

Lutheran Church of the Cross



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March 8, 2026

THIRD SUNDAY



IN LENT

Sunday Worship 11:00 a.m.

Welcome to Church of the Cross.

We pray our worship today blesses your life.

Lutheran Church of the Cross

ORDER OF SERVICE

PRELUDE “Blessed Assurance”

Mark Coldiron

Time for preparing for worship

WELCOME

Kevin Brown

OPENING HYMN “O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts”

ELW 658 *(stand)*

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

C Amen.

L Let us confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt and blots out
all offenses.

Silence is kept for reflection.

L Gracious God,

C have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

L For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you:
Gracious God,

C have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

L For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word:
Gracious God,

C have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

L For failing to recognize your coming reign, and for hindering the work of
the Spirit: Gracious God,

C have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

L For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition, and for disdain the
living water Christ offers: Gracious God,

C have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

L For disregarding voices from the margin, and for distrusting signs of your
healing and hope in the world: Gracious God,

C have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

L For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent, and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life: Gracious God,

C have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

L God's steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness abound. Through faith, the free gift of God, you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ. In the name of Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven. The Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead dwells in us, pours God's love into our hearts, and gives us life and peace.

C Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L Let us pray... 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.

C Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Laura Christensen

First Reading ... 1 Samuel 16:1-13

¹ The 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. ⁶ When 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.

Psalm 23

(read responsively)

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

² **The Lord makes me lie down in green pastures
and leads me beside still waters.**

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

⁴ **Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I shall fear no evil;
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

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

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

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.”

R The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading ... John 9:1-41 (Please rise for the Gospel)

Gospel Acclamation

L Jesus says, I am the light of the world; whoever follows me will have the light of life.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

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

¹³ They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴ Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵ Then 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." ¹⁶ Some 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. ¹⁷ So 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."

¹⁸ The 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 ¹⁹ and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" ²⁰ His parents answered, "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind, ²¹ but 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." ²² His 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. ²³ Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

²⁴ So 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." ²⁵ He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." ²⁶ They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" ²⁷ He 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."

L The gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

MESSAGE OF THE DAY

Kevin Brown

HYMN OF THE DAY "Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery" ELW 334

APOSTLES' CREED

C I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again 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

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

After each petition the Leader will say: Hear Us, O God.

*Response: **Your mercy is great.***

L God, our shepherd, we pray that you guide the church. Lead Christians in our community, congregations and across the globe in right paths for your name's sake. May we discern your will for us in this congregation. Hear us, O God.

L 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.

L God our sovereign, we plead for your peace on earth. Bring an end to war and violence, and raise up leaders in governments, courts, schools, businesses and community organizations who seek goodness and mercy. We especially pray for peace in the wars in Iran and Ukraine. Hear us, O God.

L 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 due to illness, injury or grief. Let us turn to the prayer list.... We pray for your blessings upon those named there and on those we now name before you aloud or silently... Hear us, O God.

L 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. In your wisdom, bring us new ideas for worship and for community involvement. Hear us, O God.

L 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.

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

C Amen.

L Let us pray together the prayer our Lord has taught us.

The Lord's Prayer

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, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

OFFERING *You may place your Offering and your Prayer Requests in the Basket at the table in the back of the Sanctuary. At that time, you may also light a candle at the table of votives in honor or memory of someone, or for any need.*

OFFERING PRAYER

L O God, maker of heaven and earth,

C your steadfast love embraces all creation. May we use your gifts to share generously through the one who gave us eternal life and who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

BLESSING

L 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.

C Amen.

SENDING HYMN "Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross" ELW 335 (*stand*)

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINISTRY

SHARING OF THE PEACE

L Go in peace. Believe the good news.

C Thanks be to God.

L May the peace of the Lord be with you always.

C And also with you.

L Let us share the peace of the Lord with each other as we leave today.

+++++

WE LEAVE TO BE THE CHURCH IN THE WORLD

CHURCH OF THE CROSS

Douglas Whiteaker, Council President 916-606-8976
Kevin Brown, Church Secretary 916-628-6382
Jacquie Haney, Facilities Manager 916-456-8880
Church Email: sacchurchofthecross@gmail.com

NOTES & EVENTS

Still Collecting: Mercy Holistic Ministry needs items for Homeless Women. Please bring these items to the church so that Janey can pick them up and deliver them.

Lip balms

Tiny hand lotions

Tampons

Panty liners

Deodorant that does not smell like after shave

1 box of large gallon Ziplock bags to put everything in

Socks

New women's underwear sizes Medium, Large and XL.

TODAY – Church Council Meeting following Service

Sunday, March 15 – “Bold Women Service” 11:00am

WELCA General Meeting Following Service. Bring snacks to share.



Sunday, March 29 – Palm Sunday

Thursday, April 2 – Maundy Thursday Service

Friday, April 3 – Good Friday Service

Sunday, April 5 – Easter Breakfast & Easter Worship Service

PRAYER REQUESTS AND ANSWERED PRAYERS

Deanna Ransom who fell and broke her hip. She is at a rehab facility and would like phone calls.

More prayers for Mark and Patricia, who have been in another car accident. Mark has 15 stitches in his left hand and Patricia is home, recovering from 4 broken ribs and various bruises.

The family of Judy Kaylor, longtime member of Cross, who passed away February 11.

Tami, Janey, Kate and Merete who were longtime friends of Pennie Taylor who passed away suddenly of a heart attack. And for Pennie's husband, Howard, and family.

Dee Emmert, our past interim Pastor, and family on the death of her mother, Jacque Emmert.

Charlotte Csontos-Diab, daughter of former Pastor Virginia Ward, who has been diagnosed with aggressive breast cancer and is facing surgery, chemo, and radiation.

Nelly Quiban, grandma of Heaven and Hunter, and of Harmony and Holden (Douglas Whiteaker's children) who has been diagnosed with stage 4 brain cancer.

Sonya Tafejian, Tami Stoddard's sister, who is still fighting a very aggressive breast cancer.

Lisa Mulz, who lost her dog, Petra, due to cancer. Also, for Lisa's mom who is on hospice.

Jim Dugan, friend of the congregation, who has early onset Alzheimer's.

Blair Bagley, Julie Andrews' friend who is recovering from Chiari 1 Malformation brain surgery.

Chuck Hines, as he goes through another round of chemotherapy for additional spots of lung cancer, and his friends Elaine Hussey (leg wounds and breathing difficulties); Don Jennings (cardiac stents); Ken Kohler (dementia and in hospice care); Kathy Russell (breathing difficulties due to fungus infection); Ken Smith permanent injuries leading to disabilities.

May Drobny, who fractured her hip but is recovering at home.

Donya Wiken, who is homebound.

Julie Nemes' friend Danica and her husband, Abraham, who is struggling with Parkinson's.

Sue Fossum's sister-in-law, Nancy, who is in hospice. And for Mark, Sue's brother. Prayers of thanks for Sue Fossum's sister-in-law Deb's surgery was successful with tumors benign, Sarah had her surgery with a mastectomy and neighbor Jen is continuing ongoing treatments for breast cancer but doing well.

Jackie Walters who is suffering from rheumatoid arthritis, and is facing bladder surgery. Also, Hans, Jackie's husband who has Parkinson's.

Julie Andrews' sister-in-law, Marilyn, who is in a care facility. Also, her sister-in-law, Pat.

Paul Santos, Jacquie Haney's brother-in-law hoping to receive a kidney transplant.

Erin Sullivan, Jacquie's friend, prayers for continued healing after beating breast cancer.

Karin Kretz, recovering from eye surgery.

LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE CROSS
PARTICIPATING & PARTNERING IN SERVICE

Here is a sample:

- 1) St. John's Program for Real Change - Preparing & serving dinners at Women's & Children's Shelter
- 2) Fortunate Feast - Christmas Event for Families in need
- 3) LSS of Northern California's program for Youth who have aged out of the Foster Care system
- 4) River City Community Services - Food closet
- 5) Habitat for Humanity
- 6) Rock Point Navajo Reservation - Providing school supplies, Christmas gifts for children and more
- 7) "Run to Feed the Hungry" Care Station - supporting Sacramento Food Bank
- 8) Blue Star Moms - Sending "care" packages to our troops

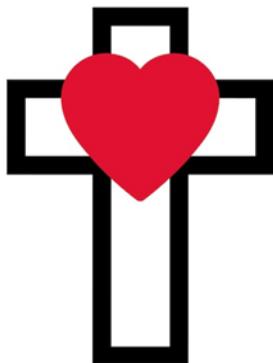
Some projects receive support funding by **Thrivent Financial** - A Non-Profit Fraternal Benefit Society that returns funds from financial products purchased by members to fund endeavors in the Community.

Other Groups That Use Our Facility:

- 1) Al-Anon
- 2) Women's AA
- 3) Food Addicts

**Come Join Us in Our Service
to Our Community**

**Worship For All Ages - Sunday 11:00 a.m.
Pet Friendly - Bring your Dog, Cat, or other Friends
WE ARE AN OPEN and DIVERSE ASSEMBLY
ALL ARE WELCOME !!**



MISSION STATEMENT

**Lutheran Church of the Cross
is a welcoming, worshipping people of God.
Through faith in Jesus Christ,
we praise the God of Creation,
Love, and Forgiveness;
encourage Spiritual Growth;
and respond to the Holy Spirit's call to
Compassionate Service in
our Community and World.**