

Order of Worship for February 22, 2026

Welcome

Gathering Hymn ELW #319 O Lord, Throughout These Forty Days

- 1 O Lord, throughout these forty days
you prayed and kept the fast;
inspire repentance for our sin,
and free us from our past.
- 2 You strove with Satan, and you won;
your faithfulness endured;
lend us your nerve, your skill, and trust
in God's eternal word.
- 3 Though parched and hungry, yet you prayed
and fixed your mind above;
so teach us to deny ourselves
that we may know God's love.
- 4 Be with us through this season, Lord,
and all our earthly days,
that when the final Easter dawns,
we join in heaven's praise.

Text: based on Claudia F. Hernaman, 1838-1898; para. Gilbert E. Doan Jr., b. 1930
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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 disdaining 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.**

Greeting

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.**

Children's Sermon

Prayer of the Day

Lord God, our strength, **the struggle between good and evil rages within and around us, and the devil and all the forces that defy you tempt us with empty promises. Keep us steadfast in your word, and when we fall, raise us again and restore us 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.**

First reading Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

Human beings were formed with great care, to be in relationship with the creator, creation, and one another. The serpent's promise to the first couple that their eyes would be opened led, ironically, to the discovery only that they were naked.

¹⁵The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. ¹⁶And the Lord God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

^{3:1} Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden'?" ²The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, ³but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.' " ⁴But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die, ⁵for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." ⁶So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. ⁷Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves. Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalms 32

¹ Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is put away!

² **Happy are they to whom the Lord imputes no guilt, and in whose spirit there is no guile!**

³ While I held my tongue, my bones withered away, because of my groaning all day long.

⁴ **For your hand was heavy upon me day and night; my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.**

⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not conceal my guilt. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord." Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.

⁶ **Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of trouble; when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.**

⁷ You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

⁸ **"I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go; I will guide you with my eye.**

⁹ Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding; who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will not stay near you."

¹⁰ **Great are the tribulations of the wicked; but mercy embraces those who trust in the Lord.**

¹¹ Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the Lord; shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

Gospel acclamation

Nothing in all creation can separate us from the love of God.

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Gospel reading Matthew 4:1-11

Jesus experiences anew the temptations that Israel faced in the wilderness. As the Son of God, he endures the testing of the evil one.

The holy gospel according to _____. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹ Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. ² He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. ³ The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." ⁴ But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.' "

⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶ saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.' "

⁷ Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.' "

⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, ⁹ and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.' "

¹¹ Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him. The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Hymn of the Day ACS #922 When We Are Tested

¹ When we are tested and wrestle alone,

famished for bread when the world offers stone,
nourish us, God, by your word and your way,
food that sustains us by night and by day.

- 2 When in the desert we cry for relief,
pleading for paths marked by certain belief,
lift us to love you beyond sign and test,
trusting your presence, our only true rest.
- 3 When we are tempted to barter our souls,
trading the truth for the pow'r to control,
teach us to worship and praise only you,
seeking your will in the work that we do.
- 4 When we have struggled and searched through the night,
sorting and sifting the wrong from the right,
Savior, surround us with circles of care,
angels of healing, of hope, and of prayer.

Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947

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Apostle's Creed

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 the People

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

A brief silence.

God of all grace, grant faith to your church. Give to all the baptized the will to resist temptation and to worship and serve you alone. Let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

God of all creation, tend this earth. When human greed and disobedience threaten this planet and the life it contains, lead us by your Spirit into ways of reverence, awe, and gentleness. Let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

God of all nations, preserve us from trouble. Surround all living in places of violence with your steadfast love and give resilience to all who work for peace. Grant courage to those who challenge, especially around issues of racism and systemic oppression. Let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

God of all healing, mend our wounds. Bring wholeness to all who are sick, give peace to all who groan in grief, and send companions to all who are lonely or isolated. Let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

God of all people, provide for our community. For any among us who hunger for bread, bring nourishment. For any among us who hunger for truth, speak your life-giving word. Let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

God of all life, bring us to you. We thank you for your free and abounding grace, and for those who, by that same grace, now rest eternally in you. Let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

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

Noisy Offering

Offering Prayer

Loving God, **everything you make is good. May these gifts be used to share your love to all people. In your name we pray, Amen.**

Sharing of the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you!**

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 joy,...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, Holy, Holy

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of might and mercy,

Your glory fills all heaven and earth. You are holy, God.

Blessed be the Savior, the one who comes in your name.

Hosanna in the highest. You are holy, God.

Words of Institution

Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

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.

Meal of Holy Communion

Communion Hymn ELW #785 When Peace Like a River

- 1 When peace like a river attendeth my way,
when sorrows like sea billows roll,
whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,
it is well, it is well with my soul.

Refrain

It is well (it is well)
with my soul, (with my soul,)
it is well, it is well with my soul.

- 2 Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
let this blest assurance control,
that Christ has regarded my helpless estate,
and has shed his own blood for my soul. *Refrain*
- 3 He lives--oh, the bliss of this glorious thought;
my sin, not in part, but the whole,
is nailed to his cross and I bear it no more.
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul! *Refrain*
- 4 Lord, hasten the day when our faith shall be sight,
the clouds be rolled back as a scroll,
the trumpet shall sound and the Lord shall descend;
even so it is well with my soul. *Refrain*

Text: Horatio G. Spafford, 1828-1888

Table Blessing

May the body and blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in God's 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.**

Sending hymn ELW #325 I Want Jesus to Walk with Me

- 1 I want Jesus to walk with me;

I want Jesus to walk with me;
all along my pilgrim journey,
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.

2 In my trials, Lord, walk with me;
in my trials, Lord, walk with me;
when my heart is almost breaking,
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.

3 When I'm in trouble, Lord, walk with me;
when I'm in trouble, Lord, walk with me;
when my head is bowed in sorrow,
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.

Text: African American spiritual

Dismissal

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.