



Bethlehem Lutheran Church

March 15, 2026 - Setting 3

Pastor Calvin Konop, Presiding

Jess Christenson, CYF Director

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Belonging to Christ. Sharing Christ on the North Shore and Beyond!

Introduction

Baptism is sometimes called enlightenment. The gospel for this Sunday is the story of the man born blind healed by Christ. "I was blind, now I see," declares the man. In baptism God opens our eyes to see the truth of who we are: God's beloved children. As David was anointed king of Israel, in baptism God anoints our head with oil, and calls us to bear witness to the light of Christ in our daily lives.

Prelude

Karina Roth

Welcome and Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

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

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God, have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In

the name of ✝ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith. **Amen.**

Gathering Song

Amazing Grace

ELW 779

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

ELW page 138

Hymn of Praise

Glory to God

ELW page 139

Prayer of the Day

Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Children's Time

(No Pennies please!)

On the way up the aisles, the children will be collecting "Noisy Change" for the "Holy Cow" fund, which will support ELCA World Hunger.

First Reading

1 Samuel 16:1-13

¹The LORD said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons."² Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the LORD said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the LORD.'³ Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do, and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you."⁴ Samuel did what the LORD commanded and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling and said, "Do you come peaceably?"⁵ He said, "Peaceably. I have come to sacrifice to the LORD; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

⁶When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely his anointed is now before the LORD."⁷ But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him, for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart."⁸ Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the LORD chosen this one."⁹ Then Jesse made Shammah

pass by. And he said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.”¹⁰ Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, “The LORD has not chosen any of these.”¹¹ Samuel said to Jesse, “Are all your sons here?” And he said, “There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep.” And Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him, for we will not sit down until he comes here.”¹² He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. The LORD said, “Rise and anoint him, for this is the one.”¹³ Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and the spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm

Sung Responsively

Psalm 23



¹ The LORD ¹ is my shepherd;
I shall not ¹ be in want.

² **The LORD makes me lie down ¹ in green pastures
and leads me be- ¹ side still waters.**

³ You restore my ¹ soul, O LORD,
and guide me along right pathways ¹ for your name’s sake.

⁴ **Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall ¹
fear no evil;**

for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they ¹ comfort me. R

⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence ¹ of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is ¹ running over.

⁶ **Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days ¹ of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the ¹ LORD forever. R**

Second Reading

Ephesians 5:8-14

⁸ Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Walk as children of light, ⁹ for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. ¹⁰ Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹ Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness; rather, expose them. ¹² For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly, ¹³ but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, ¹⁴ for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

“Sleeper, awake! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation

Return to the Lord

ELW page 142

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

¹As [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. ⁴We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” ⁶When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, ⁷saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. ⁸The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” ⁹Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am he.” ¹⁰But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” ¹¹He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.” ¹²They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the Sabbath.” Others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided. ¹⁷So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.”

¹⁸The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” ²⁰His parents answered, “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind, ²¹but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” ²²His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

²⁴So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, “Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.” ²⁵He answered, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.” ²⁶They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” ²⁷He answered

them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?”²⁸ Then they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses.²⁹ We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.”³⁰ The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes.³¹ We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will.³² Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind.³³ If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.”³⁴ They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?” And they drove him out.

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”³⁶ He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.”³⁷ Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.”³⁸ He said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him.³⁹ Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment, so that those who do not see may see and those who do see may become blind.”⁴⁰ Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are we?”⁴¹ Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.”

The Gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Pastor Calvin Konop

Hymn of the Day

Dearest Jesus, At Your Word

ELW 520

Apostles' 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 Intercession

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

God, our shepherd, we pray that you guide the church. Lead Christians in our community: *Trinity, Lutsen, Spirit of the Wilderness, First Congregational, Zoar, St. John's, Mount Rose, Cornerstone, Evangelical Free, and Life in Christ churches*. And across the globe including Northeast Minnesota Synod of the ELCA, in right paths for your name's sake. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God our provider, we cry out for this planet and the life it holds. Rescue endangered animals and plants, preserve threatened ecosystems, and save creatures from natural disasters. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God our sovereign, we plead for your peace on earth. Bring an end to war and violence, and raise up leaders in governments, courts, businesses, schools, and community organizations who seek goodness and mercy. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God our healer, we call to you in our need. Uplift all who are made to feel unimportant, and transform the hearts of all infected by bigotry and prejudice. Care for all in special need this day. *We pray especially for Joan, Rolf, Linda, Luke, Sarah, Bruce, Lynn, and Katrina.* We pray now for those we name aloud, or in the silence of our hearts. *(A time of silence)*. We pray for all those dealing with issues of mental health or addiction. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God our friend, we praise you for the diversity of people among us. Awaken us to share and receive the gifts we each possess, and stir up a spirit of understanding, celebration, and welcome for all. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God our home, we thank you for all who have died and completed their baptismal journeys. Grant us faith to live until we too dwell in your house forever. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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

Sharing the Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

Offering

Offering Prayer

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.**

Great Thanksgiving

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

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

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

Preface

Holy, Holy, Holy

ELW page 144

Words of Institution

The 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

Come to the table. Feast on God's goodness and mercy. All are welcome!

Bethlehem Lutheran Church believes in the real presence of Christ in Holy Communion, and we practice eucharistic hospitality. All persons, whether visiting or a member, are welcomed to Communion. (Offered in these sacraments are wine or apple juice; and regular or gluten-free wafers.)

Communion Music

Lamb of God

ELW page 146

Shepherd Me, O God

ELW 780

Post Communion Blessing

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in grace unto everlasting life. **Amen.**

Prayer After Communion

Compassionate God, **you have fed us with the bread of heaven.**

Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage: may our fasting be hunger for justice; our alms, a making of peace; and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Blessing

Receive the blessing 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.**

Dismissal

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

Postlude

Karina Roth

LENT = Pray + Fast + Give

We pray for healing for these members & friends: Joan Bieber, Mary Sanders, Kristin Lindholm, Rolf Morck, Linda Zenk, Clayton Koss, Lois Johnson, Butch & Rhonda Schulte, Luke Gulstrand, Sarah Coe, Lynn Schulte, Paulina Backstrom, Phyllis Olson, Bruce & Stacey Johnson, Annalisa Winje; Shae Lindholm, Char Anderson, Stacey Schulte, Hank Ferland, Margaret Dahl, Katrina Crouse, Karen Shannon, Tom Christiansen,

This week we lift up these members: Anne Swallow Gillis & Chris Gillis; Virginia Hahn; Valerie Gustafson; Baiers & Allison Heeren; Peter & Carol Bennett. May God walk with these faithful friends in their Lenten journey.

Our Mission of the Month for March is Powderhorn Park Neighborhood Rental Assistance Program. Your giving will assist families in preventing eviction from their homes, will provide opportunities for families to stay together in their homes and will assist with utilities that will keep families warm, with light and with water.



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This Week at Bethlehem:

- Sun Mar 15 8:40 AM Choir practice
10:00 AM Worship Service & Sunday School
11:15 AM Communion Class
1:00 PM Daisy Troop
2:00 PM Worship Service at Care Center
Mon Mar 16 3:30 PM Girl Scouts
6:30 PM Church Council
Tues Mar 17 8:30 AM Staff meeting
6:30 PM Worship planning
Wed Mar 18 12:30 PM Text Study
3:30 PM Bethlehem Builders!
5:30 PM Community Meal
6:00 PM Lent Worship
Thurs Mar 19 8:00 AM Bible Study
9:00 AM Quilting
6:30 PM Table Tennis
Fri Mar 20 - - - - Clarity Hearing
Sun Mar 22 8:40 AM Choir practice
10:00 AM Worship Service & Sunday School
11:15 AM Communion Class

On-line giving is encouraged using this QR Code or through automatic transfer. (Forms are available online & the office.)

