

March 14-15, 2026
Fourth Sunday in Lent
Holy Communion

The Prelude is a signal to *end our conversation* and prepare our hearts for worship.

PRELUDE

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND (u) PASSING OF PEACE

CALL TO WORSHIP "LEAD ME LORD"

Lead me, Lord, lead me in thy righteousness;
Make thy way plain before my face.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

- P** Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.
- C** Amen.
- P** Let us confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt and blots out all offenses. Gracious God,
- C** have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.
- P** For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you: Gracious God,
- C** have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.
- P** For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word: Gracious God,
- C** have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.
- P** For failing to recognize your coming reign, and for hindering the work of the Spirit: Gracious God,
- C** have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.
- P** For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition, and for disdaining the living water Christ offers: Gracious God,
- C** have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.
- P** For disregarding voices from the margin, and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world: Gracious God,
- C** have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

- P** For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent, and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life: Gracious God,
- C** have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.
- P** 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.
- C** Amen.

GATHERING HYMN "HOW FIRM A FOUNDATION"

- 1** How_ firm a foundation, O saints of the Lord,
Is_ laid for your faith in Christ Jesus, the Word!
What more can he say than to you he has said
Who_ unto the Savior for refuge have fled?
- 2** "Fear_ not, I am with you, oh, be not dismayed,
For_ I am your God and will still give you aid;
I'll strengthen you, help you, and cause you to stand,
Up - held by my righteous, omnipotent hand."
- 4** "Through - out all their lifetime my people shall prove
My_ sov'reign, eternal, unchangeable love;
and then, when gray hairs shall their temples adorn,
like_ lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne."

GREETING

- P** From our God who loves us with an everlasting love, who brings forth a new creation in Christ, who leads us by the Spirit in the wilderness: Grace and abundant mercy be with you all.
- C** And also with you.

KYRIE

**Lord have mercy. Christ have mercy
Lord have mercy; have mer – cy. O Lord.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P **Let us pray together.**

G **Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

(d)

ANTHEM

LESSON OF THE DAY

1 Samuel 16:1-13

The lesson begins:

The Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king." But Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears about it, he will kill me." The Lord said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.' Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what to do. You are to anoint for me the one I indicate." Samuel did what the Lord said. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met him. They asked, "Do you come in peace?" Samuel replied, "Yes, in peace; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me." Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, "Surely the Lord's anointed stands here before the Lord." But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." Then Jesse called Abinadab and had him pass in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, "The Lord has not chosen this one either." Jesse then had Shammah pass by,

but Samuel said, "Nor has the Lord chosen this one." Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, "The Lord has not chosen these." So he asked Jesse, "Are these all the sons you have?" "There is still the youngest," Jesse answered. "He is tending the sheep." Samuel said, "Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives." So he sent for him and had him brought in. He was glowing with health and had a fine appearance and handsome features. Then the Lord said, "Rise and anoint him; this is the one." So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon David. Samuel then went to Ramah.

P **The Word of the Lord.**

C **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 23 – RESPONSIVE

P **The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.**

C **He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters,**

P **he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake.**

C **Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

P **You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.**

C **Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.**

(u)

ACCLAMATION

Return to the Lord, your_ God, for he is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.

GOSPEL

John 9:1-41

P **The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the ninth chapter.**

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" "Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world." After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. "Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means "Sent"). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing. His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, "Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?" Some claimed that he was. Others said, "No, he only looks like him." But he himself insisted, "I am the man." "How then were your eyes opened?" they asked. He replied, "The man they call Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see." "Where is this man?" they asked him. "I don't know," he said. They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. Now the day on which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath. Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. "He put mud on my eyes," the man replied, "and I washed, and now I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others asked, "How can a sinner perform such signs?" So they were divided. Then they turned again to the blind man, "What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened." The man replied, "He is a prophet." They still did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they sent for the man's parents. "Is this your son?" they asked. "Is this the one you say was born blind? How is it that now he can see?" "We know he is our son," the parents answered, "and we know he was born blind. But how he can see now, or who opened his eyes, we don't know. Ask him. He is of age; he will speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders, who already had decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Messiah would be put out of the

synagogue. That was why his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. "Give glory to God by telling the truth," they said. "We know this man is a sinner." He replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!" Then they asked him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered, "I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples too?" Then they hurled insults at him and said, "You are this fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses! We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don't even know where he comes from." The man answered, "Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly person who does his will. Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." To this they replied, "You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!" And they threw him out. Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" "Who is he, sir?" the man asked. "Tell me so that I may believe in him." Jesus said, "You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you." Then the man said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped him. Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind." Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, "What? Are we blind too?" Jesus said, "If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.

📖 The Gospel of the Lord.

📢 Praise to you, O Christ.

(d)

SERMON

(u)

SERMON RESPONSE "O GOD, WHO GIVES US LIFE"

**O_ God, who gives us_ life and breath,
Who shapes us in_ the womb,
Who_ guards our lives from birth to death,
Then_ leads_ us from the tomb:
Deliver us from fears that kill the life we have from you,
Help us to know your_ Spirit still
Is_ mak – ing all things new.**

APOSTLES' CREED

- P Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.**
- C I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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.**

(d)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

- A Let us lift our hearts and voices to the Lord in prayer, that he would be merciful to his people.**

A brief silence.

- A Father, thank you for the light of sun, moon, stars, streetlights, candles, and lamps. Thank you for these "created lights" that bear witness to the true and uncreated Light, your Son, Jesus Christ. Lead us, even when eyes fail and earthly lights grow dim, to his kindly light, which no darkness can overcome. Lord, in your mercy,**
- C Hear our prayer**

A Heal the blindness of your Church. Give it eyes to see its own sin, and to repent. Give it eyes to see the world's sins, and to offer your forgiveness to any who will receive it. Give it eyes to see the plight of all who are afflicted by sin, death, and the devil, and to proclaim your redemption, given through the Passion of your dear Son. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer

A Let your healing, blessing, and grace rest upon the blind and deaf; and upon those with impaired senses of touch, taste, balance, or movement. Give them strength and courage. Sharpen the perception of their other senses. Surround them with people whose respect and encouragement leads them to greater faith in you, their light and their life. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer

A As your dear Son healed the man born blind, we pray that he would also bring healing, light, hope, and faith to everyone who suffers from any affliction, including: {List}. Lift them up from pain, sorrow, fear, or grief. And give them the joy of your saving help, now and always. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer

A Thank you, dear Father, for receiving into your greater light and into your eternal life, our beloved dead. Deal mercifully with those shadowed by grief. We pray: Lord, let us receive our sight, so that day by day, we see you more clearly; love you more dearly; and follow you more nearly. Lead us, with all who have redeemed by the merits of your Son, to heaven, there to gaze on his fair beauty forever. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer

P Into your hands, gracious Father, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

OFFERING

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OFFERTORY "LET THE VINEYARDS BE FRUITFUL"

Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord,
And_ fill to the brim our cup of blessing.
Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown,
That we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gather the hopes and the dreams_ of all;
Unite them with the prayers we offer.
Grace our table with your presence,
And give us a foretaste of the feast to come.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING / WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give him thanks and praise.

P It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. In love you made us for yourself; and when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, your love remained steadfast. You bid your faithful people cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the Easter feast, that, renewed by your Word and Sacraments and fervent in prayer and works of justice and mercy, we may come to the fullness of grace that you have prepared for those who love you. And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS (SUNG)

**Holy, ho - ly, 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.**

P Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ, whom you sent in the fullness of time to redeem the world. He emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in our likeness. He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. He took upon himself our sin and death and offered himself, a perfect sacrifice for the sin of the whole world. By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

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.

P Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

C Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

P Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood. By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all

the world, until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet. Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.

☞ Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

☞ As a community, let us pray in the way our Lord Jesus has taught us: *(SPOKEN)*

☞ 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.

(d)

THE COMMUNION is given and received.

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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.

THE BENEDICTION

SENDING HYMN "BE THOU MY VISION"

- 1 Be thou my_ vision, O Lord of my heart;
naught be all else to me, save that thou art:
thou my_ best_ thought_ by day and by night,
waking or sleep - ing, thy_ presence my light.**
- 4 Light of my_ soul, after victory won,
may I reach heaven's joys, O heaven's Sun!
Heart of_ my_ own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vis - ion, O_ Ruler of all.**

DISMISSAL

- A Let us go forth in the name of the Lord,**
**G To know Christ, and to make Christ known.
Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

There Is a Balm in Gilead

Refrain

There is a balm in Gil-e-ad to make the wound-ed whole;

there is a balm in Gil-e-ad to heal the sin-sick soul.

1 Some - times I feel dis - cour-aged and think my work's in vain,
2 If you can - not preach like Pe - ter, if you can - not pray like Paul,
3 Don't ev - er be dis - cour-aged, for Je - sus is your friend;

Refrain

but then the Ho - ly Spir - it re - vives my soul a - gain.
you can tell the love of Je - sus and say, "He died for all."
and if you lack for knowl-edge, he'll ne'er re - fuse to lend.