

WELCOME TO WORSHIP!



So Abram went,
as the LORD
had told him...

Genesis 12:4a, NRSV

Exactly What I Need: Faith

Second Sunday in Lent

March 1, 2026



Welcome To Worship

If you are a visitor to our church, we extend you a warm welcome. We are happy you are here. Please fill out a Connect Card to let us know how we might continue to serve you.

It's encouraging to see parents bring their families to worship the Lord. If your child becomes restless, you can use the Family Room to calm them. Quiet bags and children's bulletins are also available to keep little ones busy. Restrooms are located in the hallways along either side of the worship space. For those with special needs, large print copies of the service folder and listening devices are available from the ushers. One of our ushers can help you find the restrooms or family room and answer any other questions.

Service Notes For This Service



I recognize that I need to be saved. When Jesus said, "No one can enter the kingdom of God," that included me. I do not deserve God's blessing. But long ago, God declared that I would be blessed by a descendant of Abraham who turned out to be Jesus. The blessing is salvation. I receive that salvation by faith in Jesus as my Savior. The good news is that faith is also God's gift, imparted to me through the gospel.

Today's service includes a celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion. For personal preparation, consider using the Questions for Examination on page 8 of this service folder or Christian Questions on page 295 of the blue hymnal.

Those Serving in Worship

Pastor Peter Plagenz; Accompanist: Tammy Paul; Soloist: Rachel Provost

Acknowledgements

Setting One from Christian Worship. Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the Holy Bible, Evangelical Heritage Version® (EHV®) © 2017 Wartburg Project. All rights reserved. Used by permission. Liturgical and musical settings of Scripture based on text from The Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide.

The Service

Welcome

Hymn

868 By Faith

The song leader will sing throughout. Please join as you feel comfortable.

Stand

In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Confession

CW 154

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Holy God, gracious Father, I am sinful by nature and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have not loved you with my whole heart; I have not loved others as I should. I deserve your punishment both now and forever. But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins with his innocent suffering and death. Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Silence for meditation and reflection

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

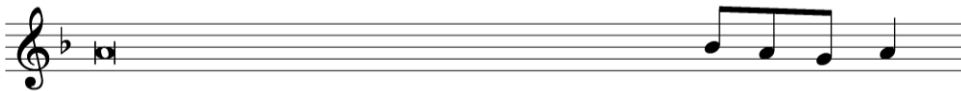
Amen.

Lord, Have Mercy



In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.



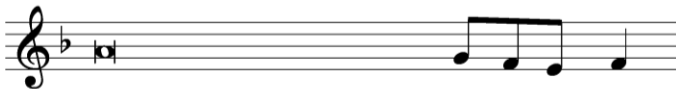
For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



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.



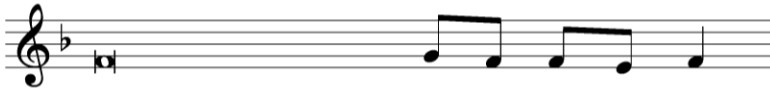
Lord, have mer - cy.



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.

Tune: Kevin Becker Tune: © 2021 Northwestern Publishing House. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 719903

The Word

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Almighty God, you see that we have no power to defend ourselves. Guard and keep us both outwardly and inwardly from all adversities that may happen to the body and all evil thoughts that may assault and hurt the soul; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Be seated

First Reading

Genesis 12:1–8

The Lord gave Abram the gift of faith to believe the promise that one of his descendants would be a gift for the whole world.

¹Now the LORD said to Abram, “Get out of your country and away from your relatives and from your father’s house and go to the land that I will show you. ²I will make you a great nation. I will bless you and make your name great. You will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse anyone who dishonors you. All of the families of the earth will be blessed in you.”

⁴So Abram went, as the LORD had told him. Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. ⁵Abram took Sarai his wife, Lot his brother’s son, and all the possessions they had accumulated and the people that they had acquired in Haran, and they set out to travel to the land of Canaan. Eventually they arrived in the land of Canaan. ⁶Abram passed through the land until he came to the Oak of Moreh at the place called Shechem. The Canaanites were in the land at that time.

⁷The LORD appeared to Abram and said, “I will give this land to your descendants.” Abram built an altar there to the LORD, who had appeared to him.

⁸He moved on from there to the hill country east of Bethel and pitched his tent there, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the LORD and proclaimed the name of the LORD. (EHV®)

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

Romans 4:1–5, 13–17

Abraham is an example of how salvation is received as a gift through faith.

¹What then will we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered according to the flesh? ²If indeed Abraham had been justified by works, he would have had a reason to boast—but not before God. ³For what does Scripture say? “Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness.”

⁴Now to a person who works, his pay is not counted as a gift but as something owed. ⁵But to the person who does not work but believes in the God who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited to him as righteousness.

¹³Indeed, the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not given to Abraham or his descendants through the law, but through the righteousness that is by faith. ¹⁴To be sure, if people are heirs by the law, faith is empty and the promise is nullified. ¹⁵For law brings wrath. (Where there is no law, there is no transgression.) ¹⁶For this reason, the promise is by faith, so that it may be according to grace and may be guaranteed to all of Abraham's descendants—not only to the one who is a descendant by law, but also to the one who has the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. ¹⁷As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations."

In the presence of God, Abraham believed him who makes the dead alive and calls non-existing things so that they exist. (EHV®)

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Stand

Gospel Acclamation

John 3:16

Glory, praise, and honor to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son,

that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Glory, praise, and honor to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel

John 3:1–17

By sharing the good news of God's love for the world, Jesus gave the gift of faith.

¹There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. ²He came to Jesus at night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these miraculous signs you are doing unless God is with him."

³Jesus replied, "Amen, Amen, I tell you: Unless someone is born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

⁴Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?"

⁵Jesus answered, "Amen, Amen, I tell you: Unless someone is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God! ⁶Whatever is born of the flesh is flesh. Whatever is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not be surprised when I tell you that you must be born from above. ⁸The wind blows where it pleases. You hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

⁹"How can these things be?" asked Nicodemus.

¹⁰"You are the teacher of Israel," Jesus answered, "and you do not know these things?"

¹¹Amen, Amen, I tell you: We speak what we know, and we testify about what we have seen.

But you people do not accept our testimony. ¹²If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? ¹³No one has ascended into heaven, except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man, who is in heaven.

¹⁴Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵so that everyone who believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

¹⁶For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. (EHV®)

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated

Children's Message

Hymn of the Day

570 God Loved the World So That He Gave

Sermon

Stand

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Be seated

Special Prayers This Week

† For the family of Gerry Paul, who passed away. Her funeral is on Monday at noon.

† For the family of Donna Bushmaker, who passed away. Her funeral is on Thursday at 1:00 pm.

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Prayer of the Church

Today, the prayer will be offered by individual petitions. Each petition will end this way:
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

The final petition will end this way:

...who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Connect Card and Offering

Please take a moment to fill out a Connect Card. After a few moments, the ushers will come forward to collect the offering. You may place your Connect Card and any offering you brought in the plate as it is passed. Moved by God's love in Christ, we offer him our first and best gifts, purely out of thanks to him. If the gospel message has moved you to give and you would like an electronic option, you can scan this QR code with your mobile phone. It will connect you with our website's giving page.



Musical Offering

The Power of the Cross

Questions for Examination

- † Do I believe that I am a sinner in need of forgiveness?
- † Do I believe that Jesus died on the cross to win forgiveness for me?
- † Do I believe that Jesus offers his true body and blood with the bread and wine in this sacrament?
- † Do I believe this sacrament strengthens my faith and strengthens me to live a God-pleasing life?
- † Am I a member of a church that belongs to the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) or Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS)?
- † If you answered “no” to any of these questions, please hold off on communing with us today. Following worship, the pastor would be happy to explain why we ask you to do this.

The Sacrament

Stand

Preface

CW 165

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

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

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

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who brought the gift of salvation to all people by his death on the tree of the cross so that the devil, who overcame us by a tree, would in turn by a tree be overcome. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

Holy, Holy, Holy

CW 167



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of heav - en - ly hosts:
heav'n 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,
bless - ed is he, bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Words of Institution

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my T body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

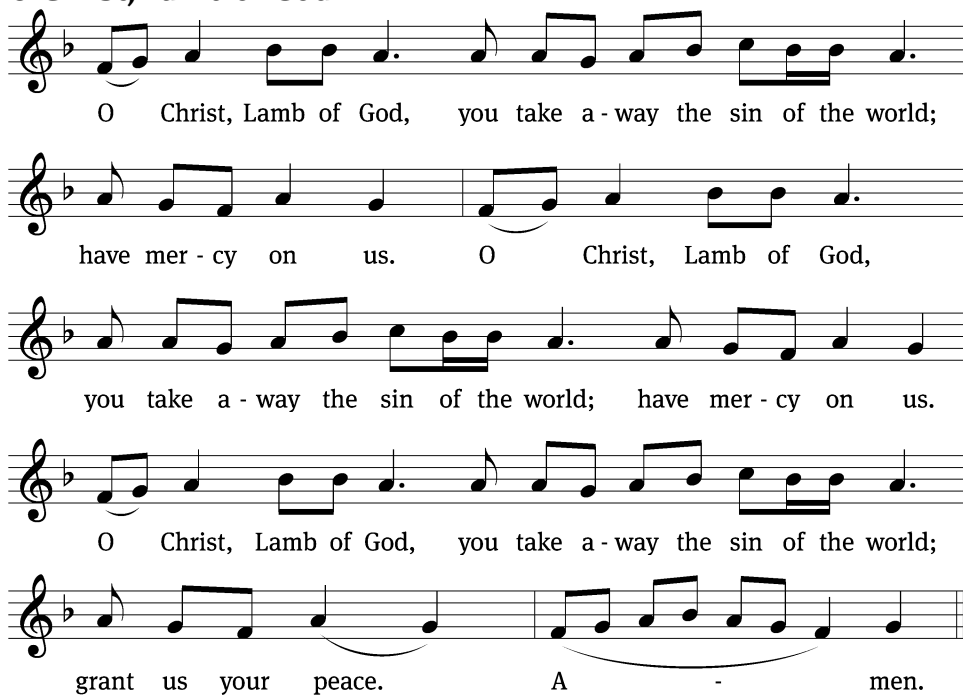
Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my T blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

O Christ, Lamb of God

CW 169



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

Be seated

Distribution

Distribution Hymn

676 *Take and Eat*

Stand

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his mercy endures forever.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this saving gift. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and ☩ give you peace.
Amen.

Hymn

811 My Faith Looks Up to Thee Sts. 1-2



Take Home Questions

Genesis 12:1-8

1. Abram is told to go to a land God will show him. For what reasons was that difficult? For what reasons was that possible?
2. How is Abram's response (he "went") a picture of faith? What is he trusting specifically?
3. God promises that "all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." In what ways does that promise connect directly to Jesus?

Romans 4:1-5,13-17

4. How might you explain this phrase in your own words: "Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness"? For what reasons is the word "credited" so important?
5. In what ways does Paul contrast wages and a gift? For what reasons is that distinction critical for our understanding of salvation?
6. For what reasons do you think we naturally drift toward wanting to earn what must only be received?

John 3:1-17

7. What truths does Jesus teach about the role of the Spirit in creating faith?
8. In what ways does verse 16 summarize the connection between faith and salvation?
9. For what reasons is it comforting that faith is described as being born rather than achieved?

News & Announcements



This Sunday's Bible Study: We Glory in Tribulation

Come to the Bible Study Room from 10:30-11:30 am

Bookstore Update

New sympathy cards have arrived! Both boxes and individual sympathy cards are now restocked. There are also books for young kids and teens, as well as activity books, which would work well for Easter baskets for sale on the table inside the Resource Center.

Hygiene Drive

Feb. 22-Mar. 15

We are collecting personal hygiene and cleaning products for the annual community hygiene drive. Your donations will go to the local FOCUS food pantry and Family Center. Most needed items: Soaps (laundry, dish, soft, shower gel, 2-in-1 shampoo), trash bags, diapers (sizes 3-6 & pull-ups), deodorant (unscented), wet wipes, toilet paper, paper towels, disposable razors, tampons, and maxi pads. Donations can be placed in the bin in the Welcome Center.

Clean Our Glass Doors

We are looking for someone to keep our glass doors clean. We are flexible on when this task is done – morning, afternoon, evening. You can work with a spouse or friend to take care of the task quickly. If you can help, please contact the office (715-421-3634) or our janitor, Matt Oligney (715-421-0825).



Share Resurrection Joy with Kids

March 28

We are looking for many volunteers to help with Easter for Kids on the morning of March 28. While several people have already signed up, we still need assistance with check-in, photography, setup and cleanup, leading activities, and supervising children. Sign up at the Ministry Table or online under the Serve tab at www.stpaulswr.org/serve.

Rooted in Faith. Active in Love.

March 6-8



Retreat into God's Word, reflect on his teachings, and rest in his care at the Pathways to Christ Women's Retreat in Oshkosh on March 6-8. See how an active faith brings joy and purpose to your daily walk. For more information, visit pathwaystochrist.org.

Veterans Need for Service

Are you a veteran looking for a meaningful way to serve Christ and support gospel outreach? Veterans are invited to serve through Mission Journeys in Jacksonville, N.C. and possibly Wilmington from July 21-27. Volunteers will support outreach efforts in serving and worshiping alongside fellow believers. Learn more at wels.net/missionjourneys.

WELS Night at the Herd

On Saturday, March 21 at 7:00 pm at the Oshkosh Arena, you can join WELS members from around the Midwest for an evening of fellowship, fun, and basketball at the WELS Night at the Herd. WELS members will receive discounted tickets and be seated together within each seating category offered. To purchase tickets go to gofevo.com/event/WELSHerd.



Thank You, Thrivent Members

Our church recently received a gift of \$92 from Thrivent Financial through their Thrivent Choice program. We thank the congregation members who took time to designate St. Paul's as the recipient of their Thrivent Choice allotment. If you have a Thrivent product, we encourage you to check into whether you qualify to direct Choice Dollars to St. Paul's. Thank you, Thrivent!

Save the Date for Everyone Outreach

Have you ever thought, "I wish our congregation was more outreach-minded"? If so, you're not alone. For this reason, we will be participating in an exciting new program called Everyone Outreach. The program will help us build a culture of outreach so that every ministry and every member is encouraged and equipped to reach the lost in our community. This is a one-day workshop on April 25. If you would like to learn more, you can visit everyoneoutreach.com.

WELS Coulee Women's Retreat

Join other sisters in Christ on April 25 for a day of faith fellowship and renewal as you reflect on the abundant grace of our Savior. Expect uplifting messages, heartfelt worship, and meaningful connections. To sign up go to welswcr.wixsite.com/retreat.



Upcoming Events

- Mar. 16-20 School Spring Break
- Mar. 28 Easter for Kids
- Mar. 29 Palm Sunday

Sunday	9:00 AM	Sunday Worship
	10:30 AM	Bible Study in the Bible Study Room
	10:30 AM	Sunday School (Grades 3K-5 th)
	11:30 AM	Foundations of the Christian Faith in the Bible Study Room
	2:00 PM	Coed Volleyball in the Gym
Monday	1:30 PM	Spiritual Health Group in the chapel at Wisc Rapids Health Services
	4:30 PM	Final Home Basketball Game
	6:00 PM	Choir Practice in the balcony
Tuesday	6:45 AM	Men's Bible Study at From the Ground Up Coffee Shop
	9:45 AM	Women Walking in the Word in the Resource Center
	6:30 PM	Unified Board Meetings in the Resource Center
Wednesday	8:45 AM	School Chapel Service
	4:00 PM	Midweek Lenten Worship
	5:00 PM	Fellowship Meal in the Cafeteria
	6:00 PM	Catechism Class in room 110
	6:30 PM	Midweek Lenten Worship
Thursday	7:00 AM	Men's Small Group at From the Ground Up Coffee Shop
Sunday	9:00 AM	Sunday Worship
	10:30 AM	Bible Study in the Bible Study Room
	10:30 AM	Sunday School (Grades 3K-5 th)
	11:30 AM	Foundations of the Christian Faith in the Bible Study Room
	2:00 PM	Coed Volleyball in the Gym

Attendance Report

Last Week's Attendance: 181

Next Sunday

Theme: Exactly What I Need:
Water

Readings: Exodus 17:1-7, Romans 5:1-8, 13-17,
John 4:5-26



For GOD so *loved* the world
that he gave his ONLY-BEGOTTEN Son,
that whoever *believes* in HIM
shall NOT perish, but have *eternal life*.

- John 3:16



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