

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A Congregation of the North American Lutheran Church
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Second Wednesday in Lent

February 25, 2026

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

HYMN, “*Baptized into Your Name Most Holy*” LBW Hymn 192

1. Baptized into your name most holy, *Green Book*
O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
I claim a place, though weak and lowly,
Among your seed, your chosen host.
Buried with Christ and dead to sin,
I have your Spirit now within.

2. My loving Father, here you take me
Henceforth to be your child and heir;
My faithful Savior, here you make me
The fruit of all your sorrows share;
O Holy Ghost, you comfort me
Though threat’ning clouds around I see.

3. O faithful God, you never fail me:
Your cov’nant surely will abide.
Let not eternal death assail me
Should I transgress it on my side!
Have mercy when I come defiled;
Forgive, lift up, restore your child.

Johann Jacob Rambach (1693-1735)

- P** I will bless the LORD at all times;
C **His praise shall continually be in my mouth.**
P My soul makes its boast in the LORD;
C **Let the humble hear and be glad.**
P O magnify the LORD with me,
C **And let us exalt his name together.**
P I sought the LORD, and he answered me,
C **And delivered me from all my fears.**
P Look to him, and be radiant;
C **So your faces shall never be ashamed.**
P This poor soul cried, and was heard by the LORD,
 and was saved from every trouble.
C **The angel of the LORD encamps
 around those who fear him, and delivers them.**
P O taste and see that the LORD is good;
C **Happy are those who take refuge in him.**
P O fear the LORD, you his holy ones,
C **For those who fear him have no want.**

(NRSV)

A PRAYER BY MARTIN LUTHER

C **O my God, I am a sinner, and yet I am not a sinner.
 Alone and apart from Christ, I am a sinner.
 But in my Lord Jesus Christ and with him, I am no sinner.
 I firmly believe that he has destroyed all my sins
 with his precious blood.
 The sign of all this is that I am baptized,
 cleansed by God's word,
 and declared absolved and freed from all my sins.
 In the sacrament of the true body and blood
 of my Lord Jesus Christ
 I have received as a sure sign of grace
 the forgiveness of sins.
 This he has won and accomplished for me
 by the shedding of his precious blood.
 For this I thank him in eternity. Amen.**

1. This is the Spirit’s entry now:
The water and the Word,
The cross of Jesus on your brow,
The seal both felt and heard.

2. This miracle of life reborn
Comes from the Lord of breath;
The perfect man from life was torn;
Our life comes through his death.

Thomas E. Herbranson (1933-2009)

SCRIPTURE READING, John 3:1-6

There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these miraculous signs you are doing unless God is with him.”

Jesus replied, “Amen, Amen, I tell you: Unless someone is born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born, can he?”

Jesus answered, “Amen, Amen, I tell you: Unless someone is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God! Whatever is born of the flesh is flesh. Whatever is born of the Spirit is spirit.”

(EHV)

SCRIPTURE READING, Titus 3:4-7

But when the kindness and love of God our Savior toward mankind appeared, he saved us — not by righteous works that we did ourselves, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and the renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs in keeping with the hope of eternal life.

(EHV)

SCRIPTURE READING, Matthew 28:16-20

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

(NRSV)

SCRIPTURE READING, 1 Peter 3:13-22

Who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? But even if you should happen to suffer because of righteousness, you are blessed. Do not be afraid of what they fear, and do not be troubled. But regard the Lord, the Christ, as holy in your hearts. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give a reason for the hope that is in you. But speak with gentleness and respect, while maintaining a clear conscience, so that those who attack your good way of life in Christ may be put to shame because they slandered you as evildoers.

Indeed, it is better, if it is God’s will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil, because Christ also suffered once for sins in our place, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in flesh but was made alive in spirit, in which he also went and made an announcement to the spirits in prison. These spirits disobeyed long ago, when God’s patience was waiting in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In this ark a few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you — not the removal of dirt from the body but the guarantee of a good conscience before God through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He went to heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers made subject to him.

(EHV)

SCRIPTURE READING, Acts 2:37-42

Now when the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Gentlemen, brothers, what should we do?”

Peter answered them, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far away, as many as the Lord our God will call.”

He testified solemnly with many other words and was appealing to them, saying, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation.”

Those who accepted his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand people were added.

They continued to hold firmly to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of the bread, and to the prayers.

(EHV)

LUTHER’S SMALL CATECHISM

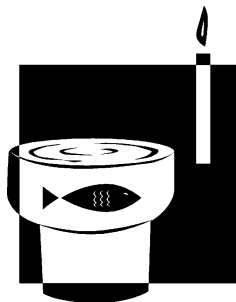
❏ What is Baptism?

☑ **Baptism is not water only, but it is water used together with God’s Word and by his command.**

❏ What is this Word?

☑ **In Matthew 28 our Lord Jesus Christ says: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”**

Martin Luther’s Small Catechism (1529)



HYMN, “All Who Believe and Are Baptized” LBW Hymn 194

1. All who believe and are baptized *Green Book*
Shall see the Lord’s salvation;
Baptized into the death of Christ,
They are a new creation;
Through Christ’s redemption they will stand
Among the glorious heav’ly band
Of ev’ry tribe and nation.

2. With one accord, O God, we pray,
Grant us your Holy Spirit;
Help us in our infirmity
Through Jesus’ blood and merit;
Grant us to grow in grace each day
By holy Baptism, that we may
Eternal life inherit.

Thomas H. Kingo (1634-1703)

SERMON

Pastor David J. Baer

HYMN, “Baptized in Water” WOV Hymn 693

1. Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit, *Green Book*
Cleansed by the blood of Christ our King:
Heirs of salvation, trusting his promise,
Faithfully now God’s praise we sing.

2. Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit,
Dead in the tomb with Christ our King:
One with his rising, freed and forgiven,
Thankfully now God’s praise we sing.

3. Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit,
Marked with the sign of Christ our King:
Born of one Father, we are God’s children,
Joyfully now God’s praise we sing.

Michael Saward (1932-2015)

CATECHISM PRAYER

☐ What is Baptism?

☑ **I thank you, Lord God, for my Baptism which I know is not water only, but is water used together with your Word and by your command to “make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” Amen.**

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.

Matthew 6:9-13

BLESSING

☐ The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the † Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.

☑ **Amen.**

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Word and Water, Filled with Promise, Words © 2021 Northwestern Publishing House. Reprinted and podcast with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-733558. All rights reserved.

1. Word and water, filled with promise,
Grant forgiveness, cleanse, reclaim
In the Father, Son, and Spirit’s
Holy, precious, saving name.
Blessings purchased when our Savior
Paid the awful ransom price —
All delivered in this washing:
Peace and paron, paradise.

2. As the water rescued Noah,
Ark uplifted on the waves,
So this water, by God’s promise,
Also rescues, also saves.
Now by Jesus’ resurrection
We before our God appear
Pure and sinless, fully righteous,
With a conscios crystal clear.

3. Though our vision may not capture
All that happens at the font,
Here the Savior keeps his promise —
Those he shepherds shall not want:
Ev’ry trace of sin forgiven,
Guilt completely washed away,
Faith in Jesus firmly planted;
See God’s kingdom come today!

4. Let us always, Lord, remember
That the water and the Word
Bear your never-failing promise:
Our salvation is assured.
Your baptismal benediction
Ever shower from above —
All the Spirit’s grace in Jesus,
And, dear Father, all your love.

More from Martin Luther

In the first place, we must above all things know well the words upon which Baptism is founded, and to which everything refers that is to be said on the subject, namely, where the Lord Christ speaks in Matthew 28:19: “Go into all the world and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” Likewise in Mark 16:16: “He who believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he who does not believe shall be condemned.”

Observe, first, that these words contain God’s commandment and institution, so that no one may doubt that Baptism is of divine origin, not something devised nor invented by men. ... For it is of the greatest importance that we regard Baptism as excellent, glorious, and exalted. It is the chief cause of our contentions and battles because the world is now so full of sects clamoring that Baptism is an external thing, and that external things are of no benefit. But no matter how external it may be, here stand God’s Word and command which institute, establish, and confirm Baptism. But what God institutes and commands cannot be useless, but must be a most precious thing.

For to be baptized in the name of God is to be baptized not by men, but by God himself. Therefore, although it is performed by human hands, it is nevertheless truly God’s own work.

From this now learn a proper understanding of the subject, and how to answer the question, What is Baptism? Namely, that it is not mere ordinary water, but water comprehended in God’s Word and command, and sanctified by them, so that it is nothing else than a divine water; not that the water in itself is nobler than other water, but that God’s Word and command are added to it.

For the real significance of the water lies in God’s Word or command and God’s name, and this is a treasure greater and nobler than heaven and earth.

Note the distinction, then, that Baptism is a very different thing than all other water; not on account of the natural quality but because something more noble is here added; for God himself stakes his honor, his power and might on it. Therefore it is not only natural water, but a

divine, heavenly, holy, and blessed water, and in whatever other terms we can praise it, — all on account of the Word, which is a heavenly, holy Word, that no one can sufficiently extol, for it has, and is able to do, all that God is and can do since it has all the virtue and power of God comprised in it. Hence also it derives its essence as a Sacrament. ... When the Word is joined to the element or natural substance, it becomes a Sacrament, that is, a holy and divine thing and sign.

In the second place, since we know now what Baptism is, and how it is to be regarded, we must also learn why and for what purpose it is instituted; that is, what it profits, gives, and works. And this also we cannot discern better than from the words of Christ above quoted: He that believes and is baptized shall be saved. Therefore state it most simply thus, that the power, work, profit, fruit, and end of Baptism is this, namely, to save. For no one is baptized in order that he may become a prince, but, as the words declare, that he be saved. But to be saved, we know, is nothing else than to be delivered from sin, death, and the devil, and to enter into the kingdom of Christ, and to live with him forever.

Here you see again how highly and precious we should esteem Baptism, because in it we obtain such an unspeakable treasure, which also indicates sufficiently that it cannot be ordinary mere water. For mere water could not do such a thing, but the Word does it, and (as said above) the fact that the name of God is comprehended therein. But where the name of God is, there must be also life and salvation, that it may indeed be called a divine, blessed, fruitful, and gracious water; for by the Word such power is imparted to Baptism that it is a washing of regeneration,” as St. Paul also calls it in Titus 3:5.

Faith must have something to believe — something to which it may cling and upon which it may stand. Thus faith clings to the water, and believes it to be Baptism in which there is pure salvation and life; not through the water, but through the fact that it is embodied in the Word and institution of God, and the joining of his name to it. When I believe this, what else is it but believing in God as the one who has given and planted his Word into this ordinance, and has offered it to us that we may grasp the treasure it contains?

Selections from Martin Luther's Large Catechism

You can read Luther's Large Catechism online at bookofconcord.org.

WELCOME TO ALL who are worshipping with us tonight. We especially welcome our visitors. If you are unfamiliar with our worship, one of our members will gladly assist you. Visitors, please be sure to sign the guest register in the narthex. We hope that you will worship with us again soon.

A LIGHT SUPPER of soup will be served following our service tonight. Please plan to stay after worship for the supper.



MIDWEEK LENTEN SERVICES are offered offered at 6:30 p.m. each Wednesday of Lent. Our Wednesday services this year focus on the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion using Luther's Small Catechism. A light supper is served following the Lenten services.

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED to help with serving the light supper following our Wednesday night Lenten services. Hosts may provide the food or the church will provide soup for the suppers. Supper hosts are asked to prepare and serve the light supper following the Lenten service and help clean up afterward.

WE ARE COLLECTING items for Lutheran World Relief Personal Care Kits during Lent. These kits help those throughout the world who are displaced from their homes by wars, disasters or violence. Items included in the kits are toothbrushes, nail clippers, bars of soap (4-5 oz.), sturdy combs, and light-weight bath-sized towels (52 x 27 maximum, dark color recommended). Help make a difference for someone in need by bringing items for the kits.

DAILY DEVOTIONS FOR LENT from the North American Lutheran Church are available online. You can download the book, request a daily email or text message or read or listen to them online. You also can listen to the devotions on Facebook. To access the devotions or for more information go to thenalc.org/lent.

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