

Third Sunday of Lent

March 8, 2026

PRELUDE

Becky Retherford

Gathering

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 to God and to one another.

(Silence is kept for reflection.)

**We confess to you, most loving God,
the sins that both bind and scatter us.
We have knowingly believed dishonest words.
We have questioned your gracious power again and again.
We have given into temptation.**

**We have acted out of fear, placing blame on others yet holding ourselves apart.
In our disbelief and confusion we have hurt our neighbors and ourselves.
Gather us back to you.
Forgive us, free us, and make us whole
for the sake of your son Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Friends, beloved of God,
Jesus came not to condemn the world but that all might be saved through him.
In the name of + Christ your sins are forgiven.
May God unbind your guilt and shame, lead you by the Spirit,
and bring you to wholeness in abundant life. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN

ELW #611

“I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say”

- 1 I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"Come unto me and rest;
lay down, O weary one, lay down
your head upon my breast."
I came to Jesus as I was,
so weary, worn, and sad;
I found in him a resting-place,
and he has made me glad.

- 2 I heard the voice of Jesus say,
 "Behold, I freely give
 the living water, thirsty one;
 stoop down and drink and live."
 I came to Jesus, and I drank
 of that life-giving stream;
 my thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
 and now I live in him.
- 3 I heard the voice of Jesus say,
 "I am this dark world's light;
 look unto me, your morn shall rise,
 and all your day be bright."
 I looked to Jesus, and I found
 in him my star, my sun;
 and in that light of life I'll walk
 till trav'ling days are done.

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

Let us pray. God of spirit and truth, **we thirst to know and to be known, no longer fragmented but whole. When we are bound by believing we cannot share anything in common. Stay with us and reveal our shared longings, that we might rejoice together. For you are the one we seek, the one we ask others to come and see. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

Word

BIBLE READING

Exodus 17:1-7

PSALM *(read responsively)*

Psalm 95:1-7

- 1 Come, let us sing to the LORD;
let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation.
- 2 Let us come before God's presence with thanksgiving
and raise a loud shout to the LORD with psalms.
- 3 For you, LORD, are a great God,
and a great ruler above all gods.

- 4 In your hand are the caverns of the earth;
the heights of the hills are also yours.
- 5 The sea is yours, for you made it,
and your hands have molded the dry land.
- 6 Come, let us worship and bow down,
let us kneel before the LORD our maker.
- 7 For the LORD is our God, and we are the people of God's pasture
and the sheep of God's hand.
Oh, that today you would hear God's voice!

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION TFF #98 "Open Our Eyes, Lord"

Open our eyes, Lord,
We want to see Jesus
To reach out and touch Him
And say that we love Him

Open our ears, Lord
And help us to listen
Open our eyes, Lord
We want to see Jesus

SERMON

"Longing for Relationship"

Pastor Julie Brenden

HYMN OF DAY *(tune of "Tallis' Canon")* "As Jesus Journeyed With His Friends"

- 1 - As Jesus journeyed with his friends,
He broke great walls and barriers down.
He showed how far God's love extends
At Jacob's Well, outside of town.
- 2 - A woman drew some water there,
And Jesus asked her for a drink.
They talked of life and truth and prayer —
His kind, warm welcome made her think.
- 3 - Though culture pushed them far apart,
He looked past things that others saw.
He saw the searching in her heart;
His love shined greater than the law.

4 - O God, when some are cast aside —
 When people here are scorned, oppressed,
 We see Christ reaching, arms stretched wide,
 To welcome, treasure, heal and bless.

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 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.

Responses: Hear us, O God, **your mercy is great.**

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

OFFERING & HYMN ELW #480 " O Bread of Life From Heaven"

- 1 O bread of life from heaven,
 O food to pilgrims given,
 O manna from above:
 feed with the blessed sweetness
 of your divine completeness
 the souls that want and need your love.

- 2 O fount of grace redeeming,
 O river ever streaming
 from Jesus' wounded side:
 come now, your love bestowing
 on thirsting souls, and flowing
 till all are fully satisfied.

- 3 We love you, Jesus, tender,
 in all your hidden splendor
 within these means of grace.
 Oh, let the veil be riven,
 and our clear eye in heaven
 behold your glory face to face.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. Blessed are you, O God, **maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

Sending

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A WORD BEFORE WE GO

Romans 5:1-11

BENEDICTION

May God who seeks you by night and by day, in death and in life,
 open your senses to the mystery of God's grace,
 enfold you through water and Spirit in Christ's love,
 and give you confidence in the Spirit's power to unbind and grant new life.
 May the Holy Trinity, + Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Mother of us all,
 bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN ELW #335 “Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross”

- 1 Jesus, keep me near the cross,
 there's a precious fountain;
 free to all, a healing stream
 flows from Calv'ry's mountain.

Refrain

**In the cross, in the cross
 be my glory ever;
 till my ransomed soul shall find
 rest beyond the river.**

- 2 Near the cross, a trembling soul,
 love and mercy found me;
 there the bright and morning star
 sheds its beams around me. ***To Refrain***
- 3 Near the cross! O Lamb of God,
 bring its scenes before me;
 help me walk from day to day
 with its shadow o'er me. ***To Refrain***
- 4 Near the cross I'll watch and wait,
 hoping, trusting ever,
 till I reach the golden strand
 just beyond the river. ***To Refrain***

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, forgiven, whole and free. **Thanks be to God.**