



Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church

1187 C.R. 128 & U.S. Rt. 20

Fremont, Ohio 43420

Pastor Tim Miller

93.1FM

Church: 419-332-6820

faithchurch@amplex.net

www.faithfremont.org

Second Sunday in Lent

March 1, 2026

Setting 3 with Holy Communion

*Congregation please stand as you are able.

Introduction

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.

Prelude:

Meditation on Colossians 3:15

B. Portman

Meditation on "The Old Rugged Cross"

M. Bradshaw

Welcome & Announcements: Joys and Concerns

Signing of the Pew Register by all present.

***Opening Hymn:**

Lift High the Cross

ELW 660

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

***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.**

***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 seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you:
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,

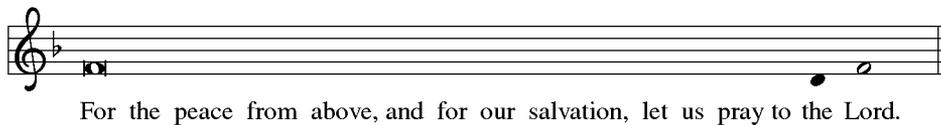
pours God's love into your hearts,
and gives you life and peace.

C: Amen.

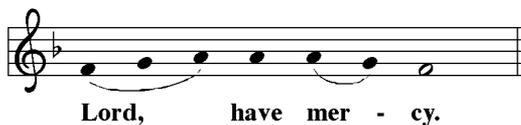
*Kyrie



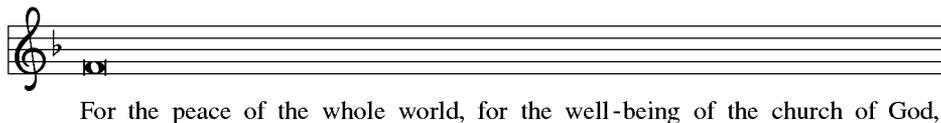
In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



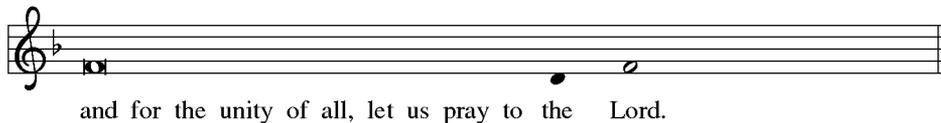
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



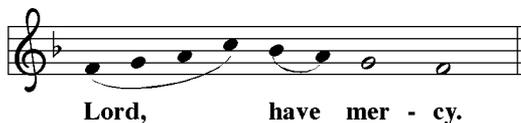
Lord, have mer - cy.



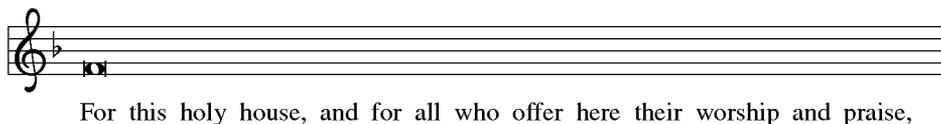
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



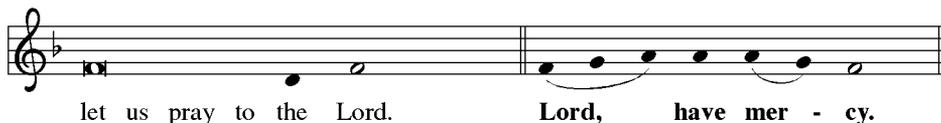
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



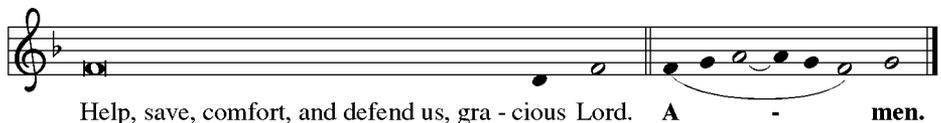
Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. **A - men.**

***Prayer of the Day**

P: Let us pray.

C: 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.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

First Reading:

Genesis 12:1-4a

God's call of Abram and Sarai has a clear purpose—that through them all the families of the earth would gain a blessing. As they set out on their journey, they are accompanied by promises of land, nation, and a great reputation.

R: A reading from Genesis, the 12th chapter.

¹ The LORD said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. ² I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³ I 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.

The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Responsive Reading:

Psalm 121

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Second Reading:

Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

In the person and example of Abraham we discover that a right relationship with God does not involve earning a reward from God but entails trusting God's promises. Abraham is the forebear and model for both Jews and Gentiles, because we too trust that ours is a God who gives life to the dead.

R: A reading from Romans, the 4th chapter.

¹ What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? ² For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³ For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." ⁴ Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. ⁵ But to one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

¹³ For 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. ¹⁴ For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵ For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law, neither is there transgression.

¹⁶ For this reason the promise depends on faith, in order that it may rest on grace, so that it may be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (who is the father of all of us, ¹⁷ as 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.

The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

A curious Pharisee visits Jesus by night to learn from the teacher his friends reject. Jesus speaks to him about life in the Spirit and the kingdom of God.

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

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

P: ¹ Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews.

² He 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 unless God is with that person.” ³ Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” ⁴ Nicodemus 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?” ⁵ Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶ What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ ⁸ The 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.” ⁹ Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” ¹⁰ Jesus answered him, “Are you the 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.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Children's Sermon

Sermon

*Sermon Hymn:

God Loved the World

ELW 323

(10:30) Holy Baptism

Page 227

*(8:00) Apostles' Creed

**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.**

*Prayers of Intercession

R: Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs.

A brief silence.

R: Faithful One, you renew us by grace. As you have inspired faith through the work of church artists and hymnwriters throughout the ages, give your church the means to praise your beauty today. Hear us, O God.

C: **Your mercy is great.**

R: Living One, you delight in this world. The sun and moon, the wind and the water declare your goodness. Preserve this earth, and protect conservationists, scientists, and all who labor in service to creation. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

R: Ruling One, you bless us to be a blessing. Open the hearts of all leaders to seek the flourishing of every person and lend your help to all who wait for justice, deliverance, and peace. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

R: Compassionate One, you send your Son to save. Declare your word of acceptance to any who feel condemned and lift up any brought low by hatred and exclusion. Tend to all who are struggling with illness or loss, *especially those we name at this time (Pause for 10 seconds for people to be named)*. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

R: Guiding One, you watch over our going out and coming in. Bless newcomers and new members in this assembly and accompany those who have recently left this community to journey elsewhere. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

R: Eternal One, you neither slumber nor sleep. Be our keeper in life and in death. Thank you for our beloved who have died, and for your promise which saves this whole world by your love. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

R: Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation.

C: Amen.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

*Sharing of the Peace

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

(10:30) Sr. Choir:

God So Loved the World

L. Larson

***Offertory:** *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow*

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

***Offering Prayer**

P: 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.

C: Amen.

***The Great Thanksgiving**

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

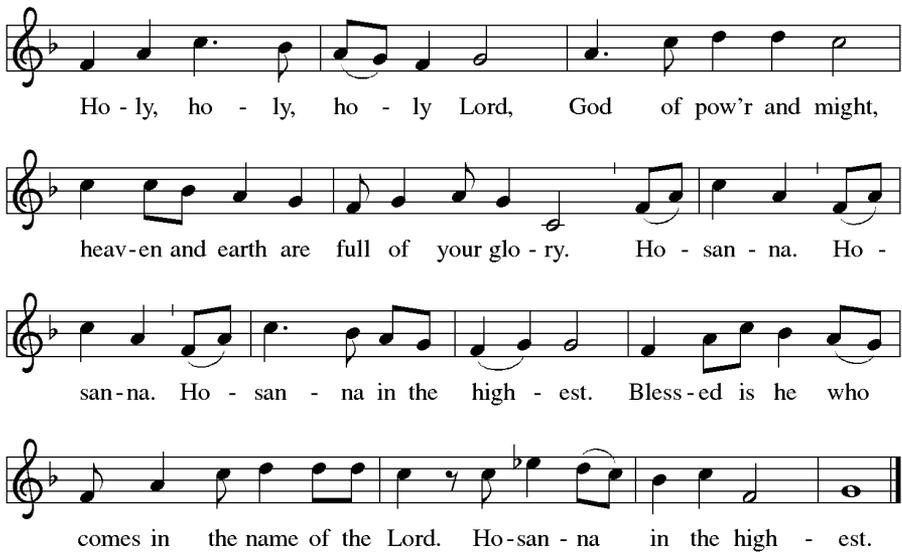
P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: 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:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
 heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
 san-na. 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.

***Thanksgiving at the Table**

P: 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.

P: 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.

P: With this bread and cup
we remember our Lord's passover from death to life
as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

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

P: 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.

C: Come, Holy Spirit.

P: 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.

C: Come, Holy Spirit.

P: 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.

C: Amen.

***Lord's Prayer**

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

**C: 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**

P: Come to the table.

Feast on God's goodness and mercy.

Lamb of God

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

Distribution of Communion

Communion will be continuous. The ushers will invite you to come forward by the center aisle. You will be handed the bread with the words, "The Body of Christ given for you." You may respond with "Amen" or "Thanks be to God!". Step to the Communion Assistant and take the cup. They will speak the words, "The Blood of Christ shed for you." You may respond with "Amen" or "Thanks be to God!" Empty cups may be placed in the basket as you return to your seat by the side aisle.

If you prefer gluten- free bread, please let the Pastor know. If you prefer grape juice, please let the Communion Assistant know. If you prefer not to receive or have children who have not yet received, please let the Pastor know and he will offer a blessing.

Communion Hymns:

ELW 451 *We Are Baptized in Christ Jesus*

ELW 803 *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*

ELW 494 *For the Bread Which You Have Broken*

***Post Communion Blessing**

P: May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen.

***Prayer After Communion**

P: God of our salvation,
we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls,
reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey.
Through the body and blood of your Son,
may we become Christ's body in the world,
bearing witness to your love for all creation,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

***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.

***Closing Hymn:**

Blessed Assurance

ELW 638

***Dismissal**

P: Go in peace. Believe the good news.

C: Thanks be to God.

***Postlude:**

The Promise of Salvation

E. Broughton

From sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2026 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.

Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SB150404.

New Revised Standard Version Bible, Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Song *Lift High the Cross*, Words: Hope Publishing Company. Music: Hope Publishing Company Permission was gained thru CCLI License #1176607 for streaming and recording. Song *We Are Baptized in Christ Jesus*, Text and music © 1985 John Ylvisaker. Song *For the Bread Which You Have Broken*, Text © 1925 Robert Jeffreys Jr., admin. Augsburg Fortress. Permission was gained thru One License #A-739669 for streaming and recording. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

DURING THIS LENTEN SEASON, we praise God for His righteous Son, who perfectly kept all of God's commandments for us and paid the full price for our disobedience. Let us praise him with hearts filled with Christ's spirit of obedience.

WE WELCOME THROUGH HOLY BAPTISM THIS MORNING Klaire Ellen King, daughter of David & Meghan (Reed) King. Sponsors are Justin & Madison Reed.

The Chosen, Season 4

Join us for Season 4 of the Chosen, in Faith Lutheran's **Lounge** Wednesdays at 5 p.m. during Lent.

Questions should be directed to Cheryl Paeth at 419-205-3659

ENDOWMENT will meet this Tuesday, March 3rd, at 7 p.m.

50TH ANNUAL HOPEWOOD OUTDOORS MAPLE SYRUP FESTIVAL: Sunday, March 8th, 11-3 p.m. at Hopewood Pines (Lutheran Memorial Camp)

This is a fun and welcoming tradition for families and our community. Enjoy all-you-can-eat pancakes, maple sausage, and lots of more maple-filled fun! Try sassafras tea and donuts cooked over an open fire, take a nature hike, and be sure to visit the sugar shack to see how maple syrup is made. Afterwards, take a break from the fun and relax by the fire with friends, old and new. Plus, all proceeds support summer camperships for kids! Visit our website at hopewoodoutdoors.org for tickets and more information.



TERRA STATE CONCERT CHOIR INVITATIONAL

CONCERT featuring Gabriel Fauré's Requiem will be held **Sunday, March 15, 2026 at 3:00 p.m.** at St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, 122 W. Ottawa Street, Oak Harbor, Ohio. Doors open at 2:30 p.m. and free will donations will be accepted. Guest Conductor Michael Shirtz and

Guest Performers Firelands Symphony Orchestra Chorale as well as Guest Violinist Ron Brooker and Guest Organist Dan Boyle will be in attendance. Additional selections conducted by Stacey Depner, Terra State Concert Choir.

FAITH'S MISSION AND OUTREACH PROJECT FOR ATKINSON SCHOOL



TESTING WEEKS

We are continuing our partnership with Atkinson Elementary this year as the students in grades 3-5 approach state testing. The testing begins the last week in March and extends

through the first week of May. The Faith Mission and Outreach Committee is again asking our congregation to help by purchasing snacks for the students during those testing weeks.

During the school day, many students eat their lunches earlier in the day and then require a snack later in the afternoon. Mr. Ward, the principal, said that the teachers often provide a small snack for the students to eat. Some of the snacks may include **PRETZELS, LANCE PEANUT BUTTER CRACKERS, GOLDFISH CRACKERS, FRUIT SNACKS, CHEEZ IT CRACKERS, ANIMAL CRACKERS,** and **GRANOLA BARS**. These treats need to be in **single prepackaged units** for sanitary reasons.

A display will be set up in the narthex of our church showing the variety of items needed. A basket for monetary donations is also available if you would like us to do the shopping. Our committee is hoping to make its first delivery of items near the middle week of March.

I hope you will prayerfully consider joining us in this endeavor to support the staff and students of Atkinson Elementary. Thank you.

In Christian Love, Randy J. Brown/ Project Coordinator

SUZIE'S SPRINGTACULAR CRAFT & VENDOR SHOW will be held **Saturday, March 21, from 9-3 p.m.** at Hayes Memorial UMC – Fremont, (The church behind the YMCA). Admission is \$2 or a donation to the Food Pantry. Crafts, Food, Jewelry, Home Décor, Candles, Clothing, 50/50, Lottery Tree, Door Prizes and so much more! Lunch will be available. Registration begins Feb. 8th. Contact Suzie Shook to secure your Vendor Space at 765-238-2708. A portion of the proceeds go to local charities.

LIGHT SUPPERS FOR LENT 2026: Light suppers will be provided prior to the Lenten services on Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m., on February 25th through March 25th.

THANK YOU to the following groups that have volunteered to provide a meal before the Wednesday Lenten services in the Fellowship Hall!

- March 4 Both Adult Sunday School classes
- March 11 Faith Fellowship Group
- March 18 Faith Women of the ELCA
- March 25 Christian Worship Committee

Many hands make light work. **Please join us and consider bringing a dish to share!** A sign-up sheet to assist these groups with additional salads, sides, and desserts is posted on the bulletin board in the coat room area for anyone who wishes to share their culinary talents.

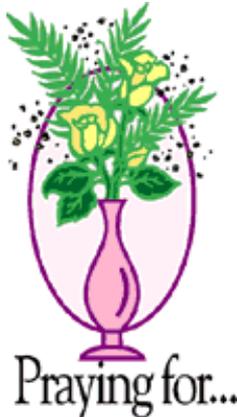
Thank you for sharing with others your bountiful blessings from God!

PRAYING DAILY

For healing and hope: Joan Bolen, Mary Ann Diekman, Denny Fahle, Millie Fetterman, Pat Forsyth, Della Humbarger, Denny Krumnow, Bill Leutenegger, Dean May, Stan Moyer, Nancy Mylander, Betty Nielsen, Gary Overmyer, Sandie Reed, Ken & Gloria Root, Bob Schneider, Janet Tressler, Minnie Weber, Linda Woessner. Mark Hausch, Jackie Mowry, Eric Paul, Laura Shields.

For the Family of: Adeline Bame

For our Bishops: Bishop Christian Ndossa, Bishop Yehiel Curry, and NWOS Bishop Daniel Beaudoin and Staff



For our partner congregation in Bumila, Tanzania

And its pastor: Pastor Peter Magasi

PRAY FOR OUR
★ ★ ★ ★ ★
MILITARY

For our Military: Noah Egbert, Troy Halfhill, Jade Kayser, Daniel Linder, Tony Rozzi, Christopher Templeton, & Joshua Tooman.

FAITH ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEK OF – March 1 to March 8

Sunday NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE

Mar. 1-----8 & 10:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion
 9:15 a.m. Sunday School & Fellowship Time
 6-7:30 p.m. Hall Reserved – 4-H – Brianne Harder

Monday

Mar. 2-----10 a.m. Valley View – Worship with H. Communion
 6:00 p.m. Mission & Outreach
 7:30 p.m. Dartball – Away vs. St. John’s

Tuesday

Mar. 3-----7 p.m. Endowment

Wednesday

Mar. 4-----5:00 p.m. The Chosen – Season 4
 6:00 p.m. Lenten Meal
 6:45 p.m. Lenten Worship
 7:30 p.m. Senior Choir

Thursday

Mar. 5-----9-3 p.m. Fellowship & Sew Day
 3 p.m. Christ Care
 6:30 p.m. Bell Choir
 7:30 p.m. Praise Choir

Friday

Mar. 6-----

Saturday

Mar. 7-----9:15 a.m. Christ Care

Sunday

Mar. 8-----8 & 10:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion
 9:15 a.m. Sunday School & Fellowship Time

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2026: ATTENDANCE: 125 – OFFERING: \$3,279.77

ASH WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2026: ATTENDANCE 84 –

OFFERING \$480.00

GOSPEL MESSAGE

March 1, 2026
SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

A New Thing Is Underway

“How can anyone be born after having grown old?” asks Nicodemus (John 3:4), articulating a question that we as the church continue to ask today. Change is hard. Transformation seems impossible. And yet, Jesus responds that in baptism we are made as new as if we had been born again, with a new heart able to perceive the reign of God. All things are possible with God!

Nicodemus is justifiably perplexed by this proclamation. We may resonate with his confusion as we look at the world around us and in the mirror before us, wondering if anything can ever truly change. Can the violence and suffering of war ever truly end? Can this broken relationship be mended? Can this illness be healed? Can hatred, oppression, and abuse be thwarted, transformed by the power of love? When we look around us, change may seem in short supply.

And yet, when we get curious, we may also become aware of signs of change, transformation, and rebirth emerging all around us. In northern regions, we can see the melting snow and first shoots of green from rousing plants, signaling the change from winter to spring. We can see mutual aid networks, community care efforts, and collective action emerge in response to social and political chaos. We can sense the tug of the Holy Spirit on our hearts, calling us toward deeper humility, compassion, and solidarity as we live in the hope of Christ.

The Lenten call—to set down what we can to attend more fully to God—draws us into a posture of curiosity that may deepen our awareness of the small but potent ways God’s kingdom is already breaking in all around us. “Do not be astonished,” says Jesus (v. 7); a new thing is underway.