

Hymn "Blessed Assurance" ELW#638

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Believe the good news.

**Thanks be to God.**

**IN OUR PRAYERS**

Gloria Meltesen, Linda, Jeremy Munson, Gordy O'Rourke, Kristy Gwin Solovey, Marilyn O'Rourke, Larry Arndt, Nick Evans, Collin Niedfeldt, Mark Drews, Carol Lydon Fronk, Nikki Fronk Lewis, Ben Bender, Jeff Bruce, Brian, Alice Leis, Darlene Diekrager, Jack Arndt, Daniel Paulson, Diane Hornburger, Mike Escutia, Marie Jacobson, Rick Brandau, Paul North, Nora Martin.

**THOSE SERVING TODAY**

Ministers: All God's People; Synod Authorized Minister: Karen Sparling; Organist: Nalani Bever; Reader: Justin Arndt; Communion Server: Barb Ornes

**CALENDAR**

Sun., March 8	Sunday School	9:00 am
	Worship	10:15 am
Wed., March 11	Lenten Service	6:30 pm
Sun., March 15	Sunday School	9:00 am
	Worship	10:15 am
	Sunday School	
	Birthday & Anniversary Recognition	
	Welcome New Members	
	Cake & Coffee Following Service	



St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Wilton, WI  
Second Sunday in Lent  
March 1, 2026  
10:15 AM

**Inviting People to Journey with Christ's Family In Spreading God's Love and Mercy**

*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.*

*\*(Indicates the people should stand as they are able.)*

*\*Welcome and Announcements*

**PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

Let us greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

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

Hymn "Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil" ELW #512

**\*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.

Gracious God,  
**(have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.)**

For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you:  
Gracious God,

For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word:  
Gracious God,

For failing to recognize your coming reign,  
and for hindering the work of the Spirit: Gracious God,

For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition,  
and for disdain the living water Christ offers: Gracious God,

For disregarding voices from the margin,  
and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world:  
Gracious God,

For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent,  
and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life:  
Gracious God,

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.

***Everyone who believes in Jesus is welcome at Christ's table.***

#### **\*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**

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

#### **BLESSING**

As you leave this place,  
When you meet anger, speak with love.  
When you meet fear, speak with hope.  
When you meet pain, speak of gentleness.  
But no matter what, speak this good news.  
For the good news of the gospel is  
love and justice for all.  
It is joy that surprises,  
And nonviolence that transforms.  
The good news of the gospel is alive in the world,  
so go forth speaking.  
For if you won't, then who will?  
Thanks be to God  
for this good, good news.  
**Amen.**

## Lord Jesus, Think on Me



1 Lord Je - sus, think on me, and purge a - way my sin;  
2 Lord Je - sus, think on me, by anx - ious thoughts op - pressed;  
3 Lord Je - sus, think on me, nor let me go a - stray;  
4 Lord Je - sus, think on me, that, when the flood is past,



from self - ish pas - sions set me free and make me pure with - in.  
let me your lov - ing ser - vant be and taste your prom - ised rest.  
through dark - ness and per - plex - i - ty point out your cho - sen way.  
1 may the\_e - ter - nal bright - ness see and share your joy at last.

### Words of Institution

#### LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one, 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.

## Hymn "What Wondrous Love Is This" ELW#666

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.*

#### FIRST READING

*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 12:1-4a

<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 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.**

### 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.**

### MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

### The Sacrament of Holy Communion

We believe in a table-setting God  
**who always has a seat saved for you.**  
We believe in an inviting God  
**who leaves the porch light on and a hand extended.**  
We believe in a radically welcoming God  
**Who eats with the overlooked and the outcast,  
the hungry and the downtrodden.**  
We believe in the good news of the gospel, which reminds us  
**that all are welcomed, all are celebrated,  
all are loved, and all are claimed.**  
Pull up a seat at God's table.  
**There is good news to be shared here.  
Amen.**

Hymn

“Lift High the Cross”

ELW#660

**\*APOSTLE’S 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.

**\*Litany & Prayers (Holden Evening Prayer) Insert**

**OFFERING**

Offertory Hymn “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross”  
Were the whole realm of na-ture mine,  
That were a pres-ent far too small;  
Love so a-maz-ing, so di-vine,  
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

**SECOND READING**

*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 4:1-5, 13-17**

<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**



**\*GOSPEL READING**

*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 John 3:1-17**

**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.**

Sermon

Karen Sparling  
Synod Authorized Minister