

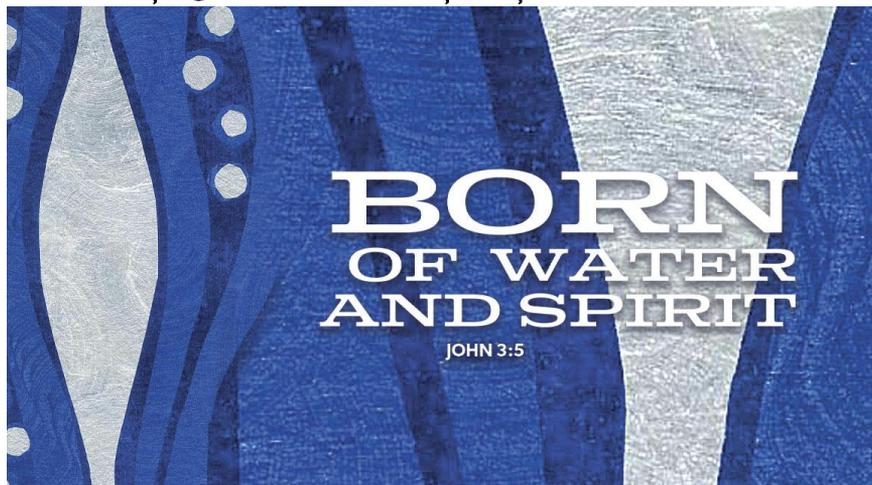
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

945 W. Round Bunch Rd., Bridge City, TX 77611

(409) 735-4573

Worshiping at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Beaumont



Second Sunday in lent

March 5, 2023

PRELUDE Variations on *Ouimette* - Benjamin Culli

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy God,

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.**

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. **Amen.**

ENTRANCE HYMN "Wash, O Lord, Our Sons and Daughters"
ELW 445



1 Wash, O God, our sons and daugh-ters, where your cleans-ing wa-ters flow.
 2 We who bring them long for nur-ture; by your milk may we be fed.
 3 Oh, how deep your ho-ly wis-dom! Un-im-ag-ined, all your ways!



Num-ber them a-mong your peo-ple; bless as Christ blessed long a-go.
 Let us join your feast, par-tak-ing cup of bless-ing, liv-ing bread.
 To your name be-glo-ry, hon-or! With our lives we wor-ship, praise!



Weave them gar-ments bright and spark-ling; com-pass them with love and light.
 God, re-new us, guide our foot-steps; free from sin and all its snares,
 We your peo-ple stand be-fore you, wa-ter-washed and Spir-it-born.



Fill, a-noint them; send your Spir-it, ho-ly dove and heart's de-light.
 one with Christ in liv-ing, dy-ing, by your Spir-it, chil-dren, heirs.
 By your grace, our lives we of-fer. Re-cre-ate us; God, trans-form!

GREETING *Please stand if you are able.*

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.**

GATHERING SONG, *Now is the Time of Grace*

MSB S403

All worshipers are invited to sing the refrain; the choir will sing the verses.

Refrain

Now is the time of grace, now is the day of sal -
va - tion. Turn now, and seek God's face,
now be-hold God's in - vi - ta - tion.

*This is the fast that God would choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to let the captives go free, and to break the yoke of oppression. **REFRAIN***

*Sharing your bread with hungry and welcoming homeless in, offering hope and offering help, this is what God requires. **REFRAIN***

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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. **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.**

Please be seated.

SECOND LESSON

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.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God**

PSALM 121

Worshippers are invited to join the choir in singing the refrain as indicated below. The cantor will sing the psalm text.



*I lift up my eyes to the hills; from where is my help to come? My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth. **REFRAIN***

*He will not let your foot be moved and he who watches over you will not fall asleep. Behold he who keeps watch over Israel shall neither slumber or sleep; the Lord himself watches over you; the Lord is your shade at your right hand, so that the sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. **REFRAIN***

*The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; it is he who shall keep you safe. The Lord shall watch over your going out and your coming in from this time forth forevermore. **REFRAIN***



FIRST LESSON

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.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God**

Please stand if you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

All worshipers are invited to sing the refrain; the choir will sing the verse.



Glo-ry and praise to you, O Lord, Je -sus Christ, Lord Je -sus Christ.

*The Son of Man must be lifted up, that whoever believes in him
may have eternal life.*

GOSPEL

John 3:1-17

The gospel according to John. **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. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” ⁹Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” ¹⁰Jesus 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. ¹²If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that 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.”

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

Please be seated.

SERMON

Please stand if you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY

“We Are Baptized in Christ Jesus”

ELW 451



1 We are bap-tized in Christ Je - sus, we are bap - tized in his death;
2 In the wa - ter and the wit - ness, in the break - ing of the bread,
3 Glo - ry be to God the Fa - ther, glo - ry be to Christ the Son,



that as Christ is raised vic - to - rious, we might live a brand new life.
in the wait - ing arms of Je - sus who is ris - en from the dead,
glo - ry to the Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er three and ev - er one;



And if we have been u - nit - ed in a dread - ful death like his,
God has made a new be - gin - ning from the ash - es of our past;
as it was in the be - gin - ning, glo - ry now re - sounds a - gain



we will all be re - u - nit - ed, for he lives.
in the los - ing and the win - ning we hold fast.
in a song that has no end - ing. . . . A - men.

NICENE CREED

Let us profess our faith in the words of the 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,
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

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

A brief silence.

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, **receive our prayer.**

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, **receive our prayer.**

O God, you so love the world. Uphold leaders who resist tyranny and oppression. Strengthen organizations that promote peace and

harmony. Direct their work to alleviate human suffering and to address its root causes. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

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 (*especially*). Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

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, **receive our prayer.**

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, **receive our prayer.**

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. **Amen.**

SHARING THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

Please be seated

RECEIVING OUR OFFERINGS

ANTHEM “God So Loved the World” - Jan Bender

OFFERING PRAYER *Those who are able shall stand.*

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

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

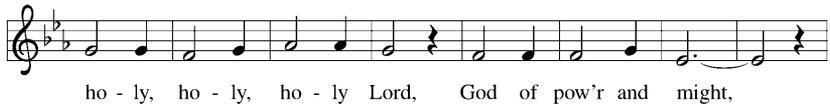
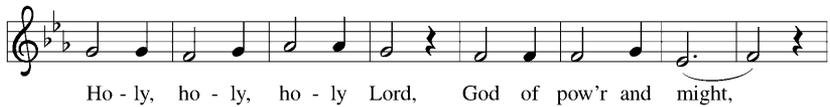
Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

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:

SANCTUS

ELW 190





Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Blessed are you, O God of the universe. Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age. Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth. Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood. Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea. Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness to the land of milk and honey. Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one. Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ. Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

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.

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. Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world. Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.

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.



THE LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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.

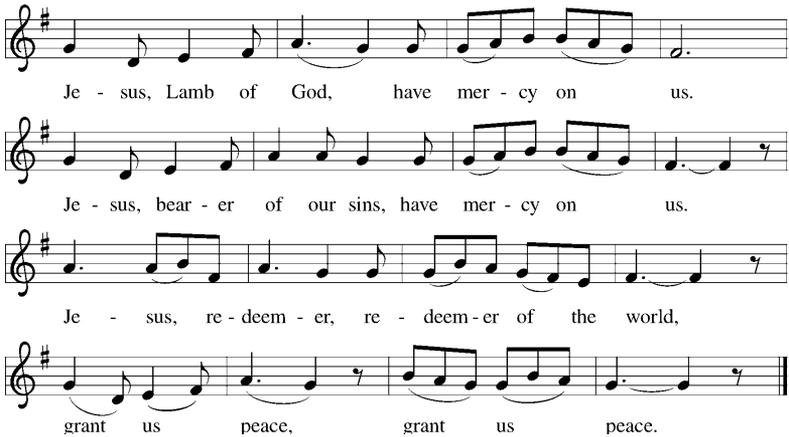
INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come and receive Jesus, our strength in the wilderness.

Please be seated.

LAMB OF GOD

ELW 199



MUSIC DURING THE DISTRIBUTION

“Create in Me, a Clean Heart”

- J. A. Freylinghausen

Please stand

COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray. Embodied God, at your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus. **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

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord’s face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace. **Amen**

SENDING HYMN

“How Firm a Foundation”

ELW 796



1 How firm a foun - da - tion, O saints of the Lord,
2 “Fear not, I am with you, oh, be not dis - mayed,
3 “When through fi - ery tri - als your path - way shall lie,
4 “Through - out all their life - time my peo - ple shall prove



is laid for your faith in his ex - cel - lent word!
for I am your God and will still give you aid;
my grace, all - suf - fi - cient, shall be your sup - ply;
my sov - reign, e - ter - nal, un - change - a - ble love;



What more can he say than to you he has said
I’ll strength - en you, help you, and cause you to stand,
The flames shall not hurt you; I on - ly de - sign
and then, when gray hairs shall their tem - ples a - dorn,



who un - to the Sav - ior for ref - uge have fled?
up - held by my righ - teous, om - nip - o - tent hand.”
your dross to con - sume and your gold to re - fine.”
like lambs they shall still in my bo - som be borne.”

DISMISSAL

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

“A Verse in B-flat”

- John Blow

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Upcoming Events

March 10, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm – serve lunch at Some Other Place, Beaumont

March 12, 10 am, Congregational Meeting, Bridge City

March 19, 3 pm, Worship with Holy Communion, Beaumont

April 2, 3 pm, Worship with Holy Communion, Beaumont

April 6, 6 pm, Maundy Thursday worship with Holy Communion, Bridge City

April 7, 6 pm, Good Friday worship, Bridge City

April 9, 9 and 11 am, Easter worship with Holy Communion, Bridge City

Windy People

What does it mean to be born of the Spirit? Jesus tells Nicodemus those who are born of the Spirit are like the wind: you can hear it but cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. What does it mean to be people of the wind? Are we to be heard, but unpredictable in our actions? Maybe.

Nicodemus is curious, working hard to reason out who Jesus is and what Jesus is saying. The trouble is that the eternal life Jesus is bringing into the world is not logical. Rebirth in the Spirit does not fit our framework of experience. The resurrection that follows the cross is not a scientific principle but a new work of God, received by faith rather than reason. The work of God is unpredictable.

Generally, we as people prefer predictability and order to uncertainty and chaos. There are reasons for this: people can be unpredictable in ways that bring pain and trauma into our lives. But there is a difference between this sort of volatility and the unpredictable ways God's grace lands in the world. God's grace always brings new life.

To be good stewards of our resources, congregations should have orderly financial processes, clear policies, and well-thought-out mission and ministry. At the same time, we can plan the Spirit right out of our work if we are more dedicated to order than we are to discernment. The Spirit blows as she will. Is there room in our worship for some improvisation when the Spirit shows up in a new way? Is there flexibility in our ministry to pivot to a new opportunity as the Spirit blows by?

Born of the Spirit, may we windy people be surprised by God's grace and be blessed to carry that gift to a world that is not expecting it.