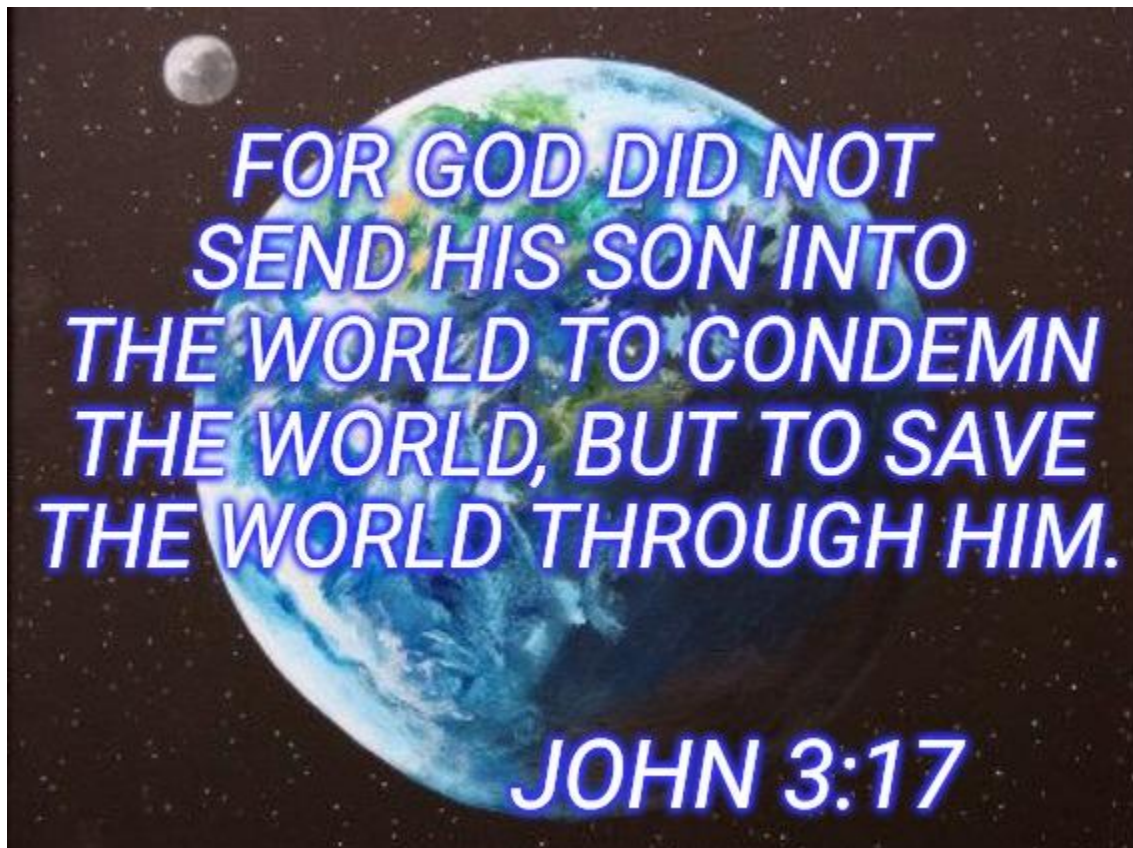


SOLOMON'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
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"Solomon's Evangelical Lutheran Church, following the example of Jesus Christ, seeks to live in the confidence and fullness of God's grace; to preach the Good News boldly and truthfully; to support and serve others in faith; to work in harmony with all creation."

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT
MARCH 5, 2023

March 5, 2023
Second Sunday in Lent

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.

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,
who journeys with us these forty days,
and sustains us with the gift of grace.

Amen.

Let us acknowledge before God and one another
our need for repentance and God's mercy.

Holy God,

we confess to you our faults and failings.

Too often we neglect and do not trust your holy word;

we take for ourselves instead of giving to others;

we spoil rather than steward your creation;

we cause hurt though you call us to heal;

we choose fear over compassion.

Forgive us, renew us, and lead us,

as we seek to follow in your way of life.

Amen.

Hear the good news:

God so loved the world that God gave the only Son,
so that all may receive life.

This promise is for you!

God embraces you with divine mercy,

✠ forgives you in Christ's name,

and revives you in the Spirit's power.

Amen.

GATHERING SONG *O Living Breath of God: Soplo de Dios viviente* (ELW 407)



- 1 O liv-ing Breath of God, wind at the be-gin - ning up-on the wa - ters;
- 2 O liv-ing Breath of God, by whose pow'r the Son came to birth a - mong us;
- 3 O liv-ing Breath of God, bear-ing us to life through bap-tis-mal wa - ters;



- O liv-ing Breath of God, bear-ing the cre - a - tion to won-drous birth:
- O liv-ing Breath of God, who to the cre - a - tion gives life a - new:
- O liv-ing Breath of God, sigh-ing with cre - a - tion for free-dom's birth:

Refrain



Come now, and fill our spir - its; pour out your gifts a - bun - dant.



O liv-ing Breath of God, Ho-ly Spir - it, breathe in us as we pray.

Text: Osvaldo Catena, 1920-1986; tr. Gerhard M. Cartford, b. 1923
Music: VÄRVINDAR FRISKA, Swedish folk tune
Tr. © 1998 Augsburg Fortress

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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.

KYRIE (ELW p. 98)

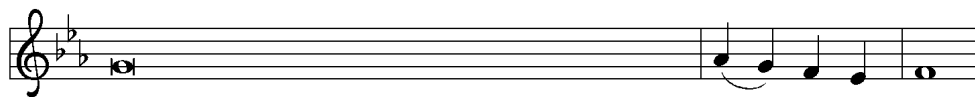
(Sung responsively between cantor and congregation)



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



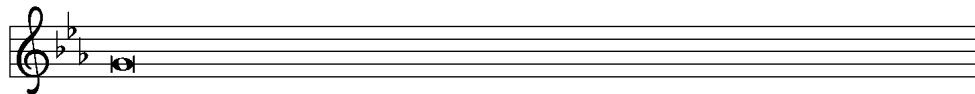
Lord, have mer - cy.



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



Lord, have mer - cy.



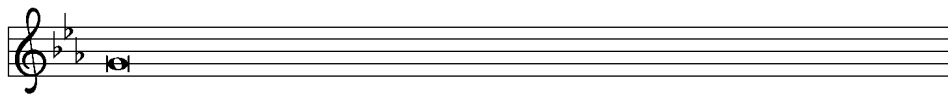
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



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, a - men.

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.

CHOIR ANTHEM *THE LOVE BEHIND THE CROSS*

FIRST READING: Genesis 12:1-4a

A reading from Genesis.

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.

¹The LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. ²I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³I 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.”

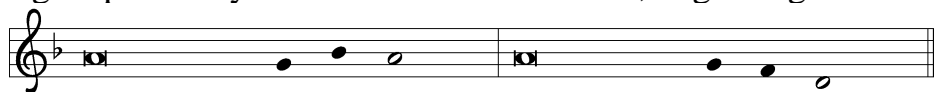
^{4a}So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 121

(Sung responsively between women and men, beginning with the women.)



Psalm tone reproduced from *Psalter for Worship Year C* © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.
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¹I lift up my eyes [|] to the hills;

from where is my [|] help to come?

²**My help comes [|] from the LORD,**
the maker of heav- [|] en and earth.

³The LORD will not let your [|] foot be moved
nor will the one who watches over you [|] fall asleep.

⁴**Behold, the keep- [|] er of Israel**
will neither slum- [|] ber nor sleep;

⁵the LORD watches ¹over you;
the LORD is your shade at ¹your right hand;
⁶**the sun will not strike ¹you by day,
nor the ¹moon by night.**
⁷The LORD will preserve you ¹from all evil
and will ¹keep your life.
⁸**The LORD will watch over your going out and your ¹coming in,
from this time forth for- ¹evermore.**

SECOND READING: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

A reading from Romans.

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.

¹What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh?
²For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." ⁴Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. ⁵But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

¹³For 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. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as 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 (W&P 27) *Cares Chorus*

C G/B Am CM⁷/G

I cast all my cares up-on you; I

Detailed description: This system contains the first two staves of music. The top staff is in treble clef with a 3/4 time signature. It features a melody line with eighth and quarter notes, and a bass line with chords. Chord symbols C, G/B, Am, and CM⁷/G are placed above the staff. The lyrics 'I cast all my cares up-on you; I' are written below the notes.

F C/E Dm Gsus G

lay all of my bur - dens down at your feet. And

Detailed description: This system contains the second two staves of music. The top staff continues the melody with a triplet of eighth notes and a quarter note. Chord symbols F, C/E, Dm, Gsus, and G are placed above the staff. The lyrics 'lay all of my bur - dens down at your feet. And' are written below the notes.

C G/B C/B^b F/A Fm/A^b

an - y - time that I don't know what to do, I will

Detailed description: This system contains the third two staves of music. The top staff continues the melody with quarter and eighth notes. Chord symbols C, G/B, C/B^b, F/A, and Fm/A^b are placed above the staff. The lyrics 'an - y - time that I don't know what to do, I will' are written below the notes.

C²/G C/G G⁷ sus G⁷ F/C C

cast all my cares up-on you.

Detailed description: This system contains the final two staves of music. The top staff concludes the melody with quarter and eighth notes. Chord symbols C²/G, C/G, G⁷ sus, G⁷, F/C, and C are placed above the staff. The lyrics 'cast all my cares up-on you.' are written below the notes.

Text: Rusty Edwards, stanzas; Frederick Whitfield, refrain
 Music: North American traditional, arr. Rusty Edwards
 Text 1997 Selah Publishing Co.; arr. 1999 Augsburg Fortress

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.

¹Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. ²He 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 apart from the presence of God.” ³Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” ⁴Nicodemus 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?” ⁵Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ ⁸The 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.” ⁹Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” ¹⁰Jesus answered him, “Are you a 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. ¹²If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that 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.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

PASTOR BARB

HYMN OF THE DAY *God Loved the World (ROCKINGHAM OLD) (ELW 323)*



1 God loved the world so that he gave his on - ly
2 Christ Je - sus is the ground of faith, who was made
3 If you are ill, if death draws near, this truth your
4 Be of good cheer, for God's own Son for - gives all
5 All glo - ry to the Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly



Son the lost to save, that all who would in
flesh and suf - fered death; all who con - fide in
trou - bled heart can cheer: Christ Je - sus res - cues
sins that you have done, and jus - ti - fied by
Spir - it, Three in One! To you, O bless - ed



him be - lieve should ev - er - last - ing life re - ceive.
Christ a - lone are built on this chief cor - ner - stone.
us from death; that is the firm - est ground of faith.
Je - sus' blood, your bap - tism grants the high - est good.
Trin - i - ty, be praise now and e - ter - nal - ly!

Text: *Gesangbuch*, Bollhagen, 1791; tr. August Crull, 1846–1923, alt.
Music: ROCKINGHAM OLD, Edward Miller, 1731–1807, adapt.

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 THE CHURCH *(Please respond.)*

P: Merciful God, C: receive our prayer.

PEACE

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

OFFERTORY *Come to the Table (W&P 33)*



Come to the ta - ble of mer - cy, pre - pared with the wine and the bread.



All who are hun - gry and thirst - y, come, and your souls will be fed.



Come at the Lord's in - vi - ta - tion; re - ceive from his nail - scarred hand.



Eat of the bread of sal - va - tion; drink of the blood of the Lamb.

Text: Claire Cloninger, b. 1942

Music: COME TO THE TABLE, Martin J. Nystrom, b. 1956

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OFFERING PRAYER

God of good gifts,
receive these and all our offerings
as we present them in faithful service
for the sake of your gospel.
Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal
as you pour out your very presence
through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life.
Amen.

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 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 p. 108)



THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

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.

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.**

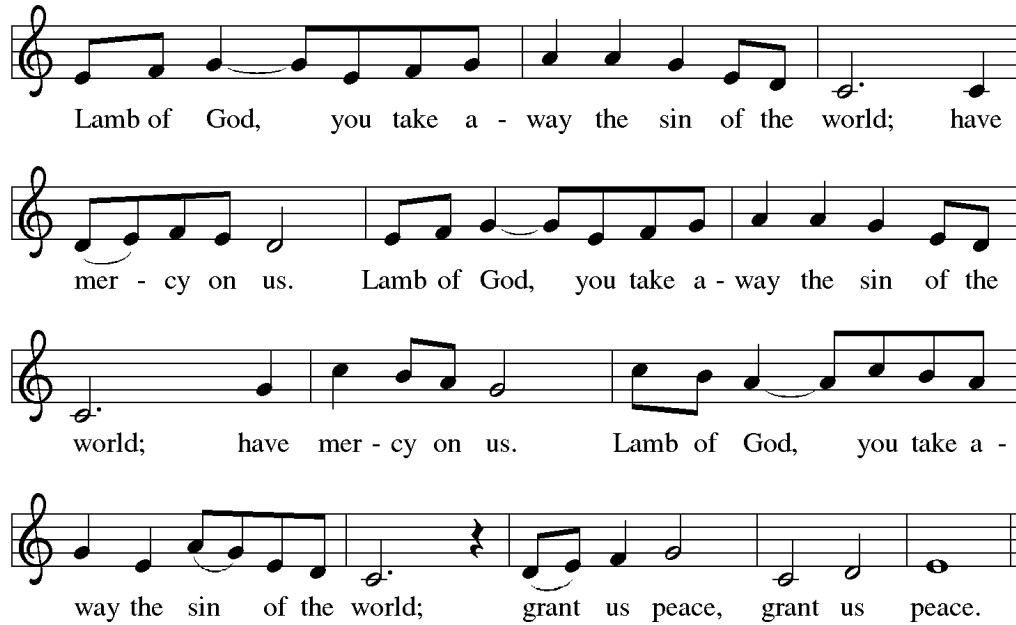
INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come and receive Jesus, our strength in the wilderness.

COMMUNION

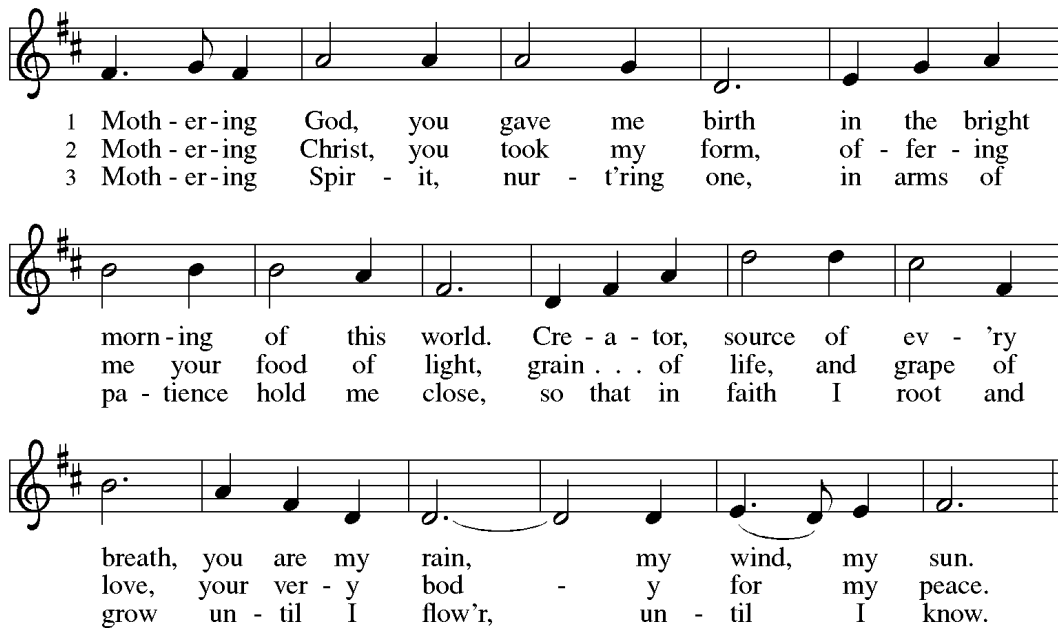
Continuous - Please continue down center aisle at the direction of the usher. After you receive the bread, you may take a cup of red wine or white grape juice from the tray. Please place your empty communion cup in the basket. Gluten free wafers are available, ask the Pastor when you come forward. Notify the Head Usher if you would appreciate receiving Communion at your seat rather than walking up to the altar, the Pastor and Communion Assistant will be happy to bring Communion to you.

COMMUNION SONG (ELW p. 112)



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, grant us peace.

HYMN DURING COMMUNION *Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth* (ELW 735)



1 Moth - er - ing God, you gave me birth in the bright
2 Moth - er - ing Christ, you took my form, of - fer - ing
3 Moth - er - ing Spir - it, nur - t'ring one, in arms of
morn - ing of this world. Cre - a - tor, source of ev - 'ry
me your food of light, grain . . . of life, and grape of
pa - tience hold me close, so that in faith I root and
breath, you are my rain, my wind, my sun.
love, your ver - y bod - y for my peace.
grow un - til I flow'r, un - til I know.

Text: Jean Janzen, b. 1933; based on Julian of Norwich, c. 1342–c. 1413
Music: NORWICH, Carolyn Jennings, b. 1936
Text © 1991 Jean Janzen, admin. Augsburg Fortress.
Music © 1995 Augsburg Fortress.

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HOMEBOUND TEAM BLESSING

COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. Amen.

SONG AFTER COMMUNION (ELW p. 113)



Now, Lord, you let your ser-vant go in peace: your word has been ful -



filled. My own eyes have seen the sal - va - tion which you have pre-pared in the



sight of ev - 'ry peo - ple: a light to re-veal you to the na - tions



and the glo - ry of your peo - ple Is - ra - el.



Now, Lord, you let your ser - vant go in peace.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Embodied God,
at your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus.
With the eyes of our hearts open to your promise,
empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors
and touch the world with your love.

Amen.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✝ give you peace.

Amen.

SENDING SONG *Lift High the Cross* (ELW 660)



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!

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

Music: CRUCIFER, Sydney H. Nicholson, 1875–1947

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SENDING IN SERVICE

Go in peace. Serve in love.

EXTINGUISHING THE CANDLE/SILENT PRAYER

POSTLUDE

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SERVING TODAY

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Organist	Doug Mummert
Head Usher	Ron Coldsmith
Acolyte	Sarah Aldrich
Lector.....	Peggi Norman
Securing Offering	Janice McEntire & Becky Pecha
Communion Set-Up.....	Peggi & Wayne Norman
Communion Clean-Up	Linda Berberich & Judy Johnson
Communion Bread	Colleen Johnson
Communion Assist	Lilly Chiado & Ron Coldsmith
Cantor	Wayne Dale
Coffee Hour.....	Zoe Mummert
Attendance last Sunday.....	52

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome Visitors! We welcome you to our worship service. We hope your visit with us will be a time of blessing. If you have any concerns, please talk to the Head Usher. We invite you to worship with us again!

Prayer requests for the following: *Cody Banks, Virginia Detwiler, Terry Fell, Callie Mummert, Bernie Harris, Matthew, Lexi and Brooke Bowen, Doc Ensinger, Jim & Carole Darr, Beth Floyd, Sarge and Barb Weaver, Tina Smith, Patricia Yetter, Nancy Marshall, Darrell Veilleux, Linda Wepking, Phyllis Brehm, Bill and Jane Brindle, Esther Gift, Jean Jackson, Marjorie McMullin, Joe Mock, Ina Shreiner, Genny Grant, Frances Kramer, Clayton Schwartz, Linda Russ, Carol Locke, Betty Amt, Ukrainian Nation, Peace for the World.* If anyone has a prayer request, please call Janice McEntire. **Please Be Aware: If you would like to remain listed on the next month's list, or if you would like to have your name removed from the list before the end of the month, please call the office.**

Office Hours for Pastor Barb are Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 9:00 a.m. until 12 noon or call for an appointment.

Weekly Calendar Reminders:

Mar 07 - W&M Regular Meeting 7PM
Mar 08 - Psalm Bible Study 10AM, Lent Svc 5:30PM
Mar 09 - Choir 7PM

Card Showers - Clayton Schwartz (93rd Birthday) on March 15, 2023, Jean Jackson (3/14) and Jay Kanagy (3/23). Their addresses are in the church directory.

Daylight Savings Time Sunday, March 12, 2023, 2:00:00 am clocks are turned forward one hour.

Relay for Life - Thank you for supporting our luncheon after Church on Sunday, February 26th. We received over \$700.00 in donations! This is a wonderful addition to our Teams total for the 2023 Event.

Relay For Life - Every Thursday in March from 3 - 9 pm the Liquid Art Brewing Company will donate 10% of total sales to the Franklin & Fulton County Relay. Address is 140 N. 3rd Street, Chambersburg. No flyer is needed! Additional details are located on the bulletin board in the Sunday School room. Thank you for your support!

Help is needed to prepare and serve food for March 16 and March 18. See sign up sheets in Sunday School room.

Bowling & Pizza Party – *Congregation Members are invited.* Saturday, March 25, 2023 – Nellie Fox Bowling 3:00- 5:00 & Vince's in Marion for Pizza. We have 4 lanes reserved. Cost: 55.00 per lane for 2 hrs. (6 per lane). Christian Ed will pay for all Youth bowling & pizza. Sign-up sheet in Sunday School Room.

Easter Flower Orders: We will be ordering Easter flowers from Lurgan Greenhouse. Yellow daffodils (6" pot) \$7.00; red, yellow, or purple tulips (6 bulbs) \$7.00; and white lilies \$8.00 will be available. Flowers can be picked up after Easter service on April 9 or the following week during office hours. Orders must be received by March 12. Extra order forms are on the table in the Sunday School Room.

Power Pack Meals - the Power Pack Ministry is now packing meals for 25 students at New Franklin School. The program covers three meals a day for the weekend, that's 150 meals that are being packed each week. The need is GREAT. Please consider doing what you can to help. Food can be placed in the gray tote in the Sunday school room. Monetary donations can be put in the offering, clearly mark your check "Power Pack". Your response in the past has been great. THANK YOU!!!

Choir Practice - Thursdays at 7:00PM.

Cancellation Notification: In the event of inclement weather, Solomon's will announce worship services are cancelled on the following platforms: Solomon's Facebook page, Solomon's Website, and on the church voicemail **BY 7:30 AM**. A prerecorded worship service and bulletin will be available on the website. Remember for events like Mid-Week Bible Study, if the schools are closed for weather, then the event is cancelled. Please always use your own judgement about whether you feel safe driving given the road conditions in your neighborhood. One part of the county may be cleared while another is not!

Sunday School is in Session - Adult Sunday School classes begin at 9:00 a.m. in the Sunday School room. Children's Church will be held during morning worship and will meet downstairs at 10:20 a.m. Confirmation Class will be held at 9:00 a.m. in the Conference Room in the Fellowship Center.

2023 Altar Flower Chart is posted in the cloakroom off the church entryway. The cost of the two vases will be \$50.00 per week. You will continue to provide Kimberly with the information for the bulletin prior to the week before the Sunday you choose. Include the cost of \$50.00 with the bulletin information. If you would like to save money by asking someone else to share the cost, you are welcome to do so. When you sign-up for a Sunday, you will be responsible to obtain the bulletin information for you and your friend and forward it to Kimberly.

Sign-up Sheets for worship assistants for 2023 are on the side table in the Sunday School room. Communion: bread, set-up, clean-up, and assistant will be on a monthly basis. If you can't commit to the entire month, please see if you can share the month with someone else. Acolytes and Lectors are on a weekly basis. If you find you can't fulfill a chosen date, please call someone to take your place. Let Kimberly in the office know so the bulletin and newsletter info stays up to date. Thank you for your commitment to help provide opportunities for meaningful worship at Solomons. Kimberly will publish the schedule for each month in the newsletter.

Bulletin Announcement Forms are in both pamphlet racks. Please submit all bulletin announcements to the office by the Wednesday prior to the Sunday for inclusion in the bulletin.

Council Minutes, Monthly Financial Statement and Committee Minutes are available in the library for anyone to read.

MARCH 5, 2023
SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

God loves us all through Jesus.



DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	John 3:1-17	For God so loved the world
Monday	Genesis 12:1-4a	Call of Abram
Tuesday	Romans 4:1-5, 13-17	God's promise gained through faith
Wednesday	Zephaniah 3:14-20	A song of joy
Thursday	Psalms 5	Trust in God
Friday	Romans 8:31-39	God's love in Christ Jesus
Saturday	Psalms 121	Assurance of God's protection
Sunday	John 4:5-42	Jesus and the woman at the well

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

*"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." **John 3:16 (NRSV)***

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Holy God, help us to trust in your goodness and mercy and not our own strength and have faith that you save the ungodly through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear Lord, you who watch our going out and coming in each and every day, we thank you for protecting us and feeding us with this gift of food. Amen. (Psalm 121:8)

A Blessing to Give:

May God bless you with peace and joy, now and always.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- Do you think you deserve everything you have? Explain.
- God cares for us through a whole community of care. How has God cared for and protected you through family, friends, or mentors?

HYMN OF THE WEEK

Blessed Assurance



DEVOTIONS

Read: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17.

Even though the Gentiles were not descendants through the Torah (the law), Paul is seeking to help Jews understand that Gentiles can also be descendants of Abraham. It is important to establish that God is reliable. The promise God made to Abraham—including Gentile nations—is reliable because the covenant with Abraham was established through faith, not the flesh. It is the very character of God to include all people, not just Jews. Whether Jew or Gentile, whether good or bad, God makes a solid, reliable, and saving relationship with us through faith. God saves the ungodly sinners. How can this be? It is because we have the God who creates out of nothing. God does not need to create children of God out of our goodness through the law. God takes our broken lives and makes something new because God *“gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist”* (v. 17). God does this so that all may know the love of God in Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Discuss: Where have you seen God’s love for others and does it surprise you that God saves the ungodly?

Pray: **Loving God, you who give life to the dead and bring into existence what does not exist, thank you for creating us as children of God through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how can you offer God’s protective care to others?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Lent is a period of forty days when we focus on prayer, fasting, and almsgiving as we prepare for Easter. Almsgiving is the tradition or practice of giving money or food to those in need. This week consider an amount you might spend on yourself, and instead add that amount to the Almsgiving Box placed in your home. The collected money is to be donated at the end of Lent.

Pray: **Loving God, we often forget about the needs of others. Help us to remember to give generously to those in need. We pray in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, amen.**