

— Every good gift —
and every perfect gift
is from above,
and cometh down
from the Father.

JAMES 1:17



St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

(Serving the Tuskegee Community since 1912)

701 West Montgomery Road

Tuskegee, Alabama 36088

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SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

March 1, 2026

MORNING PRAYER – NO In-Person SERVICE

11:00 A.M.

HYMNAL

PRAYER BOOK

Musical Prelude

Opening Hymn:

THE WORD OF GOD

76

Opening Sentences

General Confession & Absolution

79

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

** The Collect of the Day

** The First Lesson: Genesis 12:1-4a

** Psalm: 121

** Second Reading: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

** **THE GOSPEL:** John 3:1-17

THE MEDITATION: "Born from Above"

The Apostles' Creed

96

The Prayers

97

Suffrage "A"

97

Collect for Sundays

98

Collect for Grace

100

Collect for Guidance

100

** *Refer to Insert in Bulletin*

OFFERTORY

Doxology: *Praise God From Whom all Blessings
Flow*

The General Thanksgiving	101
A Prayer of Chrysostom	102
Versicle and response	102
Closing Sentence and Scripture	102

ANNOUNCEMENTS: *See Inside Bulletin*

Closing Hymn:

Dismissal



*Keeping
a Holy Lent*



FELLOWSHIP HOUR

The Christian Gathering continues after this service with fellowship and refreshments in the undercroft.

PLEASE JOIN US!!!!!!

March 8 - A Parishioner



2 LENT

Second Sunday in Lent



Revised Common Lectionary

Sunday, March 1, 2026

COLLECT

Traditional

O GOD, whose glory it is always to have mercy: Be gracious to all who have gone astray from thy ways, and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of thy Word, Jesus Christ thy Son; who with thee and the Holy Spirit liveth and reigneth, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Contemporary

O GOD, whose glory it is always to have mercy: Be gracious to all who have gone astray from your ways, and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of your Word, Jesus Christ your Son; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

FIRST READING: Genesis 12:1-4a

NOW 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. 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. 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." So Abram went, as the Lord had told him.

Refrain

My help comes from the Lord,
the maker of heaven and earth.

Psalm 121 *from* The Book of Common Prayer

- 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 He will not let your foot be moved * and he who watches over you will not fall asleep.
- 4 Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel * shall neither slumber nor sleep;
- 5 The LORD himself watches over you; * the LORD is your shade at your right hand,
- 6 So that the sun shall not strike you by day, * nor the moon by night.
- 7 The LORD shall preserve you from all evil; * it is he who shall keep you safe.
- 8 The LORD shall watch over your going out and your coming in, * from this time forth for evermore.

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

WHAT THEN ARE WE to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness. 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. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise

is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation. For 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, 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.

GOSPEL: John 3:1-17

NOW THERE WAS a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. 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 apart from the presence of God.” Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” 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?” Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ 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.” Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” Jesus answered him, “Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? 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. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who

descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. 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. 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.”

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR THE WEEK:

Monday, March 2, 2026

Tuesday, March 3, 2026

Wednesday, March 4, 2026

Thursday, March 5, 2026

Friday, March 6, 2026

Saturday, March 7, 2026

Sunday, March 8, 2026

11 a.m. - Morning Prayer (in-person)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY & ANNIVERSARY!!

March

- 8 - Logan Kelly**
- 16 - George Middleton**
- 16 - Valerie & Barnett Burston**
- 20 - Lucenia Dunn**
- 25 - Doris Okere**
- 25 - Shavonne Smith**
- 25 - Shari Smith Kelly**

NEWS FROM AROUND THE EPISCOPAL & ANGLICAN DIOCESES

For a recap of the 195th Diocesan Convention: 'Good News for a New Day', see www.dioala.org.

Congratulations to The Very Rev. Richard T. Lawson III, dean of St. John's Cathedral in Denver, CO, as the 13th bishop-elect of the Diocese of Alabama. Lawson will be ordained and consecrated as bishop diocesan on *June 27, 2026*, by Presiding Bishop Sean Rowe at the Cathedral Church of the Advent in Birmingham, AL

See www.anglicannews.org for the latest Anglican Communion News
This year's theme for UTO Lenten Ingathering is Gratitude & Reciprocity.
40 days of 'Gratitude & Reciprocity' is a call to spend 40 days thinking about our relationship with our community and the world around us. Materials are available on the entryway table if you would like to participate.

NEWS/EVENTS

T.U. (www.tuskegee.edu)

A.U. (www.auburn.edu)

EVENTS (Montgomery, Tuskegee)

Alabama Extension Service is offering 'free tax preparation' by IRS Certified Volunteers. Returns will be prepared by appointment only, every *Wednesday, 9am-2pm*. Call 334-727-0340 to schedule an appointment.

Wisdom Walkers Legacy Tour, EJI Legacy Museum, Montgomery, *March 5, 2026*, at 9am. See Eventbrite-Montgomery or <http://legacysites.eji.org>
61st Annual Bridge Crossing Jubilee, commemorating Bloody, Selma to Montgomery March and Signing of Voting Rights Act of 1965, *March 5-8, 2026*, Selma, AL See www.selmajubilee.com

Tuskegee Airmen Day Commemoration Fundraiser, *March 6-7, 2026*, Tuskegee Municipal Complex; Events include Legacy Breakfast, Kennedy Field Tour, and Fly-in. For registration or to donate see friendsoftuskegeearmenNHS.org

PRAYER LIST

CHRISTINA ANDERSON
CAROLYN BLAND*
STEPHANIE BOSWELL

MARIAN GARMON*

THOMAS BRAYE*
JAMES BRAYE
REBECCA LYN CARTER
CURT CARTER, SR*

MARIO LIGHTFOOTE*
RONNIE LIGON

CHARLES M. CRANK, II
PRESTON CRAYTON

KENNETH 'SHORTY' MILLER
JULIUS MYHAND, JR.
CLEMENT SCOTT
DAVID NGAWA**
MARTHA OSGERBY
ANNA C. OWENS
TUNESHA SMITH
ANGELICA P. SNOWDEN

LUCENIA DUNN*
SHANNON DIXON
TEDDY DOWDY*

YOLANDA P. SEAWRIGHT
DARRYL SEAWRIGHT
BRENDA D. ROBINSON*
MICHAEL ROBINSON*
LISA TECZAR
CHARLES THOMPSON**
LLOYD WILLIAMS*
E. DRAKE WHITELAW

ANITRA FULLER
ROBERT FRAZIER

DIANE KENNEY*

MARGARET 'KATIE' JONES
THERON JONES

*Local Parishioners

** Shut-In Parishioners

THE DIOCESAN CYCLE OF PRAYER

We pray for our Companion Diocese of Honduras and their bishop, Lloyd; We pray for the Diocese of Jerusalem; Community Garden, Auburn and Community Market, Opelika.

ANNOUNCEMENTS!!

- **ARMED FORCES:** Please pray for our service men and women stationed in the U.S. and overseas, especially, DeRitha Marbory Barber, Sam and Margaret Gunn Bunton, Christopher Childers, Kyle F. Graham, Shavone Marbory Hogan, Jabar and Kenya Lee Steward.
- **PRAYERS:** Continue to pray for those on the Prayer List, friends, family and all humankind afflicted by disease, war and famine. Pray for peace!
- **REMINDER:** Please continue to furnish our Food Basket with non-perishable food items (located on the ground floor of the Education Building).
- **NEW:** The link for the Sunday ZOOM Companion Service can be reached by dialing: 1-312-626-6799, Meeting ID: 882 671 9532, Passcode 008810 or click on your email invite. Mark your calendar for March 8, 2026 - Morning Prayer and March 15, 22, and 29 (Palm Sunday) - Modified Service dates.
- **REMINDER:** Please continue to pray for and support St. Andrew's Episcopal Church. Financial Donations will continue to be accepted by mail, PayPal (church website) or drop-off at the church.
- **RECTOR SEARCH UPDATE:** The Vestry is meeting to review church Finances.

**Additional announcements are listed inside the bulletin.*



SERMONS THAT WORK

Lent I

[RCL] Genesis 12:1-4a; Psalm 121; Romans 4:1-5, 13-17; John 3:1-17

Born From Above

The Gospel of John is written in sweeping poetry: The author speaks of light and dark, flesh and spirit, above and below. These themes come together in a unique way in the story of Nicodemus. We meet Nicodemus at night—and *there* is some heavy symbolism right from the start. He is already “in the dark” when he introduces himself to Jesus; you can almost hear the anxiety in his voice.

Nicodemus is a Pharisee—a movement of Jewish leaders who emphasized a rigorous interpretation of the Law. The Pharisees wanted to make religious practice accessible and clear, to offer understandable guidelines for people so that they would know how to show devotion to God. (The Apostle Paul was a Pharisee.) Now Pharisees are often portrayed by the Gospel writers as ready-made counter examples to Jesus, since they are at the heart of the religious establishment he is testing. It’s important to remember, however, that if Jesus seems to argue with them all the time, that might have more to do with his *respect* for them than his *disdain*. They are, simply put, very faithful. And the movement that was gathering around Jesus was not behaving in the right way, according to their interpretation of faithfulness.

Nicodemus, even if he comes at night, is risking something in approaching Jesus: the disapproval of his colleagues as well as the skepticism of the Jesus movement. But he is just too interested to let it go. Something in Nicodemus is drawn to Jesus.

From the start, he wants Jesus to know that he means well: “We know you come from God,” he says. We know the signs you are doing must be from God. You couldn’t do it otherwise.

In response, Jesus seems to go in a different direction. “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.”

Could Jesus be commending Nicodemus for his understanding? It might be that Jesus is saying to Nicodemus: “you wouldn’t know this unless God were with you. You get it!”

Unfortunately, it seems that Nicodemus sails right past this commendation and gets stuck: Born from above? What could that mean?

Rather than let the metaphor stand, Nicodemus takes it as literally as possible: “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?”

Nicodemus is puzzling this out in a very “apples vs. oranges” kind of way. He is trying to use geometry to solve a poem, trying to use an axe to cut off a slice of bread. He is, as Jesus later puts it, not understanding “the earthly” and therefore not having any chance whatsoever of getting at “the heavenly.”

For Jesus, being born from above means being born of the Spirit, claimed by the Holy One, the Lord. Being born from above is about releasing the assumptions of the world, receiving eyes to see and ears to hear a reality bigger than what’s right in front of you.

Born from above, you see the longing of God for liberation and healing for all people. Born from above, you see how the categories and judgments of the world have no ultimate sway. Born from above, you are changed and given the gift of God’s true freedom.

Jesus, doesn’t just move the goal posts here, he changes the game entirely. His response is an invitation into deepest wonder and awe at the reality of God’s love: a love so wild and incredible that God’s own beloved child is given to the world, so everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. The gift of this life is so persistent, so alive, that it lasts forever.

“Everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.” The question must be asked; what does it mean to believe in God’s Son, Jesus? Does it mean believing things *about* Jesus, like a theological litmus test? Is it how you act? What you think?

In the Gospel of John, belief in Jesus Christ simply means having a relationship with Jesus Christ. This truth comes through in story after story. It’s not about a grand confession of orthodoxy. Not about perfect behavior. Certainly not about spending time only with the right people. To be in relationship with Jesus Christ means to be open to this joy and wonder. To be in relationship with Jesus Christ means knowing that no one is outside the reach of his love. And to be in Christ’s love is to have eternal life, to live in that promise forever: a promise so strong that even death cannot hold sway.

Just in case it’s still unclear, Jesus continues: “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.”

What a gift is this verse in John 3:17! Can you imagine what Christianity might look like if we were all people of John 3:17 as much as John 3:16?

Indeed...this message is not about condemnation. It is about salvation: saving everyone.

The son of God came for everyone. No matter what.

That’s the other important thing about this passage: the Greek word used here in “loved the world” is *kosmos*—as in: Everyone. Everywhere. Everything.

Jesus did not come to condemn or dismiss or separate. Jesus came—and comes to us still—to make visible God’s love and forgiveness. Our Gospel text, along with our Old Testament passage, invites us to give

ourselves and our lives to the Savior who calls us into a new way of life and a new trust in God. We are called to trust God, as Abraham did, with our whole lives, hearts, and minds. With our wallets, our cars, our choices about how we spend our time.

Follow the God of Abraham, who told him that he would be a blessing, that the whole world would be blessed through him. Leave your kindred and your logic and your usual ways of thinking. Just go. Allow yourself to be born again.

That's what the real work of Lent is: this work of opening to new birth.

The Lenten season begins on Ash Wednesday with an uncompromising look at our vulnerability, our frailty, our sin. But that's just one day; the whole season is about how we allow ourselves to be found by God, how we allow ourselves to be changed by—as the writer of First Corinthians names—the God who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

What are the things in your life that “do not exist?”

What could God be calling out of you?

What does being “born from above” mean in your life, and how is God midwifing that newness in this moment?

***The Rev Sara Irwin** is the Rector of St Andrew's Episcopal Church in the Highland Park neighborhood of Pittsburgh. She is mom to two teenagers and spouse to another Episcopal priest, the Rev Noah Evans. She is part of the Creative Writing and Public Theology Doctor of Ministry program at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and loves contemplative prayer and tattoos. She also writes for the Forward Movement Grow Christians blog and has had essays included in several anthologies.*



Sermons that Work and Bible Studies that Work are a joint offering of Forward Movement and The Office of Communication at The Episcopal Church.

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/bible-study/>

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/sermons-that-work>

