



**St. John's of Hatboro**

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Faith - Service - Community



## Second Sunday in Lent

March 1, 2026

*The Good News for Today: God so loved the world...*

*Thank you for worshiping with us at St. John's. Please fill out your yellow attendance card and place it in the offering plate when we collect the offering later in the service.*

*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.*

### Gathering Music

*STAND*

#### Hymn: God Loved the World – ELW 323 (Red Book)

- 1 God loved the world so that he gave  
his only Son the lost to save,  
that all who would in him believe  
should everlasting life receive.
- 2 Christ Jesus is the ground of faith,  
who was made flesh and suffered  
death;  
all who confide in Christ alone  
are built on this chief cornerstone.
- 3 If you are ill, if death draws near,  
this truth your troubled heart can  
cheer:  
Christ Jesus rescues us from death;  
that is the firmest ground of faith.
- 4 Be of good cheer, for God's own Son  
forgives all sins that you have done,  
and justified by Jesus' blood,  
your baptism grants the highest  
good.
- 5 All glory to the Father, Son,  
and Holy Spirit, Three in One!  
To you, O blessed Trinity,  
be praise now and eternally!

Text: *Gesangbuch*, Bollhagen, 1791; tr. August Crull, 1846-1923, alt.

## Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt and blots out all offenses.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Gracious God,

**have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you: Gracious God,

**have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word: Gracious God,

**have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For failing to recognize your coming reign, and for hindering the work of the Spirit: Gracious God,

**have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition, and for disdain the living water Christ offers: Gracious God,

**have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For disregarding voices from the margin, and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world: Gracious God,

**have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent, and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life: Gracious God,

**have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

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.

**Amen.**

## Welcome & Greeting

Welcome to St. John's, where we are building a loving, accepting community centered on growing in Christ, and giving people a place to belong at any stage of their journey with God.

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.**

## Opening: Return to God *(Call and Response)* — ACS 921

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1 (In all affliction) In all affliction<br>(return, return to God.) Return,<br>return to God.          | 5 (By speech that's truthful) By speech<br>that's truthful<br>(return, return to God.) Return,<br>return to God. |
| 2 (With great endurance) With great<br>endurance<br>(return, return to God.) Return,<br>return to God. | 6 (To cease oppression) To cease<br>oppression<br>(return, return to God.) Return,<br>return to God.             |
| 3 (In ev'ry hardship) In ev'ry hardship<br>(return, return to God.) Return,<br>return to God.          | 7 (By loving justice) By loving justice<br>(return, return to God.) Return,<br>return to God.                    |
| 4 (With humble spirit) With humble<br>spirit<br>(return, return to God.) Return,<br>return to God.     | 8 (With gentle kindness) With gentle<br>kindness<br>(return, return to God.) Return,<br>return to God.           |

Text: Marilyn Haskel, b. 1945  
Text © 2009 Augsburg Fortress

## 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.**

*SIT*

## The Readings

### Genesis 12:1-4a

*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.*

<sup>1</sup> 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. <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> 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.”

<sup>4</sup> So Abram went, as the Lord had told him, and Lot went with him.

The Word of the Lord,

**Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm 121

<sup>1</sup> I lift up my eyes to the hills;  
from where is my help to come?

<sup>2</sup> **My help comes from the Lord,  
the maker of heaven and earth.**

<sup>3</sup> The Lord will not let your foot be moved  
nor will the one who watches over you fall asleep.

<sup>4</sup> **Behold, the keeper of Israel  
will neither slumber nor sleep;**

<sup>5</sup> the Lord watches over you;  
the Lord is your shade at your right hand;

<sup>6</sup> **the sun will not strike you by day,  
nor the moon by night.**

<sup>7</sup> The Lord will preserve you from all evil  
and will keep your life.

<sup>8</sup> **The Lord will watch over your going out and your coming in,  
from this time forth forevermore.**

## 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.*

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

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

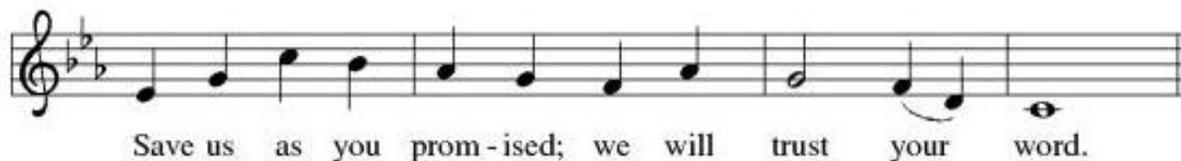
<sup>16</sup> For this reason the promise depends on faith, in order that it may rest on grace, so that it may be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (who is the father of all of us, <sup>17</sup> as it is written, “I 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,

**Thanks be to God.**

STAND

## Gospel Acclamation



## John 3:1-17

*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.*

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the third chapter:

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup> Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. <sup>2</sup> 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.” <sup>3</sup> Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” <sup>4</sup> 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?” <sup>5</sup> Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. <sup>6</sup> What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. <sup>7</sup> Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ <sup>8</sup> 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.” <sup>9</sup> Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” <sup>10</sup> Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?”

<sup>11</sup> “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. <sup>12</sup> If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? <sup>13</sup> No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. <sup>14</sup> And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup> that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

<sup>16</sup> “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.

<sup>17</sup> “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.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

*SIT*

**Sermon – “The Gift of Night” – Pastor Bo Bannister**

*STAND*

# Hymn: Hope of the World – ACS 1085



1 Hope of the world, O Christ of great com - pas - sion,  
2 Hope of the world, God's gift from high - est heav - en,  
3 Hope of the world, a - foot on dust - y high - ways,  
4 Hope of the world, who by your cross did save us  
5 Hope of the world, Christ ris'n from death vic - to - rious,



speak to our fear - ful hearts by con - flict rent.  
bring - ing to hun - gry souls the bread of life:  
show - ing to wan - d'ring souls the path of light:  
from death and deep de - spair, from guilt and sin:  
who by this tri - umph con - quered grief and pain:



Save us, your peo - ple, from con - sum - ing pas - sion,  
still let your Spir - it un - to us be giv - en  
walk close be - side us lest the tempt - ing by - ways  
we ren - der back the love your mer - cy gave us;  
we would be faith - ful to your gos - pel glo - rious;



who by our own false hopes and aims are spent.  
to heal earth's wounds and end all bit - ter strife.  
lure us a - way from you to end - less night.  
work through our lives to bring your pur - pose in.  
you are our Lord and will for - ev - er reign!

Text: Georgia Harkness, 1891–1974, alt.  
Text © 1954, ren. 1982 The Hymn Society, admin. Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved.

## The Apostles' Creed

With the whole church let us confess our faith.

**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 Intercession

Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs.

*A brief silence.*

Faithful One, you renew us by grace. As you have inspired faith through the work of church artists and hymnwriters throughout the ages like George Herbert whom the church remembers today, give your church the means to praise your beauty today. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Living One, you delight in this world. The sun and moon, the wind and the water declare your goodness. Preserve this earth, and protect conservationists, scientists, and all who labor in service to creation. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Ruling One, you bless us to be a blessing. Open the hearts of all leaders to seek the flourishing of every person and lend your help to all who wait for justice, deliverance, and peace. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Compassionate One, you send your Son to save. Declare your word of acceptance to any who feel condemned and lift up any brought low by hatred and exclusion. Tend to all who are struggling with illness or loss. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Guiding One, you watch over our going out and coming in. Bless newcomers and new members in this assembly and accompany those who have recently left this community to journey elsewhere. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Eternal One, you neither slumber nor sleep. Be our keeper in life and in death. Thank you for our beloved who have died, and for your promise which saves this whole world by your love. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation.

**Amen.**

## Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

Please share a sign of peace with one another.

*SIT*

## Announcements

*Printed copies of our weekly announcements are available at the usher's stand in the Narthex, and monthly newsletters are on the Hospitality Table. Please include your email address on your yellow attendance card to receive announcements electronically.*

## Children's Message

## Offering

### Offertory: No One Like the Lord – (Stamper)

*STAND*

### Offertory Hymn: Praise God from Whom all Blessings Flow – ELW 885 (Red Book)

The image shows three staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like. The lyrics are printed below the notes.

Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise him, all  
crea - tures here be - low; praise him a - bove, ye  
heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

## Offering Prayer

O God, maker of heaven and earth, your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus' name.

**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.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Father of mercies and faithful God, for you have given us Jesus Christ, your Son, as our Lord and Redeemer. He always showed compassion for children and the poor, for the sick and sinners, and he became a neighbor to the oppressed and the afflicted. By word and deed he announced to the world that you are our Father and that you care for all your children. And so, with all the angels and saints, we exalt and bless your name and sing the hymn of your glory, as without end we acclaim:

## Sanctus

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of  
pow-er and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -  
san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the  
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

## Eucharistic Prayer

Holy God, mighty Lord, gracious Father: Endless is your mercy and eternal your reign. You have filled all creation with light and life; heaven and earth are full of your glory.

We praise you for the grace shown to your people in every age: the promise to Israel, the rescue from Egypt, the gift of the promised land, the words of the prophets; and, at this end of all the ages, the gift of your Son, who proclaimed the good news in word and deed and was obedient to your will, even to giving his life.

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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

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

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

And now, as Christ our Savior has taught us, we are bold to pray:

## The Lord's Prayer

**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.**

*SIT*

## Invitation to Communion

Come to the table. Feast on God's goodness and mercy.

## Distribution of the Elements

## Lamb of God

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
grant us peace, grant us peace.

*STAND*

## Post-Communion Blessing

The Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you keep you in his Grace.

**Amen.**

## 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.**

## Blessing

Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity: God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation, † bless you now and always.

**Amen.**

## Hymn: Blessed Assurance – ELW 638 (Red Book)

1 Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!  
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,  
born of his Spirit, washed in his  
blood.

### *Refrain*

This is my story, this is my song,  
praising my Savior, all the day long:  
this is my story, this is my song,  
praising my Savior all the day long.

2 Perfect submission, perfect delight,  
visions of rapture now burst on my  
sight;  
angels descending bring from above  
echoes of mercy, whispers of love.  
*Refrain*

3 Perfect submission, all is at rest;  
I in my Savior am happy and blest,  
watching and waiting, looking above,  
filled with his goodness, lost in his  
love. *Refrain*

Text: Fanny J. Crosby, 1820-1915

# Dismissal

Go in peace. Believe the good news.

**Thanks be to God.**

**The text, music, and hymns of** this worship bulletin are reprinted with permission from the copyright holders. Please see the bottom of the individual hymns for the copyright information. The text and music of the worship liturgy are from [sundaysandseason.com](http://sundaysandseason.com). copyright © 2020 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Augsburg Fortress Annual License #SAS103615. One License #A-728866. CCLI License #1032818

---