

**TRINITY
LUTHERAN
CHURCH**

5:00 PM

FEBRUARY 28,
2026

Jeffery Gramza

Senior Pastor

Tim Jordan

Intern Pastor

**Jonathan
Lonsway**

Dir. of Music

Trinity Lutheran Church - Second Sunday in Lent

3701 Jefferson Ave Midland, MI 48640

February 28, 2026, 5:00 pm

PRELUDE

Charly Sly, piano

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Come, you who seek new birth.

We come, longing to be born from above.

Come out of the shadows of fear and doubt.

We step into the light of God's amazing love.

The wind of the Spirit is blowing—unseen, untamed, unstoppable.

Breathe on us, O Spirit, and make us new.

For God so loved the world...

...that grace has come near, mercy has taken flesh, and hope has a name.

Come, let us worship the God who does not condemn but saves.

We worship with open hearts, ready to be made new.

Blessed Assurance



1 Bless-ed as-sur-ance, Je-sus is mine! Oh, what a fore-taste of glo-ry di-vine!
2 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, per-fect de-light, vi-sions of rap-ture now burst on my sight;
3 Per-fect sub-mis-sion, all is at rest; I in my Sav-ior am hap-py and blest,



Heir of sal-va-tion, pur-chase of God, born of his Spir-it, washed in his blood.
an-gels de-scend-ing bring from a-bove ech-oes of mer-cy, whis-pers of love.
watch-ing and wait-ing, look-ing a-bove, filled with his good-ness, lost in his love.

Refrain



This is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long:



this is my sto-ry, this is my song, prais-ing my Sav-ior all the day long.

Text: Fanny J. Crosby, 1820–1915
Music: ASSURANCE, Phoebe P. Knapp, 1830–1908

BENEDICTION

Go now, born from above, and live as children of the living God.
May the Father who so loved the world steady your steps and enlarge your heart,
that you may see others not as problems to solve but as beloved ones to embrace.

May the Son who was lifted up draw you into costly grace, freeing you from con-
demnation and sending you to love boldly, forgive fiercely, and serve without fear.

May the Holy Spirit, wild as the wind and gentle as breath, unsettle your comfort,
ignite your courage, and carry you into places where light is needed most.

Go in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the ✝ Holy Spirit, not con-
demned, but commissioned; not afraid, but alive.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

ELW #638

Blessed Assurance
See next page

DISMISSAL

Go into the wilderness
Strengthened by the Spirit,
Standing firm in faith
And walking the way of the cross.
Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

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GATHERING HYMN

ELW #335

Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross



1 Je - sus, keep me near the cross, there's a pre - cious foun - tain;
2 Near the cross, a trem - bling soul, love and mer - cy found me;
3 Near the cross! O Lamb of God, bring its scenes be - fore me;
4 Near the cross I'll watch and wait, hop - ing, trust - ing ev - er,



free to all, a heal - ing stream flows from Cal - v'ry's moun - tain.
there the bright and morn - ing star sheds its beams a - round me.
help me walk from day to day with its shad - ow o'er me.
till I reach the gold - en strand just be - yond the riv - er.



Refrain
In the cross, in the cross be my glo - ry ev - er;



till my ran - somed soul shall find rest be - yond the riv - er.

Text: Fanny J. Crosby, 1820–1915
Music: NEAR THE CROSS, William H. Doane, 1832–1915

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Holy and merciful God, you meet us in our questions and restless longing. When we come uncertain and searching, you do not turn us away. Breathe upon us with your Spirit. Blow through the closed rooms of our doubt and awaken in us new birth—not of striving, but of grace; not of fear, but of love. Lift our eyes to the



One lifted up for us, that we may trust the wideness of your mercy. You did not send your Son to condemn the world, but to save it—to save us. Root us in that love, that we may shine with hope in a shadowed world, reborn by your Spirit and sent in your peace; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

FIRST READING: Genesis 12:1-4a

Page 7

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.

The reading is concluded:
Word of God, word of life.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM 121

- ¹ I lift up my eyes to the hills;
from where is my help to come?
- ² **My help comes from the LORD,
the maker of heaven and earth.**
- ³ The LORD will not let your foot be moved
nor will the one who watches over you fall asleep.
- ⁴ **Behold, the keeper of Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep;**
- ⁵ the LORD watches over you;
the LORD is your shade at your right hand;
- ⁶ **the sun will not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.**
- ⁷ The LORD will preserve you from all evil
and will keep your life.
- ⁸ **The LORD will watch over your going out and your coming in,
from this time forth forevermore.**

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.

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Communion will be distributed by coming forward and receiving the bread and wine. The center cups (white) are non-alcoholic grape juice. Upon receiving, please put empty cups in baskets provided. If you prefer gluten free, please ask Pastor who is distributing. Please proceed up the center aisle returning to your seat via the side aisles.

COMMUNION HYMNS

- | | |
|---|----------|
| <i>We Are Baptized in Christ Jesus</i> | ELW #451 |
| <i>When I Survey the Wondrous Cross</i> | ELW #803 |



OFFERING PRAYER

Gracious and faithful God, in this season of turning and returning, we give you thanks. You have given us breath for this day, mercy for our failures, and love that does not let us go. As we bring these gifts before you, we remember the greater gift you have given in Christ—self-giving, sacrificial, and full of grace. Receive what we offer, small though it may be, and use it for your healing work in the world. Shape our hearts to reflect your generosity, that our lives may become offerings of gratitude and hope; 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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION & 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.**

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

Page 118

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.

The reading is concluded:

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ANNOUNCEMENT

The Holy Gospel according to John, the 3rd chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: John 3:1-17

Page 71

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.

After the reading:

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.



SERMON

Jeff Gramza

HYMN OF THE DAY

God Loved the World



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 sick, if death is near, this truth your
4 Be of good cheer, for God's own Son for - gives all



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 saves your
sins which you have done, and jus - ti - fied by



him be - lieve should ev - er - last - ing life re - ceive.
Christ a - lone are built on this chief cor - ner - stone.
soul from death; that is the firm - est ground of faith.
Je - sus' blood, your bap - tism grants the high - est good.

Text: *Gesangbuch*, Bollhagen, 1791; tr. August Crull, 1846–1923, alt.
Music: DUKE STREET, attr. John Hatton, d. 1793

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the quiet of the night, Nicodemus came searching for truth.
We, too, come with questions, doubts, and places in our lives that long for new
birth. Trusting not in our own understanding but in God's mercy, let us confess
our sin before the one who came not to condemn the world, but to save it.

Silence for Reflection

Gracious God, we confess that we have loved the shadows more than
the light.

We cling to what is familiar instead of being born anew.

We hold tightly to control instead of surrendering to your Spirit.

We judge when we could show mercy.

Forgive us for resisting your transforming love.

Forgive us for doubting that your mercy is truly for us.

Breathe your Spirit into our weary hearts

and raise us into new life.

Hear the good news: God so loved the world, so loved you, that he gave his Son,
not to condemn but to save. In Jesus Christ, your sin is forgiven. In Jesus Christ,
you are born from above. In Jesus Christ, you are set free from sin to walk in the
light. **Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

SHARING CHRIST'S PEACE

Offer a sign of peace with those around you

GATHERING OF GIFTS FOR MISSION AND MINISTRY

OFFERTORY

A Lenten Walk

Hal H. Hopson
True Spirit Singers

