

# Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 15, 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 disdain 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:

*There Is a Balm in Gilead*

**ELW 614**

## 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.**

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: 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.**

## Children's Message

Peggy Burns, S.A.M.

## First 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.*

1 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." 2 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.'" 3 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." 4 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?" 5 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. 6 When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely his anointed is now before the Lord." 7 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." 8 Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." 9 Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." 10 Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The Lord has not chosen any of these." 11 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." 12 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." 13 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.

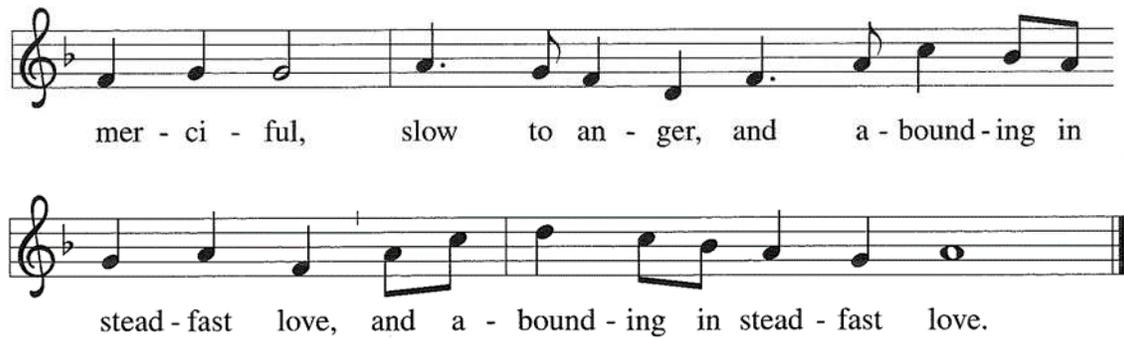
L: The Word of the Lord

**C: Thanks be to God**

## Gospel Acclamation:

### Return to the Lord

The musical notation is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody consists of two phrases. The first phrase is: Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and. The second phrase is: for he is gra - cious and. The notation includes a fermata over the final note of the second phrase. The number 'S 142b' is written in the upper right corner of the staff.



## Gospel: John 9:1-41

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

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

1 As Jesus walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. 2 His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” 3 Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. 4 We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. 5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” 6 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, 7 saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. 8 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?” 9 Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am he.” 10 But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” 11 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.” 12 They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.” 13 They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. 14 Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. 15 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.” 16 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. 17 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.” 18 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 19 and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” 20 His parents answered, “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind, 21 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.” 22 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. 23 Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.” 24 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.” 25 He answered, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.” 26 They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” 27 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?” 28 Then they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. 29 We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.” 30 The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. 31 We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. 32 Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. 33 If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” 34 They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?” And they drove him out. 35 Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” 36 He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.”

*(continued on next page)*

37 Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." 38 He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him. 39 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." 40 Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" 41 Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

## Sermon

*Peggy Burns, S.A.M.*

## Song of the Day:

*Healer of Our Every Ill*

**ELW 612**

## 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:

*Zeke Clemons*

#### Offertory:

*Create in Me a Clean Heart*

**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:**

***The King of Love My Shepherd Is  
Amazing Grace***

**ELW 502  
ELW 779**

## 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:**

***Your Grace is Enough***

### **Verse 1**

Great is Your faithfulness O God; You wrestle with the sinner's restless heart. You lead us by still waters into mercy and nothing can keep us apart.

### **Pre-Chorus**

So remember Your people, remember Your children, remember Your promise O God.

### **Chorus 1**

Your grace is enough, Your grace is enough, Your grace is enough for me.

### **Verse 2**

Great is Your love and justice, God of Jacob; You use the weak to lead the strong. You lead us in the song of Your salvation, and all Your people sing along.

### **Pre-Chorus**

Remember Your people, remember Your children, remember Your promise O God.

### **Chorus 1**

Your grace is enough, Your grace is enough, Your grace is enough for me.

### **Chorus 2**

Yeah, Your grace is enough; heaven reaches out to us. Your grace is enough for me. God, I sing Your grace is enough; I'm covered in Your love. Your grace is enough for me for me, for me.

## Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Believe the good news.

**C: Thanks be to God.**



**Bethlehem** March 15, 2026  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

1050 Peninsula Drive  
Traverse City, MI 49686  
(231) 947-9880  
[www.bethlehemtc.org](http://www.bethlehemtc.org)

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

3/15—Jim Boyd

3/15—Ann Rundhaug

3/21—Susie Burton

### **Worship Servants for March 15**

Presiding—Pr. Paul Busekist

Preaching—Peggy Burns, S.A.M.

Assisting Minister—Barbara Oster

Lector—Jan Stretlien

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

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

Hospitality: Jim & Dorene Boyd

A/V—Dale Wentzloff / Jim Hinds

Cookies/Coffee—Diane Cunningham / Mary Ann Tanis

Welcome Table— Volunteer

Bell Ringer—Tim Goebel

Front Door Monitor—Tom & Jana Rockne

Altar Guild—Mary Ann Tanis / Gail Goldsmith

Counters: Laura Hahn / Laura Okimi

**Social Ministry/Outreach update** Our next meeting for anyone interested TODAY after the service in the fellowship hall. Hope to conclude the meeting by noon so you can all enjoy your Sunday meal plans. Those planning to volunteer at Grace on April 26 will be asked to stay an extra 10 minutes so we can plan our first meal.

**Verse O.N.T.A.P.:** Do you like the Beatles, Pat Benatar, Bob Marley, Elvis (and other artists from the last few decades)? Turns out that scripture has some things to say about love, relationship, and some connections to these rockers' lyrics! Check out Verse O.N.T.A.P. TONIGHT 5:30pm-7:00pm at The Workshop 221 Garland St.

**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.

**Creation Care Team update:** our next Creation Care core team meeting will be Monday, March 16th at 6pm in the Youth Room. Subcommittee members may be meeting before as needed. Contact Paul Wiemerslage, Tina Dohm or Pastor Paul for any updates.

**New Life Group** will meet Monday March 16 from 6:00-7:30. All are welcome. We will be making plans to move forward with our ministry. It will be a Zoom meeting. The link will be sent out or contact Peggy Burns

**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 *A Watered Garden* by Benjamin M. Stewart. The group will not meet this Wednesday March 18th but will finish *A Watered Garden* on March 25th. A new book, *Mary's Memoirs The Hidden Years*, will start after Easter. See Pr. Paul or Barbara if you have any questions.

**There are no flowers on the altar during Lent. Please sign up for a Sunday beginning with Easter Sunday, April 5th**

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

**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 remaining meals are as follows: March 19 March 26

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.**

March 19 – Lenten Meal and Holden EP Service 5:45pm / 7:00pm (Live Streamed)

March 26 – Lenten Meal and Taize 2 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

(Sign-up sheets are in the Gathering Space for the brunch)

**Synod Assembly May 15 & 16, 2026** Bethlehem is looking for 1-2 people who would be interested in attending and representing our church at the North/West Lower Michigan Synod Assembly at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Portage MI. Pr Paul will not be able to attend because of a funeral and wedding. Peggy Burns will take his place. This event will be held in person this year. The theme is CONNECTED, based on the message of John provided in Revelation 5:13: Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying:

“To him who sits on the throne and to the lamb be praise and honor and glory and power for ever and ever.”

If you are interested, please talk to Pastor Paul or Barbara Oster. Cost will be covered for the Assembly, gas, food and lodging for the night of May 15th. See the event information and registration on the North West Michigan Synod Website.

**Voices for Food Access** Thanks to all who voted but Bethlehem did not win \$1,000. The 2 winning adult entries were the final drawing and the one in which fresh veggies covered the face of a woman and man. Bethlehem will receive a free entry to the Food Bowls event and \$50 to be spent on fruits and veggies. Thanks again if you took the time to vote.

**Social Ministry/Outreach update:** Monthly outreach meal: We have a confirmed interested group of 10 volunteers to prepare a community meal the 4th Sunday of the month at Grace Episcopal. We would like to have 6 more volunteers so each volunteer is only needed about 6 times per year. Please prayerfully consider this service which we will begin offering in April. Even if you can only come once or twice in a year, your help will be appreciated.

**Freedom Builders:** Orientation meeting is July 21 at 6pm and work days July 22-25 7:30am 'til done meeting at their new warehouse at 571 West Commerce Drive

**Habitat for Humanity build:** It helps to plan ahead... could you assist with a build project in Florida in late October or early November? Or perhaps a different build project? Dates are not certain at this time, but you could set aside some time and money. Or see the separate announcement about the fundraiser at Culver's this month.

**REMEMBER:** If questions, concerns, or ideas contact Cindy Monroe or Jim Hutchison.

**Giving Statements Update:** There are still some giving statements that have not been picked up. These will not be mailed out unless you call the church office and ask for them to be mailed.. Your Bookkeeper

**Spotlight on Zeke:** So many of us enjoy Zeke's talents with religious music, but did you know that he plays other kinds of music at various locations in the Traverse City area? Here is a list of his engagements in the next month that are close to TC: **3/18, 3/25** – The Pub TC, Traverse City 7:00pm

**A big thank you to all who have turned in Olesons' slips.** On March 8, 2026, we received a check from Olesons for \$294.24. In 2025, we received a total of \$1031.80 from people turning in their Olesons receipts. We will see how well we do this year! Thank you so much to everyone who turned in their Olesons receipts. Also, the area for the Oleson receipts is in the lower cabinets below the mailboxes (under the A-B-Cs...). The cabinet door is marked with the receptacle inside. Unfortunately, we are no longer collecting the receipts from Family Fair or any other grocery store. We just collect for Olesons

**Today's Prayer Recipients: Please send any changes or additions by email to [admin@bethlehemtc.org](mailto:admin@bethlehemtc.org)**

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

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

Sharon,  
Kyle,  
Christine,  
Janet,  
Cheryl  
Pat,  
Jan Schmidt,  
Pat Burton,  
Gretchen  
Shelley Miller

**The church calendar is below. Please be sure to notify the office ([admin@bethlehemtc.org](mailto:admin@bethlehemtc.org) or 231.947.9880) to be sure that your group is on the calendar.**

**Sunday, March 15**

9:15am—Adult Education (YR)  
9:15am—Sunday School  
10:00am—Worship Service (S)  
11:30am—Social Ministry/Outreach meeting (FH)  
12:30pm—Youth Discipleship Class (YR)  
5:30pm—Verse O.N.T.A.P.

**Monday, March 16**

11:00am—Finance Committee (CR)  
2:30pm—Choir (S)  
3:30pm—Grief Group (GS)  
3:30pm—Handbell Choir (S)  
6:00pm—New Life Meeting (Zoom)  
6:00pm—Creation Care Meeting (YR)

**Tuesday, March 17**

**Bulletin articles due today**

9:00am—Property Work Group  
9:00am—LWR Quilters (FH)  
6:30pm—Council Meeting (FH)

**Wednesday, March 18**

11:30am—Music Rehearsal

**Thursday, March 19**

5:30pm—ACA (Library)  
5:45pm—Lenten Meal (FH)  
7:00pm—Third Thursday/Lenten Service (S)

**Friday, March 20**

**STAR ARTICLES DUE TODAY**

10:00am—Sew Pieceful (FH)  
1:00pm—Lehto SG (Library)  
6:00pm—LifeRing Recovery Group (Library)

**Saturday, March 21**

7:00am—Equestrian Tack Sale set-up (FH)  
9:30am—Equestrian Tack Sale (FH)  
8:00pm—AA (FH)

**Sunday, March 22**

9:15am—Adult Education (YR)  
9:15am—Sunday School  
10:00am—Worship Service (S)

