

SECOND SUNDAY IN  
LENT

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**Second Sunday in Lent**

**March 1, 2026**

*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.*

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## **GATHERING**

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

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### **PRELUDE**

### **WELCOME**

### **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**

*Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross* RED ELW #335  
(Vs. 1, 2 & 3)

**1** Jesus, keep me near the cross,  
there's a precious fountain;  
free to all, a healing stream  
flows from Calv'ry's mountain.

### ***Refrain***

**In the cross, in the cross  
be my glory ever;  
till my ransomed soul shall find  
rest beyond the river.**

**2 Near the cross, a trembling soul,  
love and mercy found me;  
there the bright and morning star  
sheds its beams around me. *Refrain***

**3 Near the cross! O Lamb of God,  
bring its scenes before me;  
help me walk from day to day  
with its shadow o'er me. *Refrain***

Text: Fanny J. Crosby, 1820-1915  
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## **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**

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

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.**

**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.*

<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.

Word of God. Word of Life.

**Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: Psalm 121**

<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 heaven 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 keeper of Israel  
will neither slumber 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 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.*

<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.

Word of God. Word of Life.

**Thanks be to God.**

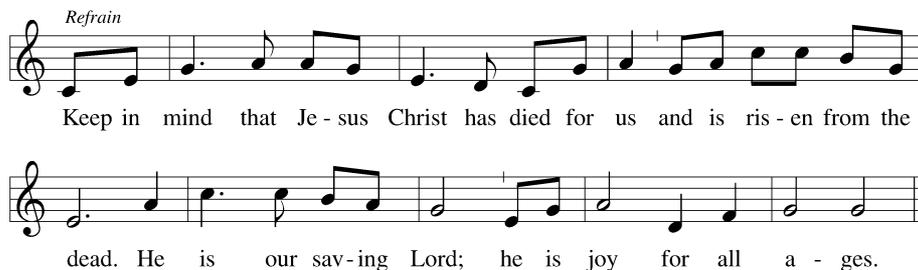
## PLEASE RISE FOR THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION—

*Keep in Mind that Jesus Christ Has Died for Us*

One License #50050

### Keep in Mind That Jesus Christ Has Died for Us

*Refrain*



Keep in mind that Je - sus Christ has died for us and is ris - en from the  
dead. He is our sav - ing Lord; he is joy for all a - ges.

## **GOSPEL: John 3:1-17**

The holy gospel according to John.

**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.*

<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.**

## **SERMON ON THE STEPS**

### **SERMON**

## HYMN OF THE DAY

*Lift High the Cross* RED ELW #660  
(Vs. 1, 2 & 3)

### *Refrain*

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim  
till all the world adore his sacred name.

- 1 Come, Christians, follow where our captain trod,  
our king victorious, Christ, the Son of God. *Refrain*
- 2 All newborn servants of the Crucified  
bear on their brows the seal of him who died. *Refrain*
- 3 O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree,  
as thou hast promised, draw us all to thee. *Refrain*

Text: George W. Kitchin, 1827-1912; rev. Michael R. Newbolt, 1874-1956

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CCLI #5169

## 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**

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

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

## **THE PEACE**

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### **MEAL**

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

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## **OFFERING**

### **OFFERING HYMN**

*Create in Me a Clean Heart* RED ELW #188

**Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and renew a right spirit within me.  
Cast me not away from your presence,  
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.  
Restore unto me the joy of your salvation,  
and uphold me with your free Spirit.**

### **OFFERTORY 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.**

**THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION  
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**

**HOLY HOLY HOLY**

**RED ELW page 207**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
heav'n 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.**

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

Great is the mystery of faith.

**Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.

## **COMMUNION**

*(Zion practices an open table. God welcomes everyone to come forward. Young children may receive bread and a blessing. If you prefer not to receive, fold your hands and receive a blessing. Grape juice and gluten free wafers are available; please ask your servers. Come to the Lord's table and share in the feast!)*

## **LAMB OF GOD**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
grant us peace.**

**RED ELW page 146**

## COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

## COMMUNION BLESSING

### POST COMMUNION 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.

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## SENDING

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

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### 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

*When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* RED ELW #803  
(Vs. 1, 2 & 4)

- 1 When I survey the wondrous cross  
on which the prince of glory died,  
my richest gain I count but loss  
and pour contempt on all my pride.

- 2 Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast  
save in the death of Christ, my God;  
all the vain things that charm me most,  
I sacrifice them to his blood.**
- 4 Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
that were a present far too small;  
love so amazing, so divine,  
demands my soul, my life, my all.**

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748  
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## **DISMISSAL**

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

## **POSTLUDE**





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## Weekly Announcements



Please  
be  
Praying  
for...

Please keep these family, friends and members in your prayers: Dilshad & Sonya Perani, Gary Revier and Deb Otto

Welcome Guests!

Please sign the visitor book in the entrance to the sanctuary.

We are glad you are here!

**Hunger Jar** for the month of March is designated to Sibley County FoodShare.

**Chicken Dinner** will be held today. Sunday, March 1 from 11am to 2pm.

**Combined Bible Study**—Tuesday and Wednesday will combine this month, meeting on Tuesday, March 3 at 10:00am

**Out of the Office**—Stacy will be out of the office Monday, March 2—Friday, March 6.

**Lion's Fish Fry Dessert Table**—We are again providing desserts to be sold at the Lion's Fish Fry. The fish fry is on Friday, March 6. We are selling our desserts for the early part of the day. Desserts need to be at the community center by 10 am. There will be some representatives from our church there to cut, package, price, and sell our goodies. Cakes, pies, refrigerator

desserts, and crisps would be great. Last year, we earned over \$200 for the parking lot from this project. Again, the money will go to the parking lot. Please help us out with these projects.

**Easter Garden flower** forms are due into the secretary's office by Sunday, March 8.

### **AV Team Members needed**

Join our AV Team!

It's much easier than you think! Can be 1 or 2 Sundays per month. If we can do it, you can do it! Talk to any of us.

Joe, Tim, Elton, Jan & Matt

<b>Date</b>	<b>Weekly Operating Offerings</b>	<b>Weekly Operating Goal</b>	<b>Debt Retirement</b>	<b>ELCA Missions</b>	<b>Hunger Jar</b>	<b>Parking Lot</b>
2/22/2026	\$ 3,919.42	\$ 4,038.31	\$ 450.00	\$ 45.00	\$ 28.00	\$ 1,232.00

**Pastor Gretchen Pierskalla**

952-237-1060

[pastor@zionarlington.org](mailto:pastor@zionarlington.org)

Hours for the week of March 1

Tuesday, March 3—1p-3p

Wednesday, March 4—3p-5p

by appointment

Stacy's Office Hours

Monday—Thursday, 2:30p-5:00p

## Worship Assistants

### **March 1**

Usher: Carrie Bartlette, Alex Battcher  
Francis Rowe, Jan Wark  
Greeter: Sandy Bergs  
Acolyte: Murdock Krueger  
Reader: Janet Rowe  
AV Team: Tim Michaelis & Joe Prasad  
Altar Guild: Wayne & Ann Werner  
Bread Maker: Jane Scharpe

### **March 4—Lenten Worship**

Usher: Wayne & Ann Werner  
Greeter: Scott Bergs  
Acolyte: Emilia Wark  
Reader: Cindy Quast

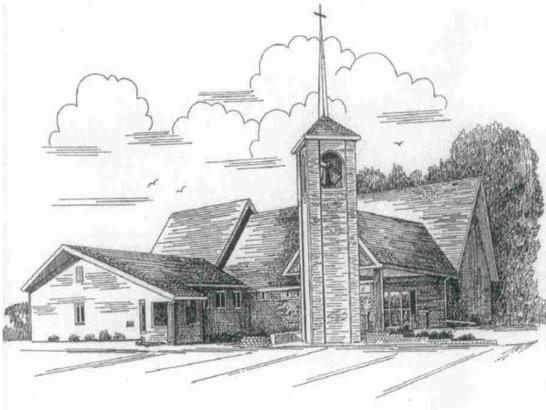
### **March 8**

Usher: John & Lana Woehler  
Dale & Laurie Stern  
Greeter: Michael Christeson  
Acolyte: Jacqueline Christeson  
Reader: Brenda Danielson  
AV Team: Matt & Jan Giesen  
Altar Guild: Jane Scharpe, Starla Schilling  
Bread Maker: Jane Scharpe

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Web: [zionarlington.org](http://zionarlington.org) // YouTube: Zion ELCA Arlington MN



## Zion Lutheran Church ELCA

### This Week at Zion:

Sunday, March 1	<b>9:00a</b> 10:00a 11a-2p	<b>Worship w/Holy Communion</b> Sunday School Zion's Chicken Dinner
Tuesday, March 3	10:00a	Tuesday & Wednesday Bible Study
Wednesday, March 4	5:30p 6:30p	Lenten Supper Lenten Worship
Thursday, March 5	10:00a	Adult Bible Study
Sunday, March 8	<b>9:00a</b> 10:00a	<b>Worship w/Holy Communion</b> Sunday School

LSS Meals on Wheels Monday—Friday 9:00a—12:00p

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