

Second Sunday in Lent

March 5, 2023

11:00 a.m.



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.

**Ascension Lutheran Church
827 Wildwood Avenue
Columbia, South Carolina 29203
803-786-6429
ascension.office827@gmail.com
The Reverend Jackie Utley**

WELCOME VISITORS

We are glad you are here!

- *The Lutheran Liturgical Service is meant to be interactive. You will be able to follow & participate in today's Order of Service using this Bulletin. There are helpful instructions *italicized* throughout but please ask a neighbor or the Usher if you have any questions.
- *We invite you to partake in the Lord's Supper (Holy Communion.) Juice and gluten free wafers are available.
- *Please fill out the attendance slip and place in the Offering Plate.
- *Online offerings can be made through Givelify.com and PayPal.com
- *We welcome and encourage children in the Sanctuary. However, there is a Nursery located at the very end of the main hallway.
- *The Women's Restroom is located through the left door, continuing through The Choir Room, then to the left. A Unisex/Handicap Restroom is located through the right door and is immediately to the left.
- *All activities (choirs, lunch groups, bible study, etc.) are open to all. You do not have to be a member to participate.
- *If you have interest or questions about membership, contact Pastor Jackie Utley at 803-786-6429 or jackie.utley@gmail.com

SAFETY PROCEDURES

- *Masks are optional but **strongly** encouraged if you are unvaccinated.
- *We have a large space and will continue to promote social distancing as **we do have members who are immunocompromised.**
- *Please sanitize hands upon entering Sanctuary.
- *"Passing the Peace" will be shared verbally, staying in your pew.
- *Continue to social distance when coming up to receive communion.

SERVING ASCENSION TODAY

Parish Pastor: *The Reverend Jackie Utley*

Crucifer: *Billy Browder*

Parish Musician: *Gregory Stone*

Usher: *Billy Browder*

Lector & Asst. Minister: *Rev. Herman Yoos*

Communion Assistant: *Rev. Herman Yoos*

Presiding Musician: *Ms. Frances Webb*

NOTICES

TODAY

Sunday, March 5, 2023 – 2nd Sunday in Lent

- 11:00 AM Holy Communion Service
 - *Evangelical Lutheran Worship Hymnal (ELW – cranberry hymnal)*
- 12:15 Council Meeting

The Lenten Greenery is given to the Glory of God by the Members of Ascension.

Music Ministry Notes: In the absence of our Parish Musician, Greg Stone, we would like to welcome Ms. Frances Webb back to Ascension and thank her for presiding over the music today.

THIS WEEK

Wednesday, March 8th

- 12 Noon – Lenten Lunch & Study
- 5:00 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal
- 6:00 PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal

NEXT SUNDAY

Sunday, March 12, 2023 – 3rd Sunday in Lent

- 11:00 AM Holy Communion Service

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stand as you are able.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

Pastor Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
 who journeys with us these forty days,
 and sustains us with the gift of grace.

All Amen.

Pastor Let us acknowledge before God and one another
 our need for repentance and God's mercy.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Pastor Holy God,

**All we confess to you our faults and failings.
 Too often we neglect and do not trust your holy word;
 we take for ourselves instead of giving to others;
 we spoil rather than steward your creation;
 we cause hurt though you call us to heal;
 we choose fear over compassion.
 Forgive us, renew us, and lead us,
 as we seek to follow in your way of life.
 Amen.**

Pastor Hear the good news:
 God so loved the world that God gave the only Son,
 so that all may receive life.
 This promise is for you!
 God embraces you with divine mercy,
 † forgives you in Christ's name,
 and revives you in the Spirit's power.

All Amen.

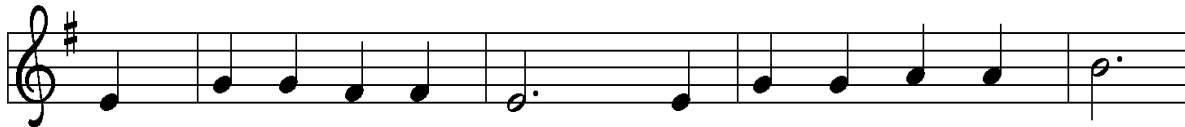
ENTRANCE HYMN ELW 796 *How Firm a Foundation*

APOSTOLIC GREETING

Pastor The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All **And also with you.**

KYRIE



1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.
2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.
3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.
Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor 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.

All **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.**

We Sit.

FIRST READING: Genesis 12:1-4a

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.

Lector The Word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 121 (*Read responsively*)

Lector ¹I lift up my eyes to the hills; from where is my help to come?

All ²My help comes from the LORD, the maker of heaven and earth.

Lector ³The LORD will not let your foot be moved
 nor will the one who watches over you fall asleep.

All ⁴Behold, the keeper of Israel will neither slumber nor sleep;

Lector ⁵the LORD watches over you;
 the LORD is your shade at your right hand;

All ⁶the sun will not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.

Lector ⁷The LORD will preserve you from all evil and will keep your life.

**All ⁸The LORD will watch over your going out and your coming in,
 from this time forth forevermore.**

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

¹What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? ²For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³For what does the scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.” ⁴Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. ⁵But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness...¹³For 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. ¹⁴If 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

violation. ¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he 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.

Lector The Word of the Lord.

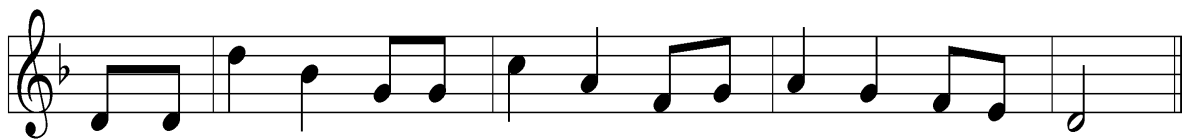
All **Thanks be to God.**

We stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION FOR LENT



We are turn - ing, Lord, to hear you; you are mer - ci - ful and kind—



slow to an - ger, rich in bless-ing, and with love to us in - clined.

THE HOLY GOSPEL: John 3:1-17

Pastor The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 3rd chapter

All **Glory to you, O Lord!**

¹Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. ²He 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 apart from the presence of God.” ³Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” ⁴Nicodemus 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?” ⁵Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ ⁸The 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.

(Gospel continues next page)

So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”⁹ Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?”¹⁰ Jesus answered him, “Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?”¹¹ “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.”¹² “If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things?”¹³ “No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.”¹⁴ “And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up,”¹⁵ “that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.”¹⁶ “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.”¹⁷ “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.”

Pastor The Gospel of the Lord!
All **Praise to you, O Christ!**

We Sit
SERMON

A brief moment of silence for reflection.

We Stand.

HYMN OF THE DAY ELW 448 *This Is the Spirit's Entry Now*

APOSTLES' CREED

Asst. Min. As the called people of God,
we profess our faith in the words of the Apostles' Creed.

**All 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.**

We sit.

INSTALLATION OF LEADERS IN THE CONGREGATION

The presiding minister addresses the assembly.

Pastor The following people have been elected by the congregation to positions of leadership. We give thanks for their willingness to serve. In baptism we are welcomed into the body of Christ and sent to share in the mission of God; we rejoice now that these sisters and brothers will lead us in our common life and our mutual mission as a congregation.

Those to be installed come forward as their names are read:

The Officers: *Mike Lever, Council Chair*
 Laura Browder, Council Secretary
 Joyce Browder, Council Treasurer

Council Members: *Catherine Garren*
 Nancy Kerr
 Herman Yoos

The presiding minister addresses those being installed.

Pastor *A reading from First Corinthians:* There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. *(1 Corinthians 12:4-7)*

You have been *elected* to positions of leadership and trust in this congregation.

You are to see that the words and deeds of this household of faith bear witness to God, who gathers us into one together with the whole church.

You are to seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support, so that the mission of Christ is carried out in this congregation, in the wider church, in this community, and in the whole world.

You are to be faithful in your specific area of serving, that the Spirit who empowers you may be glorified.

(Continues next page)

Pastor You are to be examples of faith active in love, fostering peace, harmony, and mutual understanding in this congregation.

On behalf of your sisters and brothers in Christ, I ask you:
Will you accept and faithfully carry out the duties of the offices to which you have been *elected*?

Council Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.

The assembly stands. Those being installed face the assembly. The presiding minister addresses the assembly.

Pastor People of God, I ask you:
Will you support these, your elected leaders, and will you share in the mutual ministry that Christ has given to all who are baptized?

All We will, and we ask God to help us.

Those being installed face the presiding minister, who addresses them.

Pastor I now declare you installed as council members of this congregation.
Almighty God bless you, and direct your days and your deeds in peace, that you may be faithful servants of Christ.

All Amen.

All return to their seats and the service continues with the Song of Petition and Prayers of Intercession.

SONG OF PETITION

The following will be sung before the Prayers of Intercession.



Lord, lis-ten to your chil-dren pray-ing, Lord, send your Spir-it in this place;



Lord, lis-ten to your chil-dren pray-ing, send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

The Prayers of Intercession are “The Prayers of the People.” Therefore, we invite Lay members, visitors, and children to read the prayers marked “Lay Person.” After each petition: Pastor/Lay Person: “Merciful God,” All: “receive our prayer.”

Pastor Sustained by God’s abundant mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

Lay Person O God, you so love your church. Raise up leaders who care for your people. Bless lay theologians, seminary and college professors, and all who are called to the ministry of teaching, that they form and inspire us for the work of the gospel. Merciful God,
All receive our prayer.

Lay Person O God, you so love your creation. Breathe new life into our planetary home. Guide the work of researchers, scientists, and activists who love your earth and who inspire us to care for the natural world. Merciful God,
All receive our prayer.

Lay Person O God, you so love the world. Uphold leaders who resist tyranny and oppression. Strengthen organizations that promote peace and harmony (*especially*). Direct their work to alleviate human suffering and to address its root causes. Merciful God,
All receive our prayer.

Lay Person O God, you so love your children. Bless the young in our midst, and delight us with their joy, wonder, and curiosity. Revive our ministries with children and youth and equip us all for faithful discipleship. Merciful God,
All receive our prayer.

(Prayers continue next page)

Pastor O God, you so love your people. Draw near to all who live with mental illness, depression, or addiction, and accompany them in healing and recovery. Hear the cries of those who look to you in their distress. We especially pray for these members of our Church Family who are in the hospital, at home, or in care centers. Comfort their hearts and ours with your powerful presence:

All	Tommy Boozer	Margarie Lever	Gene & Johann Roof
	Donna Clark	Pat Martin	Debbie Shumpert
	Ava Hudson	Lisa Mosely	Charlene Van Patten
	David Lever	Delores Richardson	Dorothy Van Patten

Pastor And for those others we name aloud now on our lips or silently in our hearts... Merciful God,

All receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Pastor O God, you so love your saints. As our ancestors in the faith have been a blessing to us, so inspire us by their example of holy living to be a blessing to those who come after us. Merciful God,

All receive our prayer.

Pastor We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

All Amen.

PEACE

Pastor The peace of the Lord be with you always.

All And also with you.

The people may greet one another verbally with “Peace be with you” or similar words from their pews while social distancing.

We Sit

OFFERING *Jesus, Lover of My Soul*

Healy Willan

Stand as you are able.

OFFERING SONG



Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right
spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your pres - ence, and take
not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store to me the joy of
your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Asst. Min. God of good gifts,
receive these and all our offerings as we present them
in faithful service for the sake of your gospel.

**All Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal as you pour out your
very presence through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life.
Amen.**

+ DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION +

This meal is the Lord's Supper of grace and is open to ALL Christians of any background or denomination. As Lutheran Christians, we believe in Christ's true presence in, with, and under the elements. When giving the bread, the Pastor says, "The body of Christ, given for you." When giving the cup, the Assistant says, "The blood of Christ, shed for you." Each person may respond with "Amen." If you require a gluten-free wafer or prefer grape juice, please let the Pastor know. Children who have not received communion instruction are invited to come forward for a blessing.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Pastor The Lord be with you.

All **And also with you**

Pastor Lift up your hearts!

All **We lift them to the Lord!**

Pastor Let us give thanks to the Lord our God!

All **It is right to give our thanks and praise!**

PREFACE FOR LENT

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that, renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY HOLY HOLY



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.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Pastor Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth.
In mercy for our fallen world you gave your only Son,
that all those who believe in him should not perish,
but have eternal life. We give thanks to you for the salvation
you have prepared for us through Jesus Christ.
Send now your Holy Spirit into our hearts, that we may receive
our Lord with a living faith as he comes to us in his holy supper.

All Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

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.*

LORD'S PRAYER

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

**All 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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Pastor Come and receive Jesus, our strength in the wilderness.

The Usher will invite each person to come up the center aisle to receive Holy Communion or a blessing. When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say, "The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you." and each person may respond, "Amen." After taking communion, depart down the side aisles. Please maintain appropriate social distance throughout.

LAMB OF GOD



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

COMMUNION ELW 496 *One Bread, One Body*

After all have returned to their places, stand as you are able.

COMMUNION BLESSING

Pastor The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ
strengthen us and keep us in his grace.

All Amen

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Asst. Min. Let us pray.

Embodied God,

at your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus.

**All With the eyes of our hearts open to your promise,
empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors
and touch the world with your love.**

Amen.

BLESSING

Pastor God, the giver of love,
✠ Christ, the resurrection and the life,
and the Holy Spirit of rebirth
bless you in this Lenten journey.

All Amen

SENDING HYMN ELW 451 *We Are Baptized in Christ Jesus*

DISMISSAL

Pastor Go in peace. Serve in love. Do justice.

All Thanks be to God.

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**PRAYER LIST – *Our members, family, and friends with current needs:***

- Delores Richardson
- Ara Adams
- Debra Butler
- Eleanor Jenkins, grandmother of Lily Jenkins
- Becky Smoak, former member

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Stewardship/Receipts for Sunday, February 26, 2023:

Program	\$2,373.00
Music Ministry	\$ 20.00
Memorial	\$ 572.00
Loose	\$ 40.00
Cookbook	\$ 15.00
Shrove Tuesday Offering	\$ 87.00
<u>Ash Wednesday Offering</u>	<u>\$ 277.00</u>
Total	\$3,384.00

Attendance:

Sunday Worship:30
Shrove Tuesday:15
Ash Wednesday:21



LENTEN LUNCHES

Wednesdays

March 1st – March 29th

Weekly Bible Study and a light lunch will be held at 12:00 Noon in the Fellowship Hall. If you would like to sponsor a light lunch, please contact the office.

LENTEN SERVICE PROJECT

Annually we collect a separate offering through Lent to go towards an outreach or service project. Because our church is located in a “Food Desert” we are focusing on food ministries for Seminary Ridge and the greater Eau Claire area. Ascension is looking to help in various ways by opening our doors to potentially becoming a Foodshare, Inc site and hosting a farmer’s market. All special offerings during Lent will go towards replenishing the Service & Outreach Fund to be able to continue to help our neighbors and friends. If you would like to participate, please use the purple “Lenten Season” offering envelopes or mark your regular envelopes/online giving with “Lenten.”

CRAFTERS & BAKERS NEEDED

We need craft & baked items to sell during a fundraising event in June. If you are able to help, please contact the office.