

Service of Holy Communion

2nd Sunday of Lent

March 1st, 2026



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.

GATHERING

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The congregation stands. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P. Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

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

The congregation sits or kneels. Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you: Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

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

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

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

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

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

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

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

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

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

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

God's steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness abound. Through faith, the free gift of God, you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ. In the name of ✠ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. The Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead dwells in you, pours God's love into your hearts, and gives you life and peace. **Amen.**

Congregation stands

GATHERING HYMN

Come to the Water of Life

printed in bulletin

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. Hold us in your mercy.

C. Hold us in your mercy.

A. Open our hearts.

C. Open our hearts.

A. Hold us in your love.

C. Hold us in your love. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P. 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.**

Congregation is seated

WORD

FIRST READING: Genesis 12:1-4a

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

A. Word of God, word of life.

C. Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 121 (*read responsively*)

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

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.

A. Word of God, word of life.

C. **Thanks be to God.**

TIME FOR THE CHILD IN US ALL

Children & Youth are invited forward for a special sermon time with Pastor Peggy.

Congregation stands

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



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



slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

GOSPEL: John 3:1-17

P. The holy gospel according to John. C. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

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.”

P. The gospel of the Lord. **C. Praise to you, O Christ.**

Congregation is seated

SERMON

Questions

PRAYER STATIONS

There are 5 prayer stations throughout the sanctuary that you can move to during this time. The 6th option is to stay seated while meditating, praying, and listening to the background music. The prayer stations are the same each week, with the exception of the poem changing weekly. The intention is that you take in 1 or 2 stations each week, visiting each station at least once by the end of Lent. We will spend about 5 minutes at the prayer stations before entering into the Hymn of the Day.

Congregation stands

HYMN OF THE DAY

Lift High the Cross

ELW 660

APOSTLE’S 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 THE CHURCH

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

A brief silence.

A. 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. **Your mercy is great.**

A. 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. **Your mercy is great.**

A. 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. **Your mercy is great.**

A. 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 we pray for...those we now say aloud...and those we hold in our hearts. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

A. 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. **Your mercy is great.**

A. 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. **Your mercy is great.**

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

SHARING OF THE PEACE

P. The Peace of Christ be with you always.

C. And also with you.

P. Let us share with each other a sign of Christ's peace.

Congregation is seated

CHOIR ANTHEM

God Loved the World

Johnson, Marino, Shaw, arr Cliff Duren

MEAL

OFFERTORY INVITATION

Scan to give
via Venmo ↓



Offering can be given by putting it in the offering plate when it is passed, online directly via the QR codes for Tithely or Venmo, or by requesting your bank to send a check to the church. Find more details on our website.

Thank you for your generous gifts!

Scan to give
via Tithely ↓



Congregation stands

OFFERTORY SONG

Just as I am; thy love un-known has bro - ken ev - 'ry
bar - rier down; now to be thine, yea, thine a - lone,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of three systems of music. Each system has a vocal line on a treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on a bass clef staff. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are printed below the vocal line.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

A. Let us pray... 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.**

DIALOGUE & PREFACE OF 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; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. 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-er and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

The congregation sits or kneels.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P. Holy God, our living Water and our merciful Guide, together with rivers and seas, wells and springs, we bless and magnify you. You led your people Israel through the desert, and provided them water from the rock.

We praise you for Christ, our Rock and our Water, who joins us in our desert, pouring out his life for the world.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, 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.

Remembering, therefore, his life, death, and resurrection, we await your salvation for all this thirsty world.

Pour out your Spirit on this holy food and on all gathered for this feast: wash away our sin, that we may be renewed for our journey by the love of Christ.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty God, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever. **Amen.**

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Believing in the real presence of Christ, we practice Eucharistic hospitality. All baptized persons are welcome to Communion this morning. Children may come forward for a blessing.

Please come forward, guided by the Ushers, to receive the bread and wine. Gluten free wafers are available, please note this to Pastor Peggy when you come forward. Grape juice is available in the second communion plate. As you return to your seat via the side aisles you can place your empty cup in the baskets on either side.

P. Come to the table. Feast on God's goodness and mercy.

COMMUNION SONG

sing 2X through

Take, oh, take me as I am; sum-mon out what I shall be;

set your seal up - on my heart and live in me.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

After all have received Communion the congregation stands.

TABLE BLESSING

P. The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

SONG AFTER COMMUNION

“Go, my chil - dren, with my bless-ing, nev - er a - lone.
Wak - ing, sleep - ing, I am with you, you are my own.
In my love’s bap-tis - mal riv - er I have made you mine for-ev - er.
Go, my chil - dren, with my bless - ing, you are my own.”

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A. Let us pray... God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthen 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. **Amen.**

SENDING

BENEDICTION

P. Receive the blessings of the holy Trinity: God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit whose breath sustains creation, ✠ bless you now and always. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

Blessed Assurance

ELW 638

DISMISSAL

A. Go in peace. Believe the good news. **C. Thanks be to God.**

Announcements for March 1st, 2026

Welcome to Holy Counselor Lutheran Church. May you experience the joy of God's presence in our worship!

*If today is your **first time** worshipping at Holy Counselor, please be sure to fill out the "Guest Book" on the table in the narthex and **take a welcome bag**. Please ask our ushers any questions you may have regarding worship this morning. **Large print bulletins are available.***

*The **Pray-ground** is a special place to help **support kids and families** in worshipping. We love the sound of kids in worship! God made kids wiggly and curious, and we celebrate that here. **Tips:** explain, participate, and move around together. Need to leave? No problem, but please come back!*

Worship is live streamed** to our church Facebook page, but the camera is pointed away during Communion and is not on the children when they come forward during A Time for the Child in Us All. **Anyone on the altar is on camera.

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## Volunteers for Today's Worship

|              |                  |
|--------------|------------------|
| Lay Asst.    | Debbie Lennon    |
| Ushers       | Volunteer needed |
| Comm. Asst.  | Volunteer needed |
| Tech         | Fred Schoenagel  |
| Tellers      | Volunteer needed |
| Refreshments | Volunteer needed |

\*\*\*\*\* Join us for refreshments after worship\*\*\*\*\*

## THIS WEEK AT HOLY COUNSELOR

**Sunday, March 1:** Sunday School, 8:45-9:15am  
Worship w/Communion, 2nd Sunday of Lent, 9:30am  
Chili Cookoff following worship  
Choir Practice following worship

**Wednesday, March 4:** Adult Ed Lenten Bible Study, Zoom, 10am & 7pm

**Saturday, March 7:** Women's Lenten Retreat, 9am -3pm

**Sunday, March 8:** Sunday School, 8:45-9:15am  
Worship w/Communion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent, 9:30am  
Pajama Sunday  
Choir Practice following worship

**Chili Cook-off:** TODAY Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup> following worship will be our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Chili Cook-off! Bring your appetite and opinions to vote on the best chili!

**Women's Lenten Retreat:** We are hosting our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Woman's Retreat at HCLC THIS Saturday, March 7<sup>th</sup> from 9 am-3 pm. All women are invited to come explore a Lenten journey this winter about self-care. The day includes Pastor Peggy as our keynote speaker, worship, music, workshops and meditation. Continental breakfast and lunch will be provided. There is a recommended **donation of \$15** for building use. Please **RSVP** to the office (office@hc-lutheranchurch.org) **ASAP** if you'd like to attend. See Kathy Heeren or Pam Kucks with any questions.

**Pajama Sunday:** Pajama Sunday is NEXT Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup>! Donate \$5 per person or \$20 for the whole family to support Lutheran Disaster Response and wear your PJs to church. This is **Daylight Savings morning**, so wearing pajamas is one less step to get ready for church!

**Lighten Your Load: Lent & Lament:** Pastor Peggy will be offering a Lenten evening of releasing our laments and receiving hope through the remembrance of our baptism. Join her in the Sunday School classroom **NEXT Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup> from 7-8pm**. Soup dinner will be provided.

**Pastor's Community Office Hours-March:** Pastor Peggy will be at **Café Dolci in Warwick on Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, and 24<sup>th</sup> from 12-2pm** for Community Office Hours. All are welcome to visit as she is present in the community.

**Corned Beef and Cabbage Meals to Go:** Following worship on Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup> we will have **Corned Beef and Cabbage meals to go**. Please call the office or **sign up** on the sheet with **how many meals** you would like so that we can plan accordingly. **Free will donations**, suggested donation of \$15-20! Lots of love goes into the preparation, so you can always give more.

**Loaves & Fishes:** Loaves and Fishes (our young adults and young families group) will gather for **game night** at church on **Friday, March 20th from 5-6:30pm**. Dinner will be provided! **Let Pastor Peggy know if you plan to come** so we have enough food. Come join the fun and **bring your favorite game** to share!

**Lenten Bible Study:** Adult Ed has paused their current book study during Lent for a bible study titled ***Journey to the Resurrection***. This is a 6-week series inviting you into a deeper exploration of Lent and your faith. All are welcome to attend the **Wednesday Zoom sessions at 10am or at 7pm from Wednesday, February 25<sup>th</sup> to April 1<sup>st</sup>**. Please **let Pam Kucks know** you'd like to participate so she can get you a book. Books are \$14, grants available.

**Vacation Bible School—Coordinator Needed:** We are looking for a leader to be the VBS Coordinator this summer. Pastor Peggy will help with planning, organizing, and running VBS, but we need a point person. **If you are available during the daytime in the summer and love having fun with kids this is for you!** Please contact Pastor Peggy ASAP as planning needs to begin.

**Easter Flowers:** You can order **beautiful Easter Lilies, Daffodils, Tulips, or Hyacinths** to adorn the sanctuary on Easter morning and then take them home to enjoy! **Easter flower orders are due to the office by Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup>**. Please use the half sheet flyer to order and note your payment option.

**Easter Egg Hunt & Donations:** We are excited for our annual Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup> at 11:30am! We are looking for **donations of individually wrapped candy and non-candy prizes. Please bring all donations to church by Sunday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>** and put them under the narrow table in the Narthex. Speak to Diane Rossi with questions.

**Food Pantry: Food items to help restock:** boxed cereal, boxed oatmeal pouches, scanned stew, canned chili, canned corn, children's juice boxes or pouches, 4-pack toilet paper, liquid dish soap, & toothpaste. You can always bring donations of canned goods, paper goods, and hygiene products. All donations can be **placed in the blue bin** by the sanctuary doors. Thank you!

# Come to the Water of Life



1 All who are thirst - y for mer - cy, all who are thirst - y for  
 2 All who are thirst - y for heal - ing, all who are thirst - y for  
 3 All who are thirst - y for beau - ty, all who are thirst - y for  
 4 All who are thirst - y for jus - tice, all who are thirst - y for



love; all who are thirst - y for love, for mer - cy,  
 touch; all who are thirst - y for touch, for heal - ing,  
 truth; all who are thirst - y for truth, for beau - ty,  
 peace; all who are thirst - y for peace, for jus - tice,



come: come to the Wa - ter of life.  
 come: come to the Wa - ter of life.  
 come: come to the Wa - ter of life.  
 come: come to the Wa - ter of life.

Text: Ray Makeever, b. 1943  
 Music: WATER OF LIFE, Ray Makeever  
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**Holy Counselor**  
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### **MISSION STATEMENT**

*As Children of God,  
we are called to share and serve  
Christ's love and bring God's word to all.*

### **CHURCH COUNCIL**

**Pastor** Rev. Peggy Ludlow  
**President** Nancy Knecht  
**Vice President** Frank Urbaniak  
**Treasurer** Claire Speroni  
**Recording Secretary** Dawn McCormick  
**Financial Secretary** John Heeren  
**Outreach Coordinator** Francine Vince  
**Nurture Coordinator** Fred Schoenagel  
**Administration Coordinator** Diane Rossi

### **PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

Kristina Heeren  
Pam Kucks  
Matt Moller  
Aileen Donovan

*Holy Counselor is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the Munsee people, and we give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home.*

