

**Fourth Sunday in Lent**

*March 15, 2026*



**PRELUDE**

*We arrive from many places as music gathers us into one shared moment in the Spirit.*

**WELCOME STATEMENT**

*Everyone is invited into God's story and the life of this community.*

**PROCESSIONAL**

**"Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery"**

**ELW 334**

*We journey together as a people called into God's story, walking in the way of Jesus.*

**GREETING**

*God names us as beloved and draws us into community.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who forgives all our sins, whose mercy endures forever.

**Amen.**

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.**

## **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

*We tell the truth about our lives and hear again that grace comes first.*

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 disdain 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.**

## **CHOIR ANTHEM**

**"When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"**

**John Carter**

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## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

*We ask the Spirit to prepare our hearts for hearing God's word.*

Let us pray.

**Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

## LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

*God speaks across time and tradition: in promise, struggle, praise, and the life of Jesus.*

### OLD TESTAMENT READING

*1 Samuel 16:1-13*

*Samuel anointed David even though he was the eighth-oldest son of Jesse and did not match his brothers in height or other physical characteristics. With the anointing came endowment with the Spirit of the Lord, designating David as the Lord's chosen successor to Saul.*

A reading from First Samuel.

The Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the Lord said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.' Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do, and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." Samuel did what the Lord commanded and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling and said, "Do you come peaceably?" He said, "Peaceably. I have come to sacrifice to the Lord; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely his anointed is now before the Lord." But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him, for the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart." Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The Lord has not chosen any of these." Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him, for we will not sit down until he comes here." He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. The Lord said, "Rise and anoint him, for this is the one." Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

Holy wisdom, holy word.

**Thanks be to God.**

### PSALM RESPONSE

*Psalm 23*

*We give voice to God's faithfulness, participating in the living story of God's mercy and love by echoing the ancient prayers of God's people.*

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.

**The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters.**

You restore my soul, O LORD, and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

**Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

**NEW TESTAMENT READING**

*Ephesians 5:8-14*

*Because we now live in the divine light which is Jesus Christ, we conduct our lives in ways that reflect the light of Christ, so that our activity is truly pleasing to God.*

A reading from Ephesians.

Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Walk as children of light, for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness; rather, expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly, but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

“Sleeper, awake!  
Rise from the dead,  
and Christ will shine on you.”

Holy wisdom, holy word.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** “Let Your Stedfast Love Come to Us, O Lord” *ELW Setting 1, pg 103*

S103

Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord.

Save us as you prom-ised; we will trust your word.

*Jesus heals a man born blind, provoking a hostile reaction that he regards as spiritual blindness to the things of God.*

The gospel according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

As Jesus walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am he." But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the Sabbath." Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind, but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him. Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment, so that those who do not see may see and those who do see may become blind." Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **SERMON**

Rev. Phillip Potaczek

*We hear God's promise proclaimed to us, and the Spirit works in our hearts to make it real.*

## **HYMN OF THE DAY**

“Dearest Jesus, at Your Word”

ELW 520

*We respond to the promises of God in song.*

## **PROFESSION OF FAITH**

The Nicene Creed

ELW pg 104

*We join the wider church in naming the story that holds us.*

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

*We entrust all into God's care.*

*After each prayer petition, please respond:* Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great!**

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

## **SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

*We offer signs of Christ's peace, joining God's work of reconciliation.*

The peace of Christ be with you always.  
**And also with you.**

Let us share with one another a sign of Christ's peace.

## **INVITATION TO THE OFFERING**

In the wilderness of Lent, God meets us with mercy.  
**From that mercy, generosity is born. We offer gifts and ourselves as signs of hope in a hurting world.**

*We return our gifts to God, offering ourselves for the life of the world.*

**Verse 1**

Amazing grace how sweet the sound  
That saved a wretch like me  
I once was lost but now I'm found  
Was blind but now I see

**Verse 2**

Tw'as grace that taught my heart to fear  
And grace my fears relieved  
How precious did that grace appear  
The hour I first believed

**Chorus**

My chains are gone I've been set free  
My God my Savior has ransomed me  
And like a flood His mercy reigns  
Unending love amazing grace

**Verse 3**

The Lord has promised good to me  
His word my hope secures  
He will my shield and portion be  
As long as life endures  
(Chorus)

**Verse 4**

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow  
The sun forbear to shine  
But God who called me here below  
Will be forever mine  
Will be forever mine  
You are forever mine

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**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's name.  
Amen**

**THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

*We lift our hearts and give thanks for God's life-giving work.*

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**

*We remember God's faithfulness and join heaven and earth in praise.*

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy ... And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join in their unending hymn:

## **HOLY, HOLY, HOLY**

ELW Setting 1, page 108

5108

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

## **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

*We recall the story of Jesus and ask the Spirit to make us one.*

Blessed are you, O God of the universe... With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's passover from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

O God of resurrection and new life: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine. Bless this feast. Grace our table with your presence.

**Come, Holy Spirit.**

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread. Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world. Breathe new life into us. Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.

**Come, Holy Spirit.**

With your holy ones of all times and places, with the earth and all its creatures, with sun and moon and stars, we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

*Modern Version*

*We pray as Jesus taught, trusting God for what we need.*

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, we pray as our Savior taught us:

**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 HOLY COMMUNION**

*All are welcome to God's table of grace, receiving Christ's presence as nourishment for the journey.*

## **DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION**

*All who wish to know the love of God in Jesus Christ are invited to Holy Communion. Inform a communion assistant if you need a gluten-free host. Grape juice is located in the center ring of the tray. If you are not receiving the sacrament today, please come forward with your arms crossed over your chest for a blessing.*

## **COMMUNION HYMN**

**"You Are Mine"**

**ELW 581**

*Singing in response to God's gift, we enter more deeply into the presence of Christ.*

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

*We ask for strength to live what we have received.*

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*We share news and opportunities to live God's love together as a community.*

## **BLESSING**

*God's promise goes with us into whatever comes next.*

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.**

**RECESSIONAL**

“Open My Heart to Your Love”

Hans Peterson

*With hearts lifted, we turn toward the world as Christ's people.*

Open my heart to your love, oh God  
Open my eyes to your grace  
Open my life to receive your word  
Send wisdom and courage to follow your way

Healer of nations and broken hearts  
you are the pathway to peace  
Singer of life in the face of death  
may we be your vessels so love will increase

Open my heart to your love, oh God  
Open my eyes to your grace  
Open my life to receive your word  
Send wisdom and courage to follow your way

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**SENDING**

*We are sent to love, serve, and live the story we have shared.*

Our Eucharist has ended. **Now it must be lived.**  
Go in peace. Believe the good news! **Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE**

“This Is Amazing Grace”

Riddle, Farro, Wickham

*As worship concludes, music strengthens and inspires us for the journey ahead.*

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### **\*\*\*Trinity at a Glance\*\*\***

- **No Affirmation Classes will be held for the rest of March and no class on April 5th.** Classes will resume on April 12th.
- **Please excuse our typo!** The total balance reflected in the Congregational Annual Report for the General Fund should say \$72,371.60. Also, the \$1,000 noted on page 27 for Growing Hope Globally (GHG) Calendars should actually read \$500, as reflected on page 10 for GHG.
- **Join us for Soup Suppers during Lent** on Wednesdays at 6 pm, followed by Lenten Evening Prayer (including music from Holden Village) at 7 pm. All are welcome! *If you are bringing soup, please arrive at 5:45pm to set up your food.* Thank you!
- Please note that there will be **NO Soup Supper on Wednesday, March 25th.**
- **Please stop by the Giving Tree** in the narthex and pick up a tag or two for Mission/Outreach's next project. **We are collecting items for PADS Move-Out Kits.** These kits are given to clients who are leaving the shelter to help them get started as they move on. Thank you so much for your generosity!
- **Easter Breakfast is Sunday, April 5th 8am.** The sign up sheet for donations is in the back by Java Junction. **Food is due April 1st.** Please mark the food "For Easter."
- **Easter Lily orders are being taken.** The lilies will decorate the Altar on Easter Sunday. The sign up sheet is in Java Junction. Cost is the same as last year, \$18 each. **Orders are due by March 16th and payment is due by March 30th.**
- **The Alice Guenther Memorial Scholarship was established in 2023 to celebrate the life and legacy of Alice Guenther and her love of music.** Her interest in music led her to pursue a career in teaching music to others. She was a music teacher for the Ottawa Elementary Schools for 23 years. Alice was also the organist at Trinity for 40 years. She had a lifelong love of music in the church as she believed it enhances the worship services. The purpose of the scholarship is to award a student for their music involvement in church and/or school and help support the student(s) who demonstrates a love for music. To apply for the Alice Guenther Scholarship, you must be: an active member of Trinity, a high school Senior planning to further your education through college or trade school, and active in music at Trinity or active in music at your respective high school. **Applications must be completed by April 2nd. Scholarship will be awarded May 2nd.** Scholarship applications are available at the office or at the Information Kiosk in Java Junction.
- **Endowment Fund grant applications** are available in the church office and on Trinity's website (in the footer under 'Quick References'). They are also available in a red folder in the black bin under the 'Elevator' sign at the back of the sanctuary. Applications are **due no later than March 31st.**
- **The next blood drive is Wednesday, April 8, 2026.** Please contact Carol Wahlstrom to donate or to volunteer to help: [carolwahlstrom@gmail.com](mailto:carolwahlstrom@gmail.com).
- There is a **Lost and Found** bin by the coat rack in the Sanctuary. There is also a ring found and held in the office. If items are not claimed, they will be donated to the garage sale. If the ring is yours, please call the office 815-434-0596 or send an email to [tlcoffice@trinitylutheranottawa.com](mailto:tlcoffice@trinitylutheranottawa.com).
- **National Quilting Day, March 21st,** is celebrated by Lutheran World Relief, who for more than 80 years have given over 28 million quilts to people in need around the world and in the U.S. Our growing group of Trinity Stitchers made 78 quilts last year, 54 of them were sent to LWR. We are thankful for your donations of fabric. Funds are needed to buy batting, the inner layer of quilts. **Easter Breakfast will have a free will offering for the Trinity Stitchers account so that we can continue our mission.** Funds can also be directly given to this account. Thank you for your continued support.
- **The Annual Trinity Rummage Sale will be held Fri, May 1st, 2-4pm for set up & 4-7pm for the sale. Also Sat, May 2nd 9-4pm for the sale. Clean up date TBD.** We are now taking donations for this event. If you are interested in helping, please contact Carol Wahlstrom, [carolwahlstrom@gmail.com](mailto:carolwahlstrom@gmail.com). We will need help for set up, during the sale dates & for clean up.

- **Marj Nelson thanks everyone** for their past and continued prayers for her and her kidney donor, that all goes well during her transplant in late summer/early fall.

- **CURRENT FINANCIAL REPORT:**

- Feb Income = \$26,430.81 (Income YTD = \$46,261.88)
- Feb Expense = \$21,148.40 (Expense YTD = \$42,676.60)
- Income Less Expense = \$5,282.41 (Income Less Expense YTD = \$3,585.28)

- **THIS WEEK @ TRINITY:**

- **Monday (3/16):** 9a Tai Chi (Fellowship Hall)  
10a Drum Fit (Community Room)  
10a Staff Meeting (Office)
- **Tuesday (3/17):** 8a L.E.A.S.E. Screening (Conference Room)  
10a Sit Fit (Community Room)  
4:30p Property Committee (Conference Room)  
7p TRMS Board Meeting (Community Room)
- **Wednesday (3/18)** 1p Bible Study (Community Room)  
6p Soup Supper (Fellowship Hall)  
6:30p Choir Rehearsal (Choir Room)  
7p Lenten Evening Prayer
- **Thursday (3/19):** 10a Sit Fit (Community Room)  
7p Church Council Meeting (Board Room)
- **Friday (3/20):** Lutherdale Youth Retreat  
7a Sunrise Rotary (Fellowship Hall)
- **Saturday (3/21):** Lutherdale Youth Retreat  
*National Quilting Day!* 
- **Sunday (3/22)** *No 1st Communion Class*  
Quilt Sunday!  
9a Sunday Session  
9a Affirmation Class  
10a Holy Communion

**WORSHIP ASSISTANT SCHEDULE -**

*Please sign up using the binder at the back of the aisle.*

**Sunday, March 15, 2026**

Crucifer/Acolyte: *Reagan Duffield*  
Ushers:  
Lector: *Jackie Smith*  
Communion Assistants: *Brad Gromm, Jane Goetz*  
Altar Guild: *Jan Beckman & Becky Glaser*  
Video Tech: *Anne Lauterjung*  
Music Directors: *Matt Makeever & Mary Heider*  
Altar Flowers:

**Sunday, March 22, 2026**

Crucifer/Acolyte: *Pearl Manning*  
Ushers:  
Lector: *Shannon Matteson*  
Communion Assistants: *Shannon Matteson, Mike Matteson, Ann Enke*  
Altar Guild: *Ann Enke & Becky Glaser*  
Video Tech: *Anne Lauterjung*  
Music Directors: *Matt Makeever & Mary Heider*  
Altar Flowers: *In Loving Memory of Joan Cantrell from Jan Beckman*