



*The Congregations of
First English Lutheran Church
And Zion Lutheran Parish
Welcome You to Worship
Pastor Cheryl Rondeau-Bassett ~ 605-237-1501*

Journey to the Cross

Lent Week 2 ~ March 4, 2026 ~ 6:00 pm

(congregation reads what is written in bold)

Welcome and Announcements

As we continue our journey to the cross this week in Lent, we once again step away from the distractions of everyday life and intentionally reflection on what it means to have a right relationship with God.

We recognize it does not involve earning a reward from God but trusting God's promises to be true. As we walk alongside Jesus, our faith sustains us, even in times when we do not understand where God is leading us or cannot understand.

We gather around the Word which continues to create a new birth within us and reminds us that we are to always seek renewal in the Spirit. Tonight we search our devotion and righteousness through on God's Word.

Come receive the one who brings new life as we stand for the call to worship

Call to Worship

We praise you for the shocking miraculous truth God,

C: That we can always be born again in your extravagant gift.

We praise you for your invitation to be born of water and Spirit.,

**C: That daily you welcome us into a surprising new life,
the wonderful, creative, unpredictable world of your Spirit;**

To allow ourselves to be birthed, by your grace,

into a new experiences embraced in your love.

C: And awakening our souls to worship together in faith.

Gathering Song “What Wonderous Love is This” LBW 385 (1 & 2)

Greeting

The love of God poured into our hearts, the saving grace of Jesus Christ, and the abundant life of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Power of the eternal Father, help us. Wisdom of the Son, enlighten the eye of our understanding. Tender mercy of the Holy Spirit, unite our hearts to yourself.

Eternal God, restore health to the sick and life to the dead. Give us a voice, your own voice, to cry out to you for mercy for the world. You, light, give us light. You, wisdom, give us wisdom. You, supreme strength, strengthen us.

C: Amen.

Scripture Reading

First 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.

¹ What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? ² For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³ For what does the scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.” ⁴ Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. ⁵ But to one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

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

¹⁶ 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, ¹⁷ 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.

C: Thanks be to God

Responsive Reading: 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.**

Gospel Reading: John 3: 1-17

Gospel announcement response:

C: Glory to you oh 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.

Gospel Reading: John 3: 1-17

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

C: Praise be to you, O Christ.

Holy Conversations – Lent 2

Instructions

Conversation by Nicodemus

Engage with questions:

Conversation by Mary Magdalene

Engage with questions:

Time of Meditation

We will now have our offering

Song of Response “Jesus, Refuge of the Weary” LBW 93 vs 1 & 3

Offering Prayer for Lent

God of the wilderness, We give these offerings in gratitude,

C: rejoicing in the abundance of your gifts to us.

We give these offerings in faith,

C: trusting that you will provide for our needs.

We give these offerings in hope,

C: knowing you can use them to spread your love in this world.

And with these offerings, we give ourselves;

C: May we live with generous hearts, with open hands. Amen

Prayers of Intercession

In hope for new birth for all creation, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need...

A brief silence.

As those born from above for new life in Christ, lift up our eyes to where the cross of Christ stands for our healing, so may we believe, and in believing not die but have eternal life through Christ, who in your love you sent to save the world.

Lord Jesus, we pray:

C: Hear us, and have mercy.

As disciples of Jesus may we always seek renewal in the invisible wind so that through the Spirit our minds are open to perceive your kingdom. May those preparing for baptism trust in the invisible love of God, who brings them the gift of life, that they may be reborn through faith.

Lord Jesus, we pray:

C: Hear us, and have mercy.

As the God of Abram and Nicodemus, the God of all of us who think we are too old or too poor or too small or too weak or too busy, we come to you in renewed awareness of all you have done for us. Remove our struggles with doubt and birth us all anew. Lord Jesus, we pray:

C: Hear us, and have mercy.

As the compassionate God, instill in the hearts of the world's people to join in a common search for justice and righteousness. We pray for all those who long for a new beginning: those who are imprisoned, those who are estranged, those who have left loved ones behind, and those who are suffering spiritual illness in any way. Lord Jesus, we pray:

C: Hear us, and have mercy.

As the God of healing, may the sick, suffering, and vulnerable experience the saving power of the one sent in God's name. Give them all new life by the power of your Spirit. Help us to see how we can be present with them as your hands and feet. Lord Jesus, we pray:

C: Hear us, and have mercy.

As those who are searching for you, hear us and help us on our journey. Birth us all anew, O God and help us to grow up again, to accept not only earthly things but heavenly things, to lift up your Son and be lifted up ourselves, to let your Spirit move us beyond our understanding. Lord Jesus, we pray:

C: Hear us, and have mercy.

As those who follow the light, hear us, Oh God, and give us new birth by your Spirit to walk together in peace and friendship. May we be guided by your voice within us and so follow where you lead, for you are our breath, our life, and the world's hope, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Lord's Prayer

C: 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.

Blessing

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.
May your eyes be opened afresh to see the blessings of God
May you feel the amazement of Christ extravagant gift
And may the wind stir the flame within you and fill you with the Holy spirit.

C: Amen.

Sending Song: "Restore in Us, O God" WOV 662

Dismissal

Go in peace, and journey with Christ

C: We Will. Thanks be to God.