

2nd Sunday of Lent, March 1, 2026
Shepherd of the Hill ELCA, 10 am

“Encouraging faith and proclaiming God’s love
by Gathering, Growing, Giving.”



Your presence in the sanctuary signifies your agreement to be on our live broadcast.

INTRODUCTION

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

Please stand for the parts of the service designated with †

The congregation’s parts are in **bold type**.

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

† **CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS**

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

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.**

† **GATHERING SONG**

“What Wonderous Love is This”

LBW 385

† **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.

† **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

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.**

FIRST READING: Genesis 12:1-4a

A reading from the 12th chapters of GENESIS.

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.

¹The Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ²I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³I 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."

^{4a}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

Please join in reading responsively 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.**

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

A reading from 4th chapter of ROMANS.

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

¹⁶For 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, ¹⁷as 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.

† **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION FOR LENT**

Let your steadfast love come to us, O Lord.

Save us as you promised; we will trust your word.

† **GOSPEL: JOHN 3:1-17**

The Holy Gospel according to the 3rd chapter of John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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

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.

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

SERMON

Pastor Natalie Leske

† **HYMN OF THE DAY “Lift High the Cross”**

LBW 377

† APOSTLES' 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 into hell. 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, 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 (*especially*). 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.**

MEAL

† GREETING OF PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Please share a greeting of peace with one another.

OFFERING & 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.**

† DIALOGUE

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.**

† PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy...

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



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

† THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

We give you thanks, Father, through Jesus Christ, your beloved Son, whom you sent in this end of the ages to save and redeem us and to proclaim to us your will.

He is your Word, inseparable from you, through whom you created all things, and in whom you take delight. He is your Word, sent from heaven to a virgin's womb. He there took on our nature and our lot and was shown forth as your Son, born of the Holy Spirit and of the virgin Mary. He, our Lord Jesus, fulfilled all your will and won for you a holy people; he stretched out his hands in suffering in order to free from suffering those who trust you.

He is the one who, handed over to a death he freely accepted, in order to destroy death, to break the bonds of the evil one, to crush hell underfoot, to give light to the righteous, to establish his covenant, and to show forth the resurrection, taking bread and giving thanks to you, said: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

In the same way 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.

Remembering, then, his death and resurrection, we take this bread and cup, giving you thanks that you have made us worthy to stand before you and to serve you as your priestly people.

Send your Spirit upon these gifts of your church; gather into one all who share this bread and wine; fill us with your Holy Spirit to establish our faith in truth, that we may praise and glorify you through your Son Jesus Christ; through whom all glory and honor are yours, almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy church, both now and forever. **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.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you. Amen

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

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

SHARING COMMUNION

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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

† 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 SONG

“Blessed Assurance”

WOV 699

† DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

† SENDING MUSIC

WORSHIP LEADERS

Presiding Leader

Musician

Acolyte

Usher

Video

Reader

Pastor Natalie Leske

Michelle Young

Jace Holcomb

Betty Heltne, Tim Jenson

Billy Heltne

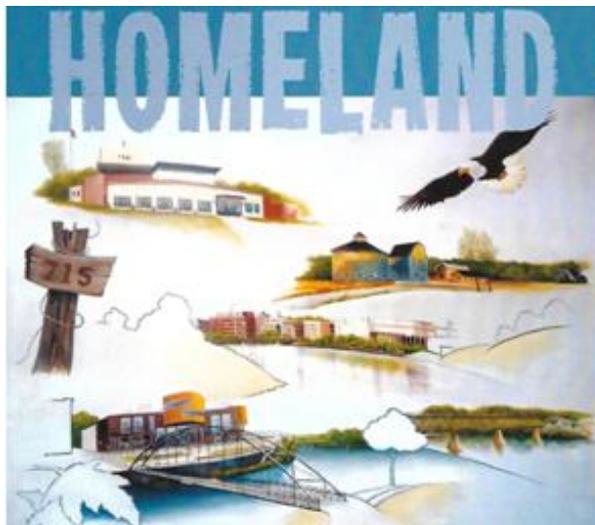
Diane Rose

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today! CVASING 2026
Trinity Lutheran Church
2 pm & 7 pm

\$10 at the door. Proceeds to Feed My People Food Bank



HOMELAND

CVASING 2026
Directed by Gary Rambo
Dole Anderson, Accompanist

March 1, 2026 at 2pm & 7pm
Trinity Lutheran Church • 1314 East Lexington Blvd • Eau Claire, WI 54701
Tickets \$10 at the Door or from CVASing Members
All concert proceeds go to benefit Feed My People Food Bank

**American Red Cross Blood Drive!
Sponsored by Elk Mound High School**



**Elk Mound High School
Shepherd of the Hill
Lutheran Church**

207 University St

**Monday, March 2, 2026
11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**



**Lent Soup Suppers begin Wednesday, February 25 @ 6 pm!
Sign Up sheets are in the gathering area.
Soups, sandwiches and desserts are appreciated!
All are welcome to join us for this special fellowship.
Thank you!**

Miracles of Jesus

FEBRUARY 25	JESUS HEALS THE GERASENE DEMONIAK
MARCH 4	JESUS HEALS A WOMAN AND RAISES JAIRUS' DAUGHTER
MARCH 11	JESUS FEEDS THE FIVE THOUSAND
MARCH 18	JESUS HEALS THE MAN BORN BLIND
MARCH 25	JESUS RAISES LAZARUS FROM THE DEAD

***On Wednesdays in Lent
Soup Supper is at 6 pm
Worship is at 7 pm.***

Drawn
TO THE WORD
faithandfreedom.com

LENT

Ushers, readers, communion assistants and livestream helpers are needed.

Helping to lead worship is a very rewarding way to use your talents and gifts. Training and support are offered for all positions. To volunteer or if you have questions, please reach out to Head Usher Tim Jenson for ushering, Kris Jenson, the church secretary for reading and communion assisting, and to Billy Heltne or Tim Jenson for livestreaming.

Thank you for prayerfully considering these forms of discipleship.

If you are a VISITOR with us today, we are so grateful that God brought you here. Please share your name and contact info in either the Guest Book or a Visitor info sheet found in the Gathering Area.

Pastor Natalie's Office Hours:

Pastor Natalie's office hours are Wednesday from 10 am to 2 pm or by appointment.

You may call Pastor Natalie's cell phone 715-829-8324 to see if she can meet you Monday - Thursday.

THIS WEEK AT CHURCH AND BEYOND OUR DOORS

SUNDAY	3/1	8:45 am	- Sunday School
		10 am	- 2 nd Sunday of Lent, communion
MONDAY	3/2	6 pm	- AA Meeting
TUESDAY	3/3	11:30-12:30	- Pop-Up Food Pantry, EM Village Hall
		4-6 pm	- Food Pantry
WEDNESDAY	3/4	6 pm	- Soup Supper
		7 pm	- Lent Worship
FRIDAY	3/6	10-noon	- Food Pantry
SUNDAY	3/8	8:45 am	- Sunday School
		10 am	- 3 rd Sunday of Lent

Shepherd of the Hill Lutheran Church

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