare with joy for the paschal feast,  
that, renewed in the gift of baptism,  
we may come to the fullness of your grace.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,  
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

ELW#144



## THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Blessed are you, O God of the universe.

Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth.

Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood.

Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea.

Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness  
to the land of milk and honey.

Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one.

Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ.

Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, 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 for the remembrance of me.

With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's Passover  
from death to life, as we proclaim the mystery of faith:  
**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

O God of resurrection and new life:  
Pour out your Holy Spirit on us  
and on these gifts of bread and wine.  
Bless this feast. Grace our table with your presence. **Come, Holy Spirit.**

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread.  
Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world.  
Breathe new life into us.  
Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love. **Come, Holy Spirit.**

With the holy ones of all times and places,  
with the earth and all its creatures,  
with sun and moon and stars,  
we praise you, O God,  
blessed and holy Trinity,  
now and forever. **Amen**

## LORD'S PRAYER

*Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:*

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. Amen.

### COMMUNION HYMN:

### LAMB OF GOD

ELW p. 146

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

## **HYMNS DURING COMMUNION**

*Congregation is encouraged to sing.*

WE ARE BAPTIZED IN CHRIST JESUS  
ON MY HEART IMPRINT YOUR IMAGE

ELW #451

ELW #811

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

*Offered by 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. **Amen.**

## **SENDING**

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

## **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.**

## **REDEEMER'S MISSION**

Redeemers Mission is: **A lifelong family ministry of God's love!**

**SENDING HYMN:** *AMAZING GRACE, HOW SWEET THE SOUND*  
*(printed on next page)*

ELW #779

## **DISMISSAL**

*Offered by Assisting Minister.*

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

## **POSTLUDE**

**Donna Cotter, Organ**

# 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.

## Serving Today

<b>Ushers:</b>	Brad Van Putten and Tom Stires
<b>Greeters:</b>	Wade and Barbara Tate
<b>Assisting Minister:</b>	Phil Rhoads
<b>Lector 1:</b>	Joyce Frid
<b>Lector 2:</b>	Cindy Martin
<b>Acolyte:</b>	Jacob Lybrand
<b>Crucifer:</b>	Dillon Howell
<b>Cantor:</b>	Jeffrey Stringer
<b>Counters:</b>	Sonny Lybrand, Brenda Van Putten, and Aaron Cornwell
<b>Altar Guild:</b>	Donna Norman
<b>Flowers:</b>	Lent, No Flowers
<b>Sheepdogs:</b>	BJ King, Sonny Lybrand, and Michael Lybrand 4-6pm JJ Johnson
<b>Nursery:</b>	Chrissy Bristow and Rose Lanning

## Serving Next Week - March 8, 2026

<b>Ushers:</b>	Marc Karrmann and Chuck Pegram
<b>Greeters:</b>	Tom Lewis and Phil Rhoads
<b>Assisting Minister:</b>	Nancy Stires
<b>Lector 1:</b>	Kathy Mieczkowski
<b>Lector 2:</b>	Pat Kirchman
<b>Acolyte:</b>	Ari Damian
<b>Crucifer:</b>	Harper Meloon
<b>Cantor:</b>	Kyle Henderson
<b>Counters:</b>	Harold Neel, Donna Norman, and Rev. Kevin Koger
<b>Altar Guild:</b>	Marilyn Barr
<b>Flowers:</b>	Lent, No Flowers
<b>Sheepdog:</b>	Michael Miller, Beto Damian, and Brian Ginsberg 2-4pm Michael Miller 4-6pm Brian Ginsberg
<b>Nursery:</b>	Liz Miller and Hannah Hester

## NOTES