

# ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH

*Called by Christ to be a sanctuary that welcomes and serves all.*

23225 Gill Road, Farmington Hills, MI 48335

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## Second Sunday in Lent



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.

March 1, 2026

10 a.m.

*Ministers:* Everyone

*Pastor:* Rev. Dr. Mark Fisher

*Director of Music:* Sean Michael Jackman DMA, Ed.D

*Director of Mission Advancement:* Ashleigh Altmann

*Office Manager:* Marie Cook

# GATHERING

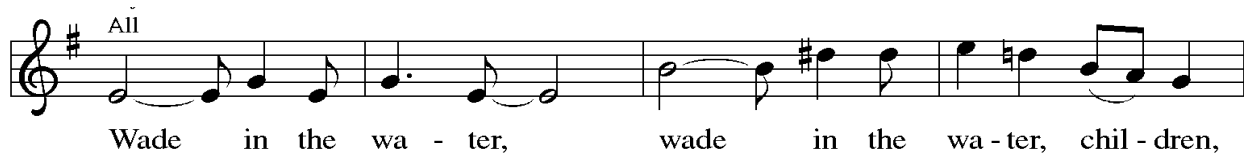
*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

## BELL CALL TO WORSHIP

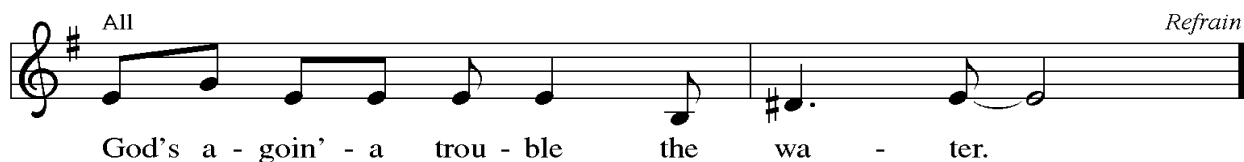
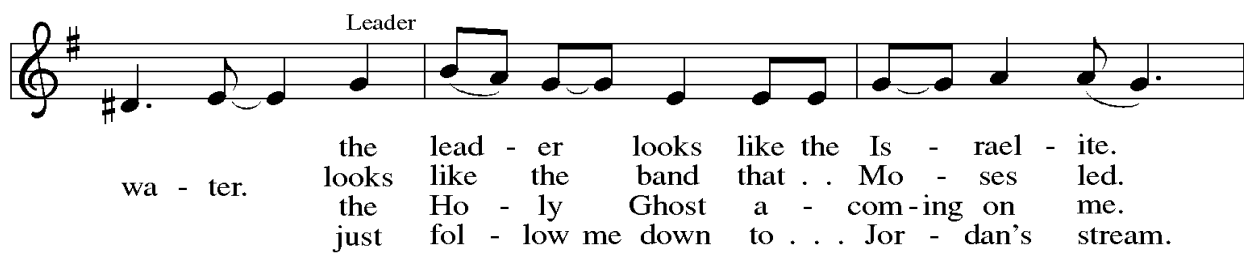
**PRELUDE MUSIC:** We Are Moving Jeff Karoub

## WELCOME/ ANNOUNCEMENTS

## GATHERING HYMN: Wade in the Water ELW 459



- 1 See that host all dressed in white,
- 2 See that band all dressed in red, God's a - goin' - a trou - ble the
- 3 Look o - ver yon - der, what do I see?
- 4 If you don't be - lieve I've been re - deemed,



Text: African American spiritual  
Music: WADE IN THE WATER, African American spiritual

## GREETING

P: 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.**

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*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, the fountain of living water,  
the rock who gave us birth, our light and our salvation. **Amen.**

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness.  
Let us give thanks for the gift of water.

Water! Water! We praise you, O God, for water—the *Detroit River, Lake St Clair, Lake Huron,*  
*Lake Erie, the Rouge River,*

the rain that nourishes animals and plants, the water for drinking and bathing.

We praise you, O God, for water.

**We praise you, O God, for water.**

We praise you, O God, for our water stories— a flood that cleansed the earth,  
the sea that drowned the enemy, a river that healed leprosy.

We praise you, O God, for water.

**We praise you, O God, for water.**

We remember the waters of Jesus— baptized in the Jordan River,  
calming the Sea of Galilee, drinking from Jacob's Well,  
healing at the pool of Bethesda, washing the disciples' feet.

We praise you, O God, for water.

**We praise you, O God, for water.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Have mercy, O God,

**against you, you alone, we have sinned.**

**We have disconnected ourselves from your creation**

**We have not acknowledged your presence in the hearts of everyone that we meet.**

**In your compassion, cleanse us from our sin and take away our guilt.**

**Create in us a new heart and give us a steadfast spirit.**

**Do not cast us away, but fill us with your Holy Spirit and restore your joy within us.**

**Amen.**

As tender as parent to child, so deep is God's compassion for you.

As high as heaven is above earth, so vast is God's love for you.

As far as east is from west, so far God removes your sin from you,  
renewing your life through Jesus Christ.

Blessed be God who crowns us with mercy and love.

**Blessed be God forever.**



## PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray.....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 as the waters of baptism cleanse us, we too may work to keep our water sources clean, accessible, and sacred. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE:** Ms. Ashleigh Altemann

## 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.*

<sup>1</sup>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. <sup>2</sup>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. <sup>3</sup>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."

<sup>4a</sup> So Abram went, as the LORD had told him, and Lot went with him.

A: The word of the Lord. C: **Thanks be to God.**

### PSALM: Psalm 121

*I lift up my eyes to the hills; my help comes from the LORD. (Ps. 121:1, 2)*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

C: **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.*

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

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

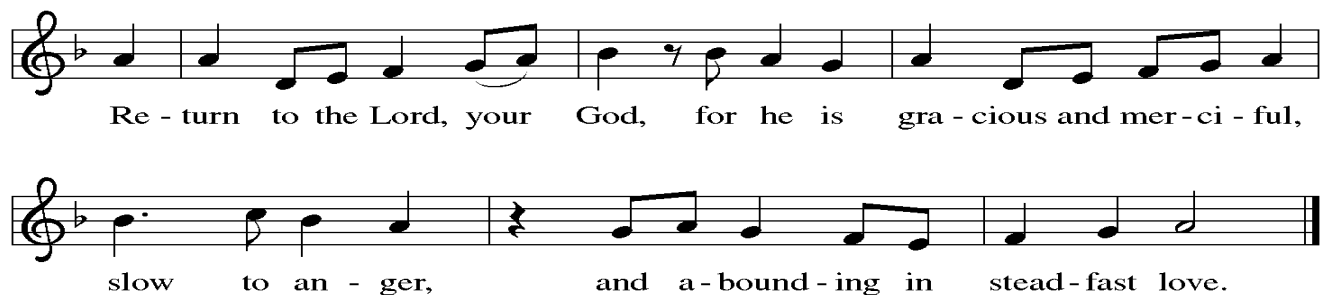
<sup>16</sup> For this reason the promise depends on faith, in order that it may rest on grace, so that it may be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (who is the father of all of us, <sup>17</sup> as it is written, "I 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: The word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

*All rise as are able*

## LENTEN 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 the 3rd chapter.

**C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

*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.*

<sup>1</sup> Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. <sup>2</sup> 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.” <sup>3</sup> Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” <sup>4</sup> 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?” <sup>5</sup> Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. <sup>6</sup> What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. <sup>7</sup> Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You must be born from above.’ <sup>8</sup> 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.” <sup>9</sup> Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” <sup>10</sup> Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? <sup>11</sup> “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. <sup>12</sup> If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? <sup>13</sup> No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. <sup>14</sup> And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup> that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

<sup>16</sup> “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.

<sup>17</sup> “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.**

*Please be seated.*

**SERMON:** “As the Wind Blows”

Pastor Mark Fisher

**HYMN OF THE DAY:** Shall We Gather at the River    ELW 423 V1 V2 and V4

# Shall We Gather at the River

1 Shall we gath - er at the riv - er, where bright an - gel feet have trod,  
2 On the mar - gin of the riv - er, wash - ing up its sil - ver spray,  
3 Ere we reach the shin - ing riv - er, lay we ev - 'ry bur - den down;  
4 Soon we'll reach the shin - ing riv - er, soon our pil - grim - age will cease;

with its crys - tal tide for - ev - er flow - ing by the throne of God?  
we will walk and wor - ship ev - er, all the hap - py gold - en day.  
grace our spir - its will de - liv - er, and pro - vide a robe and crown.  
soon our hap - py hearts will quiv - er with the mel - o - dy of peace.

*Refrain*

Yes, we'll gath - er at the riv - er, the beau - ti - ful, the beau - ti - ful riv - er;

gath - er with the saints at the riv - er that flows by the throne of God.

**CONFESSION OF FAITH: The Apostles' Creed**

**C: 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 hol  
catholic church,  
the communion of saints, the  
forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body, and the  
life everlasting. Amen.**

**ST JOHN CHOIR ANTHEM: "Peace for the Journey" from A Journey to Hope by J. M. Martin**

**PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISE ACCLAMATIONS**

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

P: 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 (like George Herbert whom the church remembers today), 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). 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 (*especially*) and accompany those who have recently left this community to journey elsewhere (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

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.**

# MEAL

*God feeds us with the presence of Christ.*

**OFFERING MUSIC:** On The Planet      Jeff Karoub

## OFFERING PRAYER

P: Let us pray.....Gracious God, you bless us with gifts of guidance, new life, growth in grace, and fruitful labor. Accept the first fruits of time and toil, field and orchard we offer here. Bless and multiply these gifts to our nurture and the care of your creation; for the sake of your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

## GREAT THANKSGIVING

P: The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.      **We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **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, Lord God of pow'r and might,  
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.  
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.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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**

P: All who are hungry, come! The feast of grace is spread.

**Pastor/Presider extends invitation to online participants to partake of communion  
The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ shed for you. Amen**

## 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, grant us peace.

**COMMUNION MUSIC:** Lead with Your Heart Jeff Karoub

**BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION**

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

**SENDING**

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

**CLOSING PRAYER**

A: Mothering God of Creation, you have fed us with daily bread, our bread of life. Let this grace now pour through us like a running river to deep, watery depths. Send us forth as gardeners of your kingdom, bearing Christ's dying and rising, that the desert may blossom and the whole creation tastes its mercy. **Amen.**

**RINGING OF THE BELL**

**BLESSING:** May God, the Gardener of creation, keep you rooted in hope; may the Living Water who wells up from Christ refresh and renew you; and may the rushing Wind of the Spirit carry you forth to abundant love and grace, + now and forever. **Amen.**

**SENDING HYMN:** Let Justice Flow Like Streams ELW 717

**DISMISSAL**

A: We are called by Christ

**C: to be a Sanctuary that Welcomes and Serves All.**

A: Go in peace. Care for all of creation

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE:** Complicated Game Jeff Karoub

# Let Justice Flow like Streams

1 Let jus - tice flow like streams of spar - kling wa - ter, pure,  
2 Let righ - teous - ness roll on as oth - ers' cares we heed,  
3 So may God's plumb line, straight, de - fine our mea - sure true,

en - a - bling growth, re - fresh - ing life, a - bun - dant, cleans - ing, sure.  
an ev - er - flow - ing stream of faith trans - lat - ed in - to deed.  
and jus - tice, right, and peace per - vade this world our whole life through.

Text: Jane Parker Huber, b. 1926  
Music: ST. THOMAS, Aaron Williams, 1731–1776  
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