



St. Peter's Lutheran Church
Highspire
Lent 2
March 1, 2026

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.

Overview

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.

WORDS OF WELCOME
PRELUDE

Juliet Mitton

The Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS ELW p. 94

P In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord

C Amen.

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. Most merciful God,

C we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

P In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

*GREETING

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

C And also with you.

*KYRIE

In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**

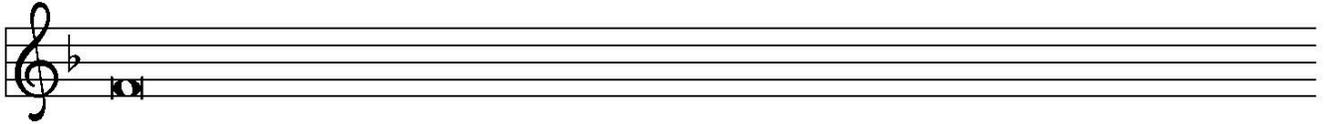
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

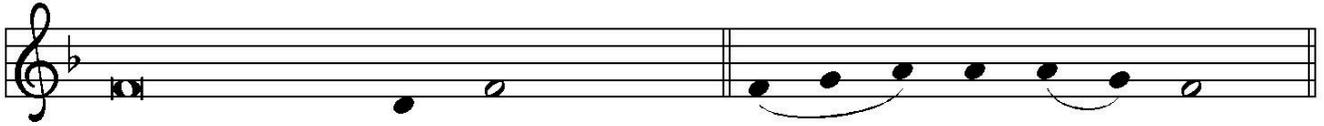
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,

and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

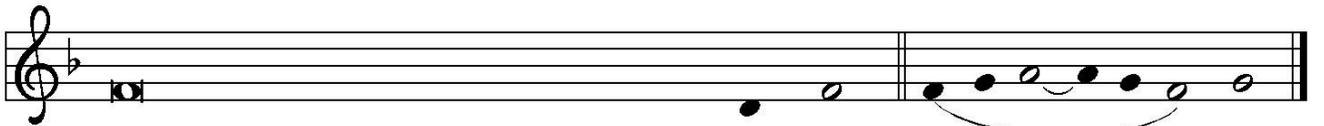


For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord.

A - men.

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

P 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.

C Amen.

The 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.

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

4a So Abram went, as the Lord had told him, and Lot went with him.

L The word of the Lord

C Thanks be to God

PSALM: **Psalm 121** (read responsively)

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

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

**2 My help comes from the Lord,
the maker of heaven and earth.**

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

**4 Behold, the keeper of Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep;**

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

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

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

**8 The Lord will watch over your going out and your coming
in, from this time forth forevermore.**

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.

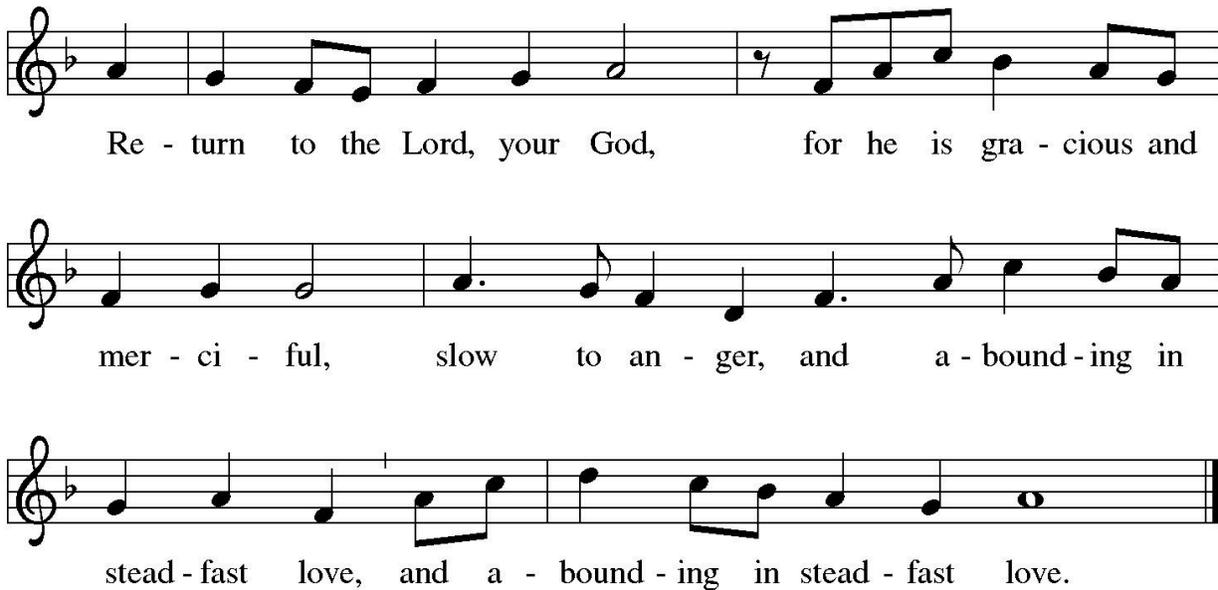
1 What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? 2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. 3 For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." 4 Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. 5 But to one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

13 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. 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, neither is there transgression.

16 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, 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.

L The word of the Lord

C Thanks be to God



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**

P The holy gospel according to John

C Glory to you, O Lord.

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.

1 Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. 2 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." 3 Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." 4 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?" 5 Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. 6 What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be

born from above.' 8 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." 9 Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" 10 Jesus answered him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?"

11 "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. 12 If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? 13 No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. 14 And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

16 "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.

17 "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."

P The gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Sr. Marianne Brock

SERMON

Sr. Marianne Brock

*HYMN OF THE DAY Lift High the Cross

ELW# 660

*APOSTLES' CREED

ELW p.105

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 INTERCESSION

A 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 *Don Alsedek, Connie Barner, Rachel Benkovic, Richard Deutsch, Rose Hoover, Tracy Keene, Samson Kennedy, Bernie Kunz, Rob Lipsitt, and Sally Schonewolf.* 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 assembly and accompany those who have recently left this community to journey elsewhere. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

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.**

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

C Amen.

*PEACE

ELW p. 106

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

C And also with you.

The Meal

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

*OFFERTORY HYMN

Create In Me a Clean Heart

ELW# 186



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.

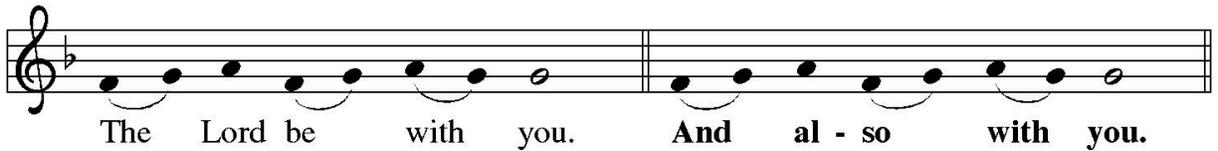
***OFFERTORY PRAYER**

A 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.

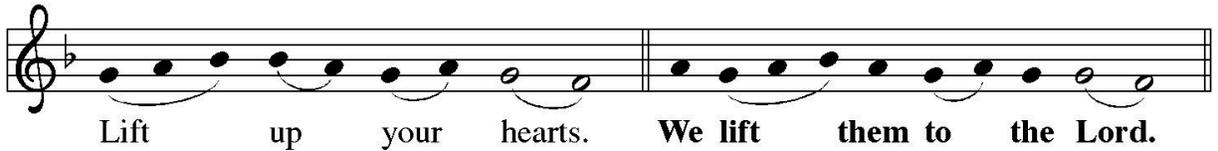
C Amen

***THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

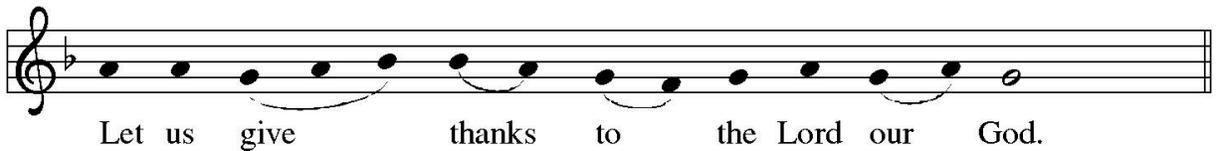
ELW p.144



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.



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



Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

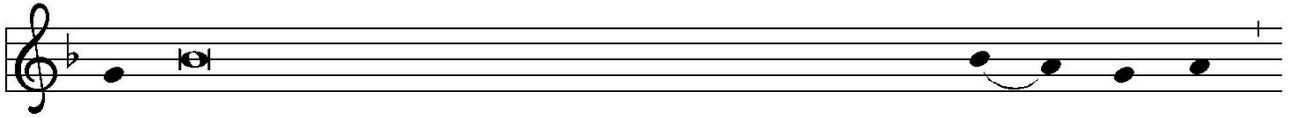


It is right to give our thanks and praise.

*PREFACE



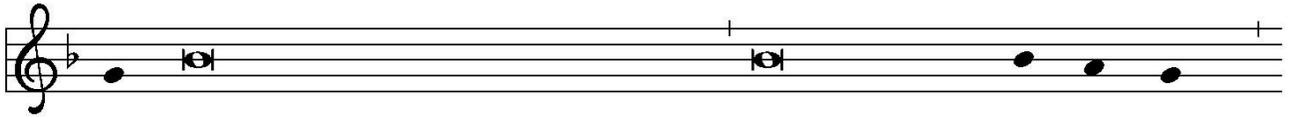
It is indeed right, our du - ty and our joy,



that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you,



al - mighty and merciful God, through our Sav - ior Je - sus Christ.



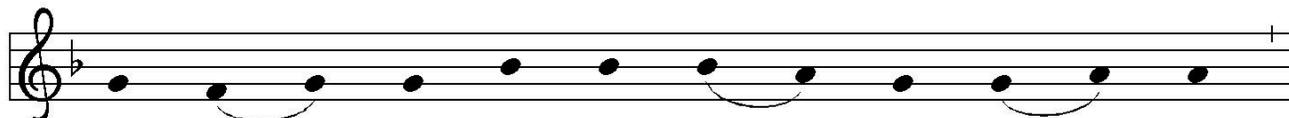
You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the



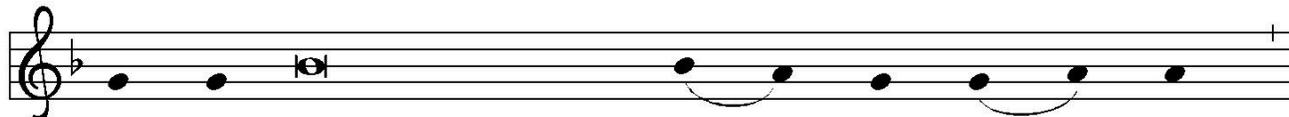
pas - chal feast, that re - newed in the gift of bap - tism,



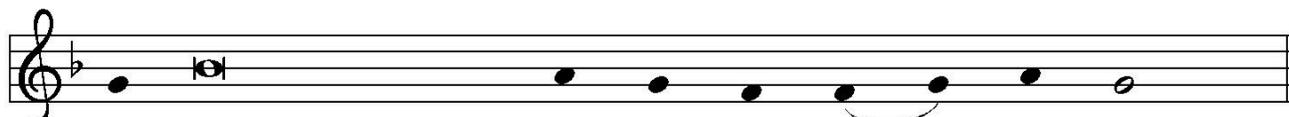
we may come to the full - ness of your grace.



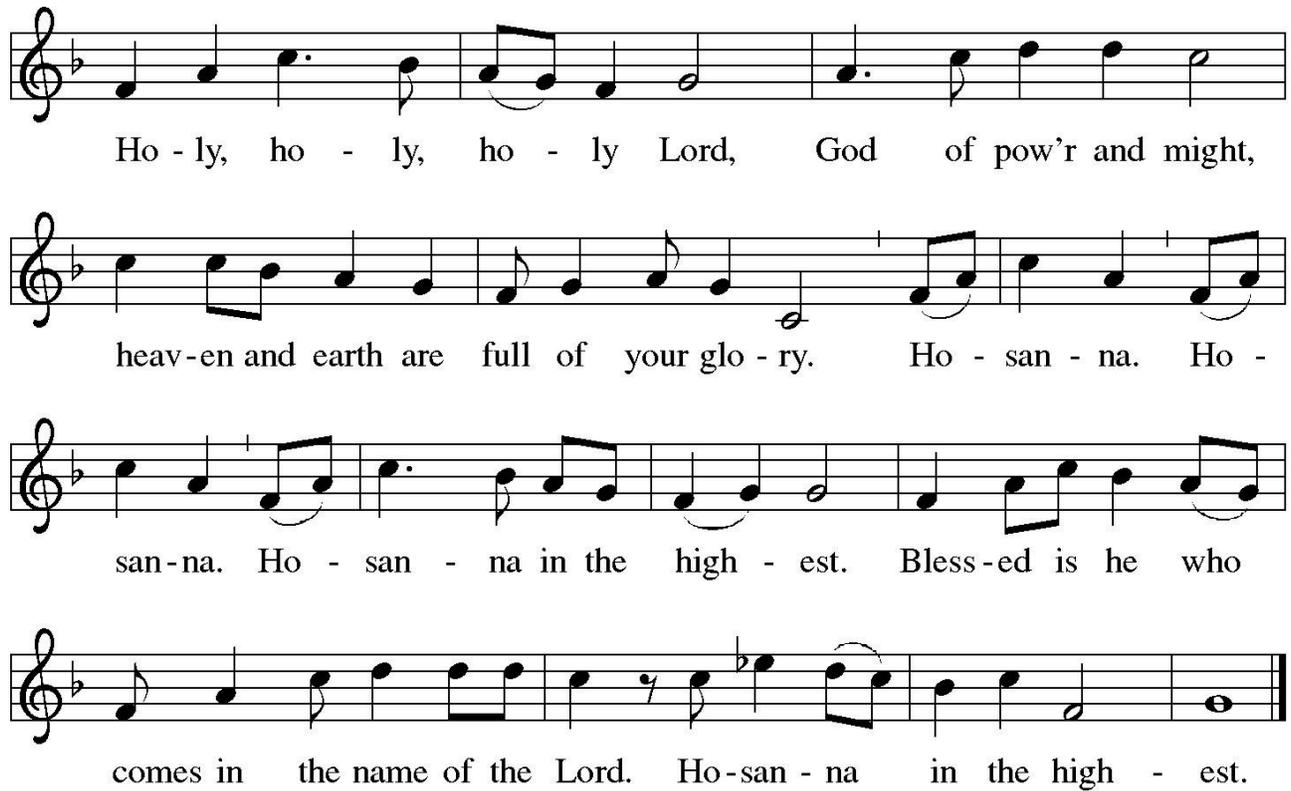
And so, with all the choirs of an - gels,



with the church on earth and the hosts of heav - en,



we praise your name and join their un - end - ing hymn:



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

***EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

P 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 your 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.

C Amen.

*THE LORD'S PRAYER

ELW p.145

P 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.

*SHARING THE MEAL

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

COMMUNION HYMNS:

Lamb of God

ELW p.146

We Are Baptized in Christ Jesus

ELW# 451

Jesus Remember Me"(3 times)

ELW# 616

*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A 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.

C Amen.

The Sending

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

***BENEDICTION**

P 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.

C Amen.

***SENDING HYMN** When I Survey the Wondrous Cross ELW #803

***DISMISSAL**

A Go in peace. Believe the good news.

C Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Juliet Mitton

***Thank you, Sr. Marianne for presiding over worship
today, you are a blessing to us.***

***We appreciate Juliet Mitton for sharing her musical talent
with us this morning. Thank you Juliet.***

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Prelude - Juliet Mitton

Gathering Hymn - "Blessed Assurance" ELW #638 words - Fanny J. Crosby
music - Phoebe P. Knapp PUBLIC DOMAIN

Kyrie - p.138-139, ELW, setting 3

Lenten Acclamation - "Return to the Lord, Your God" p.142 ELW, setting 3

Hymn of the Day - "Lift High the Cross" ELW #660 words - George W.

Kitchin music - Sydney H. Nicholson @1974 Hope Publishing Co. CRUCIFER

Special Music - "How Great Thou Art" arr. Kevin McChesney @1997 Jeffers
Handbell Supply Co. O STORE GUD Bell Choir

Offertory Hymn - "Create in Me a Clean Heart" ELW #186 music - @ 2006,
Augsburg Fortress, Richard Hillert words - PUBLIC DOMAIN

Great Thanksgiving - p.144 ELW, setting 3

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord - p.144 ELW, setting 3

Distribution Hymns - "Lamb of God" p.146 ELW, setting 3

"We Are Baptized in Christ Jesus" ELW #451 words & music - John Ylvisaker
@1985 John Ylvisaker Ouimette

"Jesus, Remember Me" ELW #616 (3 times) Jacques Berthier @ 1981 Les
Presses de Taize, GIA Publications

Sending hymn - "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" ELW #803 words -
Isaac Watts music - Lowell Mason HAMBURG PUBLIC DOMAIN

Postlude - Juliet Mitton

St. Peter's Lutheran Church Highspire Contact Information:

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For pastoral care, please reach out to the church office at 717-939-3492 or
by email at stpetershighspire240@gmail.com. You can also call Patrick
Hawkins at 717-903-2987.

ALTAR FLOWERS

The Centerpiece is presented to the Glory of God in honor of their 43rd wedding anniversary on March 6th by Bob and Carole Orendorf.

SPONSORS NEEDED FOR ALTAR FLOWERS

The following dates are available for sponsors. If you are interested, please let Helene Hoch know at 717-343-8397.

March 29th Palm Sunday

April 2nd Maundy Thursday

Worship Participants for March 1, 2026

Presiding Minister	Sr. Marianne Brock
Music Director	Stephen Strauss
Worship Assistant	Patrick Hawkins
Musician	Juliet Mitton
Lector	Randy Hoover

Worship Participants for March 8, 2026

Presiding Minister	Sr. Marianne Brock
Music Director	Stephen Strauss
Worship Assistant	Brian Keyser
Musician	Deb Dillane
Lector	Matt Hunt

CHOIR REHEARSALS

This Wednesday, March 4th, there will be rehearsal for the bell choir at 7pm and choir at 7:45pm. Join us at rehearsals and offer your talents to the Lord through music! Any questions, call or text Steve at 717-265-6854.

All are Welcome Bible Study

The All are Welcome Bible Study meets on Tuesday nights at 6:30pm. We are currently reading Psalms. We send out a weekly email with the Zoom link, as well as a brief summary of what we covered the previous week. To get the link for attending the Zoom session, or just to get on the weekly email list, please contact Matt and Mary Hunt at

allarewelcomebiblestudy@gmail.com

Meet Pastor Alex

As discussed at our congregational meeting, we will welcome Pastor Alex on Sunday March 15th. On March 15th our worship service time will also change to 11:00 AM. However, her first time with us will be on March 11th during Evening Prayer at 6:30 pm. Please come out and meet Pastor Alex. There will be refreshments after the service.

Services for Wednesdays in Lent:

February 25th	Evening Prayer	6:30pm
March 4th	Evening Prayer	6:30pm
March 11th	Evening Prayer	6:30pm (meet Pastor Alex)
March 18th	Evening Prayer	6:30pm
March 25th	Evening Prayer	6:30pm

Upcoming Holy Week Services:

March 29th:	Palm Sunday	11am Service
April 2nd:	Maundy Thursday	7pm Service
April 3rd:	Good Friday @St. Michael	7pm Service
April 4th:	Vigil of Easter	7pm Service
April 5th:	Easter Sunday	11am Service

The Harrisburg Cedarettes will award \$1000.00 scholarships to high school seniors who plan to attend HACC studying in a medical field (Nursing, Dental, EMT, etc.) for the fall semester of 2026. Starting January 1, 2026, applications can be obtained from the guidance counselor or you may contact Winifred McGee at 717-367-5681 or email her at winifredmcg55@gmail.com. The deadline for submission of the application will be Friday, March 27, 2026.

THANKFUL THREADS

The Thankful Threads is in need of children and adult pant and skirt hangers with clips. (There is NOT a need for regular hangers.) The hangers can be brought to the church prior to the services or during the Free Meal hours on Monday evening. For more information, call Martha Walmer at 717-939-0153.

Come to church and stay for fellowship every Sunday in the Parlor. Enjoy coffee and snacks and friendly conversation! If you would be interested in "Hosting a Sunday" please check the sign-up sheet posted on the bulletin board located in the hallway outside the Music Room/Church Office.