

First Sunday in Lent

February 22, 2026 – 10am

Modern Worship, ELW Setting 3



Prelude Music

Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

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

C: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt and blots out all offenses.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Gracious God,

C: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P: For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word: Gracious God,

C: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P: For failing to recognize your coming reign, and for hindering the work of the Spirit: Gracious God,

C: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P: For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition, and for disdaining the living water Christ offers: Gracious God,

C: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P: For disregarding voices from the margin, and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world: Gracious God,

C: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P: For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent, and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life: Gracious God,

C: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P: 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.

C: Amen.

Gathering Song:

I Want Jesus to Walk with Me

ELW 325

Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all!

C: And also with you!

Kyrie

A: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

(continued on next page)

A: For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

A: For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

A: For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

A: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord. **C: Amen.**

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray together,

C: Lord God, our strength, the struggle between good and evil rages within and around us, and the devil and all the forces that defy you tempt us with empty promises. Keep us steadfast in your word, and when we fall, raise us again and restore us 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 2:15-17; 3:1-7

Human beings were formed with great care, to be in relationship with the creator, creation, and one another. The serpent's promise to the first couple that their eyes would be opened led, ironically, to the discovery only that they were naked.

15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden, 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die." 3:1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?'" 2 The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, 3 but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" 4 But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die, 5 for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." 6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. 7 Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

Psalm: Psalm 32

1 Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is put away!

2 Happy are they to whom the Lord imputes no guilt, and in whose spirit there is no guile!

3 While I held my tongue, my bones withered away, because of my groaning all day long.

4 For your hand was heavy upon me day and night; my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.

5 Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not conceal my guilt. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord." Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.

6 Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of trouble; when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.

7 You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

8 "I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go; I will guide you with my eye.

(continued on next page)

9 Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding; who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will not stay near you.”

10 Great are the tribulations of the wicked; but mercy embraces those who trust in the Lord.

11 Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the Lord; shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

Gospel Acclamation:

Return to the Lord

S 142b

Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and

stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in

The musical notation consists of three staves of music in a single system, written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first staff begins with a treble clef and a B-flat key signature, followed by a series of quarter and eighth notes. The second staff continues the melody with similar note values. The third staff concludes the phrase with a final cadence. The lyrics are placed below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes.

Gospel: Matthew 4:1-11

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

P: A reading from... **C: Glory to You, O Lord.**

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.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Pastor Paul Busekist

Song of the Day:

On Eagle’s Wings

ELW 787

Nicene Creed

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 the Church / Sign of the Peace

Offering

Offering Song:

David Husser

Offertory:

Create In Me a Clean Heart O God

ELW 186

Offering Prayer

A: Let us pray together.

C: 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.

Words of Institution

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.

Communion (*Please note: gluten-free wafers and white grape juice cups are available*)

Communion Songs:

Thy Holy Wings
Jesus, Still Lead On

ELW 613

ELW 624

Final Blessing

P: 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.

C: Amen.

Sending Song:

Lead Me, Guide Me

ELW 768

Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Believe the good news.

C: Thanks be to God.



Bethlehem February 22, 2026
LUTHERAN CHURCH

1050 Peninsula Drive
Traverse City, MI 49686
(231) 947-9880
www.bethlehemtc.org

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

2/22—Sarah Denton

2/26—Crystal Fernholz

2/26—Fay Miller

2/24—Paul Rundhaug

2/26—Barb Beyer

Worship Servants for February 22

Preaching & Presiding—Pr. Paul Busekist

Assisting Minister—Peggy Burns

Lector—Nancy Pflasterer

Musicians: David Husser, Phil & Denice Bossardet, Pr Paul

Today's altar flowers are donated: **NO ALTAR FLOWERS DURING LENT**

Hospitality: Dan & Laura Hahn

A/V—Paul Ton / Barbara Oster

Cookies/Coffee—Diane Cunningham / Mary Ann Tanis

Welcome Table— Volunteer

Bell Ringer—Tim Goebel

Front Door Monitor—Jana & Tom Rockne

Altar Guild—Kate Holtfreter / Barbara Oster

Counters: Kate Holtfreter / Mike McCarty

Annual Ski Trip! All Are Welcome! Ready to brave the winter cold and join us on the slopes? Our annual intergenerational Ski Trip to Crystal Mountain is **this afternoon!** All ages are welcome to join us, both for skiing and for dinner at Geno's afterward. We plan to meet at Crystal Mountain at **1:30pm.** (This is a pay-your-own-way event - youth who volunteered at the pancake breakfast fundraiser will have their passes covered.) If skiing isn't your thing, you are still welcome to come just to watch the fun! We hope to see you there! Reach out to Alanna with any questions.

Sledding Party! Let's enjoy this beautiful winter wonderland! Bring a sled and join us for sledding at the fantastic Twin Lakes hill on **Saturday, February 28th at 12:30pm.** Snacks and warm drinks will be provided! If you don't want to sled, you are still invited - it's enjoyable to watch the fun while sipping hot chocolate!

"A Watered Garden : A Collaborative Devotional for Lent 2026": Here's a link to an email delivery service which Bethlehem members, friends, and family can subscribe to and receive these devotions each day from Ash Wednesday through Easter Sunday:

<http://eepurl.com/bcbuf9>

The Fellowship Committee is looking for help with the Thursday Lenten meals. Funds are available to purchase a meal or ingredients to prepare the meal. There is also opportunity to receive support from Thrivent if we have 2 weeks' notice. Attendance at the meals varies but is typically 15-25. The dates for the meals are as follows:

February 26

March 19

March 5

March 26

March 12

The needs are for providing the main meal, desserts, set up and clean-up. Please see the sign-up sheets in the gathering space or contact Linda Hansen at farfromtown@aol.com or 231-590-4793 for questions or more information. Thank you.

Below are the important dates for Lent through Easter.

February 26 – Lenten Meal and Holden EP Service 5:45pm / 7:00pm

March 5 -- Lenten Meal and Taize 1 Service 5:45pm / 7:00pm

March 12 -- Lenten Meal and Behold Our Light Service 5:45pm / 7:00pm

March 19 – Lenten Meal and TBD Service 5:45pm / 7:00pm

March 26 -- Lenten Meal and Holden EP Service 5:45pm / 7:00pm

March 29 – Palm Sunday service 10:00am (Live Streamed)

April 2 – Maundy Thursday service 7:00pm (Live Streamed)

April 3 – Good Friday service 7:00pm (Live Streamed)

April 4 – Easter Vigil service 7:00pm (Live Streamed)

April 5 – Easter services 8:00am / 10:00am (only 10:00am Live Streamed)

April 5 – Easter Brunch 9:00am

Help the BLC Food Pantry receive \$1,000 from Munson Healthcare's "Voices For Food Access" campaign! Artists from across Northern Michigan submitted artwork that showcased what food access meant to them - on behalf of Bethlehem, Cindy Monroe has submitted photos of the BLC food pantry freshly stocked and and completely empty 48 hours later, along with a wonderful poem she wrote. The entries with the most votes will be awarded \$1,000 to go toward the food pantry of their choice! All you have to do is visit the website listed in your weekly email (unfortunately it's too long to include here!), scroll until you see the BLC food pantry image with Cindy's poem, and hit the thumbs up button on it to vote! **Voting is now open until February 25th!**

Cake Bakers Needed! Calling all cake bakers! Last year, we provided breads and rolls for the winter Single MOMMS event. Single MOMM holds these event nights four times a year, designed to create a fun and safe space where single moms can take a break from everyday life, connect with each other, be encouraged, and enjoy a meal together. We're excited to support their Event Night again this year! This event is a carnival theme, and will include a traditional cake walk! That's where we come in - we are hoping to have at least 20 cakes to contribute, although more is always great. There is a sign-up list in the Narthex, along with a variety of cake/pie boxes. **Please sign up to bake a cake, and take a box home to put it in! Cakes will need to be left in the church kitchen (marked for Single MOMM) no later than Thursday, March 5th.** If you have any questions, please contact Alanna at alanna.steffunick@bethlehemtc.org.

FUNDRAISER FOR HABITAT for HUMANITY: Maybe you cannot wield a hammer or travel to a building site, but we all can eat! Culver's on Munson will donate a portion of all purchases made **5-8pm on March 11.** Bring family, friends, and neighbors and help raise funds for Habitat.

Social Ministry/Outreach update: Meeting in the Fellowship Hall after the service on **March 15.**

So many of you have done so much since our last meeting in Oct and for that we are truly thankful. Please come and receive quick updates on Fellowship, Food Pantry, Safe Harbor and other activities. Be sure to take a look at the very informative poster presentation on the Baby Pantry. Our current most pressing need is for more volunteers to prepare a community meal the 4th Sunday of the month at Grace Episcopal. Even if you can only come once or twice per year that would still be a great help. And be thinking about Freedom Builders: July 21-25, or Habitat for Humanity sometime in the future. If you cannot come but have an interest in any area be sure to contact Cindy Monroe or Jim Hutchison.

Giving Statements Available Your individual giving statements are now available in your mailbox in the Narthex. The statement covers giving from January 1st through December 31, 2025. Please pick them up at your convenience. To save on postage, I will mail out the ones not picked up by the end of February. Thank you for your generous support for the programs and ministries of your church. We are all blessed by your faithful giving. Your Bookkeeper

Grief Group meets the 1st and 3rd Monday of the month from 3:30-4:30 in the gathering space, unless the TC schools are closed. Any questions contact Peggy Burns 232-392-6913.

Sunday School and Sunday's Adult Education hold their classes at 9:15am on Sunday. The Wednesday Zoom Book/Bible Study meets at 1:30pm with a study of the book of James using the book *James: Walking in Wisdom* by Lydia Brownback. Please see either Pr Paul or Barbara for more information.

Chair Yoga will continue meeting at 3:00pm on Mondays only. It is still \$5 per class. The group will not meet on March 9th and March 16th.

Today's Prayer Recipients: Please send any changes or additions by email to admin@bethlehemtc.org

Harper Wiemerslage,
Jerry Hill,
John Block,
Roy DuMond,
Mary Woodring,
Norm Fred,
Lynn,
Steve,
Sherry,
Bob,
Ron Hellenga,
Pat Burton

John Stretlien,
Judy Fenton,
Cindy Hitesman,
Richard Fernholz,
Julie Lapeer,
Lee,
Chris,
Dale and Cheryl,
Leroy,
Julie Barrett,
Patti,

Sharon,
Kyle,
Ken,
Marianne,
Christine,
Janet,
Cheryl
Pat,
Greg,
Jan Schmidt

The church calendar is below. Please be sure to notify the office (admin@bethlehemtc.org or 231.947.9880) to be sure that your group is of the calendar.

Sunday, February 22

9:15am—Adult Education (YR)
9:15am—Sunday School
10:00am—Worship Service (S)
1:30pm—Skiing at Crystal Mountain

Monday, February 23

2:30pm—Choir (S)
3:00pm—Chair Yoga (FH)
3:30pm—Handbell Choir (S)

Tuesday, February 24

Bulletin articles due today

9:00am—Property Work Group
9:00am—LWR Quilters (FH)

Wednesday, February 25

11:30am—Music Rehearsal
1:30pm—Zoom Book & Bible Study (Zoom & YR)

Thursday, February 26

5:30pm—ACA (Library)
5:45pm—Lenten Meal (FH)
7:00pm—Lenten Service (Sanctuary)

Friday, February 27

6:00pm—LifeRing Recovery Group (Library)

Saturday, February 28

12:30PM—Sledding at Twin Lakes
8:00pm—AA (FH)

Sunday, March 1

9:15am—Adult Education (YR)
9:15am—Sunday School
10:00am—Worship Service (S)
12:30pm—Youth Discipleship Class (YR)

A Watered Garden

Christian Worship and Earth's Ecology



Sign up for online Lenten devotions sent directly to your email address each day

Pastors from all over Michigan and elsewhere, including Pastor Paul, have written these reflections.

<http://eepurl.com/bcbuf9>

Do you like the Beatles, Pat Benatar, Bob Marley, Elvis (and other artists from the last few decades)? Turns out scripture has some things to say about love, relationship, and some connections to these rockers' lyrics! Check out Verse ONTAP on March 15th!

VERSE ONTAP

Old & New Testament Appendix Project

Theme: Songs of Love & Emotion – March 15th

5:30 - 7:00pm
@ The Workshop
workshopbrewing.com
221 Garland St, Traverse City, MI

Join us as we
Eat, Drink, Listen and Be Merry!

A partnership between...

Bethlehem
Traverse City Church

