



WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD

MATTHEW 4:10

February 22, 2026

First Sunday in Lent

Bethany Lutheran Church (ELCA)

Introduction to the day

Today's gospel tells of Jesus' temptation in the desert. His forty-day fast becomes the basis of our Lenten pilgrimage. In the early church Lent was a time of intense preparation for those to be baptized at the Easter Vigil. This catechetical focus on the meaning of faith is at the heart of our Lenten journey to the baptismal waters of Easter. Hungry for God's mercy, we receive the bread of life to nourish us for the days ahead.

This worship is being streamed live via Facebook and will be posted to our website.
The camera captures anyone in the first few pews of our worship space and beyond extending to the altar.

PREDLUDE
LIGHTING OF CANDLES
RINGING OF BELL
WELCOME

GATHERING

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

The assembly stands.

Please respond with the words printed in bold.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father,
and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

God of heaven and earth,
you come in close and make us yours.
Equip us by your Spirit to confess our sin,
embrace your forgiveness,
and seek the way you set before us in your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

With honesty in our heart, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Merciful God,

forgive us.

Our will is handcuffed to sin, and we cannot break free.

We have spoken when we should have kept quiet.

We were silent when we should have said something.

We were still when we know we should have moved.

For the wrong we have done,

for the good we have failed to do,

have mercy on us,

through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

People of God, look to the Son,
given to heal you and set you free
because God loved the world so much.

In the name of ✠ Jesus Christ,
your sins are forgiven.

Take hold of life – eternal life!

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN / *Want Jesus to Walk with Me* (ELW 325) See next page.



1 I want Je - sus to walk with me;
 2 In my tri - als, Lord, walk with me;
 3 When I'm in trou - ble, Lord, walk with me;



I want Je - sus to walk with me;
 in my tri - als, Lord, walk with me;
 when I'm in trou - ble, Lord, walk with me;



all a - long my pil - grim jour - ney,
 when my heart is al - most break - ing,
 when my head is bowed in sor - row,



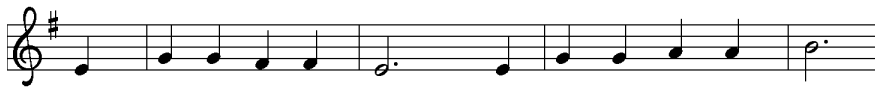
Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me.
 Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me.
 Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me.

GREETING

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.

KYRIE



1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.
 2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.
 3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.
 Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.
 Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

Lord God, our strength, the struggle between good and evil rages within and around us, and the devil and all the forces that defy you tempt us with empty promises. Keep us steadfast in your word, and when we fall, raise us again and restore us through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

The assembly is seated.

WORD

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

FIRST READING: Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

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

A reading from Genesis.

¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

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

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 32

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SECOND READING: Romans 5:12-19

Through Adam's disobedience, humanity came under bondage to sin and death, from which we cannot free ourselves. In Christ's obedient death, God graciously showers on us the free gift of liberation and life.

A reading from Romans.

¹² Just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned ¹³ for sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. ¹⁴ Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who did not sin in the likeness of Adam, who is a pattern of the one who was to come.

¹⁵ But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many. ¹⁶ And the gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the gift following many trespasses brings justification. ¹⁷ If, because of the one man's trespass, death reigned through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.

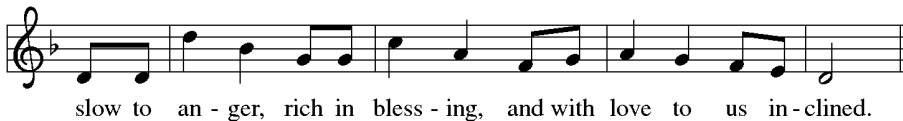
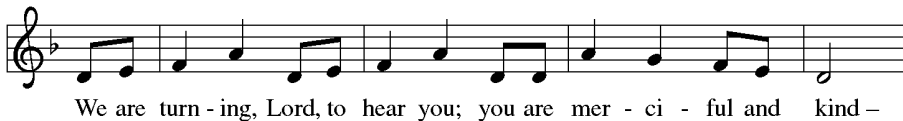
¹⁸ Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all. ¹⁹ For just as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so through the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

The assembly stands to welcome the gospel.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL READING: Matthew 4:1-11

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

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. ² He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. ³ The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." ⁴ But he answered, "It is written,

'One does not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'

⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶ saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,

'He will command his angels concerning you,
and 'On their hands they will bear you up,
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'

⁷ Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, ⁹ and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written,

'Worship the Lord your God,
and serve only him.'

¹¹ Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly is seated.

SERMON

The assembly stands.

HYMN OF THE DAY *When We Are Tested* (ACS 922)



1 When we are test - ed and wres - tle a - lone,
2 When in the des - ert we cry for re - lief,
3 When we are tempt - ed to bar - ter our souls,
4 When we have strug - gled and searched through the night,



fam - ished for bread when the world of - fers stone,
plead - ing for paths marked by cer - tain be - lief,
trad - ing the truth for the pow'r to con - trol,
sort - ing and sift - ing the wrong from the right,



nour - ish us, God, by your word and your way,
lift us to love you be - yond sign and test,
teach us to wor - ship and praise on - ly you,
Sav - ior, sur - round us with cir - cles of care,



food that sus - tains us by night and by day.
trust - ing your pres - ence, our on - ly true rest.
seek - ing your will in the work that we do.
an - gels of heal - ing, of hope, and of prayer.

The assembly is seated.

INSTALLATION OF CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

The following people have been elected to positions of leadership within the church: Dale Swenson, Pat Cassabaum, Jessica Fonseca, Heidi Christensen, Curt Casper, Darla Crosthwaite, Nancy Bruns, Al Beyer, and Cheryl Boerjan. Additionally, Claudia Beyer who was appointed as financial secretary. We give thanks for your willingness to serve.

In baptism we are welcomed into the body of Christ and sent to share in the mission of God; we rejoice now that these sisters and brothers will lead us in our common life and our mutual mission as a congregation.

A reading from First Corinthians: There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

You have been elected to positions of leadership and trust in this congregation. You are to see that the words and deeds of this household of faith bear witness to God, who gathers us into one together with the whole church. You are to seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support, so that the mission of Christ is carried out in this congregation, in the wider church, in this community, and in the whole world. You are to be faithful in your specific area of serving, that the Spirit who empowers you may be glorified. You are to be examples of faith active in love, fostering peace, harmony, and mutual understanding in this congregation.

On behalf of your sisters and brothers in Christ, I ask you:

Will you accept and faithfully carry out the duties of the offices to which you have been elected?

I will, and I ask God to help me.

The assembly stands.

People of God, I ask you:

Will you support these, your elected leaders, and will you share in the mutual ministry that Christ has given to all who are baptized?

We will, and we ask God to help us.


I now declare you installed as officers and council members of this congregation. Almighty God bless you, and direct your days and your deeds in peace, that you may be faithful servants of Christ.

Amen.

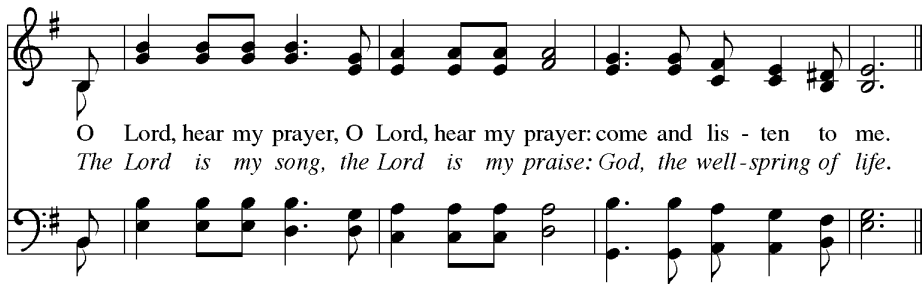
PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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

Each petition ends with, "Lord, in your mercy" and the people of God sing "O Lord, Hear My Prayer."



O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer: when I call, an - swer me.
or *The Lord is my song, the Lord is my praise: all my hope comes from God.*



O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer: come and lis - ten to me.
The Lord is my song, the Lord is my praise: God, the well-spring of life.

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

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

The assembly is seated.

OFFERING

We are grateful for your gifts, and they are needed to continue the work of the church. For those worshipping online, options on ways to give are found on our website (www.wbbethany.org). Thank you! After the offering is gathered, the people of God stand and sing the hymn below as the gifts are brought forward.

OFFERTORY HYMN *Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil (ELW 512)* See next page.

Lord, let my heart be good soil, o-pen to the seed of your word.

Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is un-der-stood.

When my heart is hard, break the stone a - way. When my heart is cold,

warm it with the day. When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.

Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart be good soil.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

**God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone,
but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these your gifts,
which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
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.**

BLESSING

May God who has called us forth from the dust of the earth,
and claimed us as children of the light,
strengthen you on your journey into life renewed.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine upon you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor

and give you ☩ peace.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN *Jesus Still Lead On* (ELW 624)



1 Je - sus, still lead on, till our rest be won; and, al - though the
 2 If the way be drear, if the foe be near, let no faith - less
 3 When we seek re - lief from a long - felt grief, when temp - ta - tions
 4 Je - sus, still lead on, till our rest be won; heav'n - ly lead - er,



way be cheer - less, we will fol - low, calm and fear - less;
 fears o'er - take us, let not faith and hope for - sake us;
 come al - lur - ing make us pa - tient and en - dur - ing;
 still di - rect us, still sup - port, con - sole, pro - tect us,



guide us by your hand to the prom - ised land.
 safe - ly past the foe to our home we go.
 show us that bright shore where we weep no more.
 till we safe - ly stand in the prom - ised land.

DISMISSAL

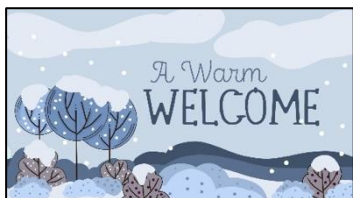
Marked with the cross of Christ,
 go forth to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Please join us for fellowship and refreshments in the Great Hall following worship

OUR MINISTRY ASSISTANTS		
Ministers of:	Today	March 1
Music	Jill Barnhart	Jill Barnhart
Proclamation (Lector)	Howard Moss	Phil Hougen
Technology	Dale Swenson	Darla & Kevin Crosthwaite
Hospitality	Howard & Terry Moss	Dave & Kami Poppen
Worship (Altar Care)	Nancy Bruns	Paula Casper & Patsy Ernst
Food & Fellowship	Jon & Laura Twing	Del & Sue Hughes



Thank you for worshipping with us today. Just as Jesus welcomed the stranger, we believe all are welcome here. Please join us again next week.
 For more information about our life together in Christ, visit:
www.wbbethany.org



Join us next Wednesday for dinner from 6:15-7:00 PM. Following dinner will be a short service of prayer around the cross. We will also gather March 4, 11 and 25. Invite a friend and come for some food, fellowship, and reflection.



Land Acknowledgement

Bethany Lutheran is located in the original and ancestral homelands of the Iowa, Sauk, Fox, Kickapoo and Ojibwe peoples, and we give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor all our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home.

OUR mission

To grow so deep in Christ through worship, education, and fellowship that we celebrate by reaching out to others.



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