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March 11, 2026

The Fourth Wednesday in Lent

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Rev. Ken Bersche

Maggie Kent, Secretary

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## Prelude

### Processional Hymn *Please Stand*

“Lamb of God”

♪ Your only Son, no sin to hide, But You have sent Him from Your side  
To walk upon this guilty sod, And to be called the Lamb of God.

~O Lamb of God, sweet Lamb of God, I love the holy Lamb of God!

O wash me in His precious blood, My Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God!

♪ Your Gift of love they crucified, They laughed and scorned Him as He died:  
The humble King they named a fraud, And sacrificed the Lamb of God. ~O Lamb...

♪ I was so lost, I should have died, But You have brought me to Your side  
To be led by Your staff and rod, And to be called a lamb of God. ~O Lamb....

Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 550 -Text & Tune: Twila Paris b.1958;  
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## Invocation

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

*Matthew 28:19b*

**Amen.**

## Confession and Absolution

We confess our sins before God, our heavenly Father.

**Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your steadfast love; according to Your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against You, You only, have I sinned and done what is evil in Your sight, so that You may be justified in Your words and blameless in Your judgment. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, You delight in truth in the inward being, and You teach me wisdom in the secret heart. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that You have broken rejoice. Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Your presence, and take not Your Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.**

*Psalm 51:1-12*

In His great mercy, God sent His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who took all our sins to the cross. In His stead and by His command, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen. Thanks be to God.**

## Prayer

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us pray. Almighty God, because You know that we of ourselves have no strength, keep us both outwardly and inwardly that we may be defended from all adversities that may happen to the body and from all evil thoughts that may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

### **Old Testament Reading** *Please Be Seated*

Exodus 12:1–14

<sup>1</sup>The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, <sup>2</sup>“This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you. <sup>3</sup>Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household. <sup>4</sup>And if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his nearest neighbor shall take according to the number of persons; according to what each can eat you shall make your count for the lamb. <sup>5</sup>Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, <sup>6</sup>and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight.

<sup>7</sup>“Then they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. <sup>8</sup>They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted on the fire; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it. <sup>9</sup>Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted, its head with its legs and its inner parts. <sup>10</sup>And you shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. <sup>11</sup>In this manner you shall eat it: with your belt fastened, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. And you shall eat it in haste. It is the Lord's Passover. <sup>12</sup>For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the Lord. <sup>13</sup>The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.

<sup>14</sup>“This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast.

### **The Epistle**

1 Corinthians 5:6–8

<sup>6</sup>Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? <sup>7</sup>Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. <sup>8</sup>Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

### **Gradual Hymn**

“Not All the Blood of Beasts”

♪ Not all the blood of beasts On Jewish altars slain  
Could give the guilty conscience peace Or wash away the stain.

♪ But Christ, the heav'nly Lamb, Takes all our sins away;  
A sacrifice of nobler name And richer blood than they.

♪ My faith would lay its hand On that dear head of Thine,  
While as a penitent I stand, And there confess my sin.

♪ My soul looks back to see The burden Thou didst bear  
When hanging on the cursèd tree; I know my guilt was there.

♪ Believing, we rejoice To see the curse remove;  
We bless the Lamb with cheerful voice And sing His bleeding love.

## Passion History of Our Lord *Please Stand*

Matthew 27:1–26

<sup>1</sup>When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death. <sup>2</sup>And they bound him and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate the governor. <sup>3</sup>Then when Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he changed his mind and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders, <sup>4</sup>saying, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.” They said, “What is that to us? See to it yourself.” <sup>5</sup>And throwing down the pieces of silver into the temple, he departed, and he went and hanged himself. <sup>6</sup>But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, “It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is blood money.” <sup>7</sup>So they took counsel and bought with them the potter's field as a burial place for strangers. <sup>8</sup>Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. <sup>9</sup>Then was fulfilled what had been spoken by the prophet Jeremiah, saying, “And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him on whom a price had been set by some of the sons of Israel, <sup>10</sup>and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord directed me.” <sup>11</sup>Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” Jesus said, “You have said so.” <sup>12</sup>But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he gave no answer. <sup>13</sup>Then Pilate said to him, “Do you not hear how many things they testify against you?” <sup>14</sup>But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly amazed. <sup>15</sup>Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted. <sup>16</sup>And they had then a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. <sup>17</sup>So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them, “Whom do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?” <sup>18</sup>For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up. <sup>19</sup>Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, “Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream.” <sup>20</sup>Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. <sup>21</sup>The governor again said to them, “Which of the two do you want me to release for you?” And they said, “Barabbas.” <sup>22</sup>Pilate said to them, “Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?” They all said, “Let him be crucified!” <sup>23</sup>And he said, “Why? What evil has he done?” But they shouted all the more, “Let him be crucified!” <sup>24</sup>So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves.” <sup>25</sup>And all the people answered, “His blood be on us and on our children!” <sup>26</sup>Then he released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, delivered him to be crucified.

## Apostles' Creed

### The Hymn *Please Be Seated*

“Just As I Am without One Plea”

- ♪ Just as I am, without one plea But that Thy blood was shed for me  
And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.
- ♪ Just as I am and waiting not To rid my soul of one dark blot,  
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.
- ♪ Just as I am, though tossed about With many\_a conflict, many\_a doubt,  
Fightings and fears within, without, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.
- ♪ Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind; Sight, riches, healing of the mind,  
Yea, all I need, in Thee to find, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.
- ♪ Just as I am, Thou wilt receive, Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;  
Because Thy promise I believe, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.
- ♪ Just as I am; Thy love unknown Has broken ev'ry barrier down;  
Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

*Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 570 -Text: Charlotte Elliott 1789-1871; Public domain*

## Proclamation of the Word

“The Blood of the Lamb”

Exodus 12:1–14

## Response Hymn

“Glory Be to Jesus”

- ♪ Glory be to Jesus, Who in bitter pains  
Poured for me the lifeblood From His sacred veins!
- ♪ Grace and life eternal In that blood I find;  
Blest be His compassion, Infinitely kind!
- ♪ Blest through endless ages Be the precious stream  
Which from endless torment Did the world redeem!
- ♪ Abel’s blood for vengeance Pleaded to the skies;  
But the blood of Jesus For our pardon cries.
- ♪ Oft as earth exulting Wafts its praise on high,  
Angel hosts rejoicing Make their glad reply.
- ♪ Lift we, then, our voices, Swell the mighty flood;  
Louder still and louder Praise the precious blood!

*Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 433 -Text: Italian, 18<sup>th</sup> cent.; tr. Edward Caswall 1814-78; Public domain*

## Prayer of the Church *Please Stand Each petition is concluded with the following:*

Lord, in Your mercy,  
**Hear our prayer.**

## Lord’s Prayer

## Benediction

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.

*Numbers 6:24–26*

**Amen.**

## Recessional Hymn *Please Be Seated*

“Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness”

- ♪ Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness My beauty are, my glorious dress;  
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed, With joy shall I lift up my head.
- ♪ Bold shall I stand in that great day, Cleansed and redeemed, no debt to pay;  
Fully absolved through these I am From sin and fear, from guilt and shame.
- ♪ Lord, I believe Thy precious blood, Which at the mercy seat of God  
Pleads for the captives’ liberty, Was also shed in love for me.
- ♪ Lord, I believe, were sinners more Than sands upon the ocean shore,  
Thou hast for all a ransom paid, For all a full atonement made.
- ♪ When from the dust of death I rise To claim my mansion in the skies,  
This then shall be my only plea: Jesus hath lived and died for me.
- ♪ Jesus, be endless praise to Thee, Whose boundless mercy hath for me,  
For me, and all Thy hands have made, An everlasting ransom paid.

*Lutheran Service Book, Hymn 563–Text: Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, 1700–60;  
tr. John B. Wesley, 1703–91, alt.; Text: Public domain*

## Postlude

## Door Offering