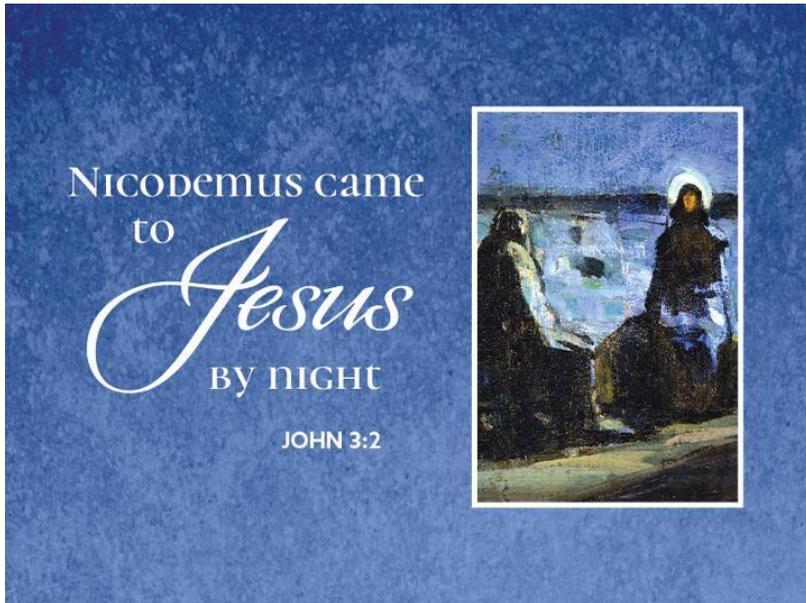




SUNDAY, MARCH 1, 2026



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.

GATHERING

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

WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING MUSIC

“JESUS SHALL REIGN”

Music and lyrics Gerrit Gustafson, Isaac Watts
© The Worship Songbook Admin The Worship Songbook

INVOCATION

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

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most merciful God,

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.

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. **Amen.**

HYMN OF PRAISE

“MORE LIKE JESUS”

Music and lyrics Brett Younker, Brooke Lingertwood et al.
© 2018 sixsteps Music; worshiptogether.com songs; SHOUT! Music
Publishing Australia Admin CMG Publishing Hillsong Publishing

APOSTOLIC 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

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.**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

FIRST READING

A reading from **GENESIS 12:1-4a**

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.

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL

JOHN 3:1-17

The Holy Gospel according to John. **Glory to You, O Lord.**

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."

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to You, O Christ.**

1. How are Abram and Nicodemus similar?
2. Both passages involve change — leaving or being reborn. Why is change often hard spiritually?
3. What does it mean to trust God when we don't have all the answers?
4. What might God be inviting you into right now?

HYMN OF THE DAY

GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS (ELW #733)



1 Great is thy faith-ful-ness, O God my Fa-ther; there is no
 2 Sum-mer and win-ter and spring-time and har-vest, sun, moon, and
 3 Par-don for sin and a peace that en-dur-eth, thine own dear



shad-ow of turn-ing with thee; thou chang-est not, thy com-
 stars in their cours-es a-bove join with all na-ture in
 pres-ence to cheer and to guide; strength for to-day and bright



pas-sions they fail not; as thou hast been, thou for-ev-er wilt be.
 man-i-fold wit-ness to thy great faith-ful-ness, mer-cy, and love.
 hope for to-mor-row, bless-ings all mine, with ten thou-sand be-side!

Refrain



Great is thy faith-ful-ness! Great is thy faith-ful-ness! Morn-ing by



morn-ing new mer-cies I see; all I have need-ed thy



hand hath pro-vid-ed; great is thy faith-ful-ness, Lord, un-to me.

Text: Thomas O. Chisholm, 1866–1960

Music: FAITHFULNESS, William M. Runyan, 1870–1957

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OUR STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Apostles' Creed

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

With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

After each petition: Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Concluding petition: Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

SHARING OF CHRIST'S PEACE

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

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

OFFERING

Thank you for your continued generosity in supporting the ongoing ministry of Bethel Lutheran Church! In-person gifts may be placed in the offering plates, mailed to Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church (2077 N. Frederick Pike, Winchester, VA 22603), given online at www.bethelwinchester.com or using the adjacent QR code.



MUSIC FOR REFLECTION-MEEKNESS AND MAJESTY-Choir/Band

OFFERING PRAYER

God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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 feast to come, 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

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.

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 your fidelity to the Hebrew people.

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

Praise to you for his death, resurrection, and ascension.

Praise to you for your Spirit which weaves mysteriously through the fabric of life.

In the night in which he was arrested, 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.**

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine. Grace our table with your presence. **Come, Holy Spirit.**

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.**

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

THE DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Welcome to the Lord's Table!

Everyone, regardless of age and denomination, is invited to join us for Holy Communion. If you prefer a blessing, simply inform the communion distributors. The ushers will direct your row when it is time to come forward.

You will receive the bread from the first Holy Communion distributor. You will pick up the cup of wine or juice from the tray held by the second distributor. For those who need gluten free a pre-packaged **gluten-free wafer** and a cup of **grape juice is also available.**

Once you have communed, you are invited to return to your seat for silent reflection or singing

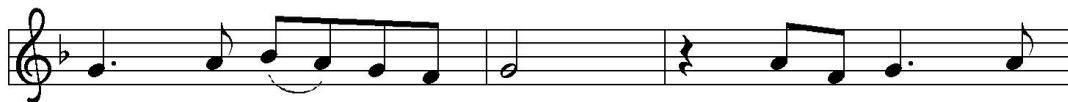
LAMB OF GOD



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.

COMMUNION HYMN

“CHANGE MY HEART, OH GOD”

Music and lyrics Eddie Espinosa © 1982 Heart And Harp Worship Admin Music Services, Inc

COMMUNION BLESSING

Let us pray ... Compassionate God, you have fed us with the bread of heaven. Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage: may our fasting be hunger for justice; our alms, a making of peace; and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

BENEDICTION

May the God of fidelity and grace grant you harmony with one another.
May the Lord of life inspire you to seek justice and joy.
May the power of the Holy Spirit abide in you forever. **Amen.**



1 Lord of light, your name out - shin - ing all the stars and
 2 By the toil of faith - ful work - ers in some far out -
 3 Grant that knowl - edge, still in - creas - ing, at your feet may
 4 By the prayers of faith - ful watch - ers, nev - er si - lent



suns of space, use our tal - ents in your king - dom
 ly - ing field, by the cour - age where the ra - diance
 low - ly kneel; with your grace our tri - umphs hal - low,
 day or night; by the cross of Je - sus, bring - ing



as the ser - vants of your grace; use us to ful -
 of the cross is still re - vealed, by the vic - to -
 with your char - i - ty our zeal; lift the na - tions
 peace to all and heal - ing light; by the love that



fill your pur - pose in the gift of Christ your Son.
 ries of meek - ness, through re - proach and suf - f'ring won:
 from the shad - ows to the glad - ness of the sun:
 pass - es knowl - edge, mak - ing all your chil - dren one:

Refrain

Fa - ther, as in high - est heav - en, so on earth your will be done.

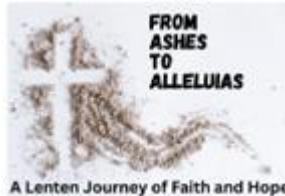
Text: Howell E. Lewis, 1860-1953 alt. Music: Abbot's Leigh Cyril V Taylor 1907-1991 Text ©Union of Welsh Independents Music
 ©1942 ren 1970 Hope Publishing

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

We hope every person felt welcomed here, especially our guests. We trust that our time together has filled you with a sense of joy and peace, and we invite you to return soon.



MIDWEEK LENTEN WORSHIP SERIES
Walking Wet;

Living Our Baptism from Ashes to Alleluias

We don't graduate from baptism. We walk wet each day; claimed by grace, cleaned in water, changed by God's promises, and called to serve God and each other.

Wednesday, March 4

5:30pm Lenten Dinner/Conversation
7pm Lenten Midweek Worship
"We are Claimed"

Wednesday, March 11

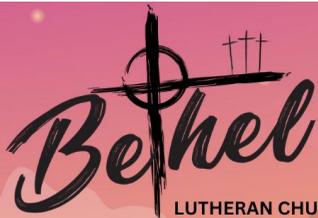
5:30pm Lenten Dinner/Conversation
7pm Lenten Midweek Worship
"We are Cleaned"

Wednesday, March 18

5:30pm Lenten Dinner/Conversation
7pm Lenten Midweek Worship
"We are Changed"

Wednesday, March 25

5:30pm Lenten Dinner/Conversation
7pm Lenten Midweek Worship
"We are Called"



LUTHERAN CHURCH

2077 N. Frederick Pike
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HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SERVICES

PALM SUNDAY
MARCH 29TH
9:30AM

MAUNDY THURSDAY
APRIL 2ND
7pm

GOOD FRIDAY
APRIL 3RD
Noon and 7pm

EASTER SUNDAY
APRIL 5TH
9:30am

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www.bethelwinchester.com

