

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

15 MARCH 2026

Gathering

CONFESSION & GREETING

Pastor In this season of Lent we begin our worship with an order of confession...
Most merciful God, we confess that

All we have not listened for your Word as we should.

Pastor We confess that

All We have been ignorant and blind to our own sin.

Pastor We confess that

All We have been so proud we cannot admit that we are wrong.

Pastor We confess that

All We have been self-righteous and unable to admit our own flaws.

Pastor We confess that

All We have been callous and ceased to have empathy and compassion for others.

Pastor We confess that

All We have been defiant, insisting on our own way.

Pastor We confess that

All We have been evasive, placing blame on someone or something else.

Pastor In your compassion,

All For these things and more we are truly sorry and humbly repent.

Forgive us our sins, known and unknown,

things we have done and things we have failed to do.

Renew us and lead us.

Pastor The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be
with you all.

All And also with you.

GATHERING SONG

There Is a Balm in Gilead

ELW #614

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Word

UNDERSTANDING THE READING

GOSPEL 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 READING: JOHN 9:1-41

Reader This morning we hear the good news of Jesus Christ from the Gospel of John.

All **Glory to you, O God.**

¹⁻² Walking down the street, Jesus saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked, “Rabbi, who sinned: this man or his parents, causing him to be born blind?”

³⁻⁵ Jesus said, “You’re asking the wrong question. You’re looking for someone to blame. There is no such cause-effect here. Look instead for what God can do. We need to be energetically at work for the One who sent me here, working while the sun shines. When night falls, the workday is over. For as long as I am in the world, there is plenty of light. I am the world’s Light.”

⁶⁻⁷ He said this and then spit in the dust, made a clay paste with the saliva, rubbed the paste on the blind man’s eyes, and said, “Go, wash at the Pool of Siloam” (Siloam means “Sent”). The man went and washed—and saw.

⁸ Soon the town was buzzing. His relatives and those who year after year had seen him as a blind man begging were saying, “Why, isn’t this the man we knew, who sat here and begged?”

⁹ Others said, “It’s him all right!”

But others objected, “It’s not the same man at all. It just looks like him.”

He said, “It’s me, the very one.”

¹⁰ They said, “How did your eyes get opened?”

¹¹ “A man named Jesus made a paste and rubbed it on my eyes and told me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ I did what he said. When I washed, I saw.”

¹² “So where is he?”

“I don’t know.”

¹³⁻¹⁵ They marched the man to the Pharisees. This day when Jesus made the paste and healed his blindness was the Sabbath. The Pharisees grilled him again on how he had come to see. He said, “He put a clay paste on my eyes, and I washed, and now I see.”

¹⁶ Some of the Pharisees said, “Obviously, this man can’t be from God. He doesn’t keep the Sabbath.”

Others countered, “How can a bad man do miraculous, God-revealing things like this?” There was a split in their ranks.

¹⁷ They came back at the blind man, “You’re the expert. He opened *your* eyes. What do you say about him?”

He said, “He is a prophet.”

¹⁸⁻¹⁹ The Jews didn’t believe it, didn’t believe the man was blind to begin with. So they called the parents of the man now bright-eyed with sight. They asked them, “Is this your son, the one you say was born blind? So how is it that he now sees?”

²⁰⁻²³ His parents said, “We know he is our son, and we know he was born blind. But we don’t know how he came to see—haven’t a clue about who opened his eyes. Why don’t you ask him? He’s a grown man and can speak for himself.” (His parents were talking like this because they were intimidated by the Jewish leaders, who had already

decided that anyone who took a stand that this was the Messiah would be kicked out of the meeting place. That's why his parents said, "Ask him. He's a grown man.")

²⁴ They called the man back a second time—the man who had been blind—and told him, "Give credit to God. We know this man is an impostor."

²⁵ He replied, "I know nothing about that one way or the other. But I know one thing for sure: I was blind . . . I now see."

²⁶ They said, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?"

²⁷ "I've told you over and over and you haven't listened. Why do you want to hear it again? Are you so eager to become his disciples?"

²⁸⁻²⁹ With that they jumped all over him. "You might be a disciple of that man, but we're disciples of Moses. We know for sure that God spoke to Moses, but we have no idea where this man even comes from."

³⁰⁻³³ The man replied, "This is amazing! You claim to know nothing about him, but the fact is, he opened my eyes! It's well known that God isn't at the beck and call of sinners, but listens carefully to anyone who lives in reverence and does his will. That someone opened the eyes of a man born blind has never been heard of—ever. If this man didn't come from God, he wouldn't be able to do anything."

³⁴ They said, "You're nothing but dirt! How dare you take that tone with us!" Then they threw him out in the street.

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and went and found him. He asked him, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

³⁶ The man said, "Point him out to me, sir, so that I can believe in him."

³⁷ Jesus said, "You're looking right at him. Don't you recognize my voice?"

³⁸ "Master, I believe," the man said, and worshiped him.

³⁹ Jesus then said, "I came into the world to bring everything into the clear light of day, making all the distinctions clear, so that those who have never seen will see, and those who have made a great pretense of seeing will be exposed as blind."

⁴⁰ Some Pharisees overheard him and said, "Does that mean you're calling us blind?"

⁴¹ Jesus said, "If you were really blind, you would be blameless, but since you claim to see everything so well, you're accountable for every fault and failure."

Reader This is the good news of Jesus Christ, the Gospel of the Lord.
All Praise to you O Christ.

SERMON

SONG OF THE DAY

O Christ, Your Heart, Compassionate

ELW #722

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Leader Hear us, O God.

All Your mercy is great.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

Pastor The peace of Christ be with you all.

All And also with you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

For more information about what is happening here at First Lutheran, please see the insert Announcements or sign up for our weekly email at rushcityfirstlutheran.org/news

Meal

OFFERING

You can give online by scanning this QR code or you can use the brown envelopes in your pew to make an offering by cash or check.

Please also take this time to fill out the "Count Me In" card in your bulletin. It helps us understand who is here and how our worship might be more welcoming.



OFFERING SONG

John 9

By Patty Shelly

OFFERING PRAYER

Leader God of the wilderness,

All We give these offerings in gratitude, rejoicing in the abundance of your gifts to us. We give these offerings in faith, trusting that you will provide for our needs. We give these offerings in hope, knowing you can use them to spread your love in this world. And with these offerings, we give ourselves. Help us always to live with generous hearts and open hands. Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Pastor The Lord be with you.

All And also with you.

Pastor Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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;
Lead us not into temptation and deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

COMMUNION

Just as Christ welcomes all people, all people are welcome at Christ's table here at First. We invite you to share communion regardless of your age, race, creed, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, social status, or physical or mental ability. There are gluten free wafers for those who need them. There is red wine and white grape juice. If you wish to receive a blessing in lieu of grain and grape, let the pastor know when you come forward. She will be happy to give you a blessing. If you need to receive communion in your seat, please tell an usher.

COMMUNION SONGS

When We Must Bear Persistent Pain

ACS #1014

Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound

ELW #779

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Leader Compassionate God,

All 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.

Sending

BENEDICTION

SENDING SONG

Be Thou My Vision

ELW #793

DISMISSAL

Leader Go in peace, God's word is near!

All Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE



Holy Week Dates and Worship Times

Palm Sunday, March 29th: 9:00 AM with Praise Band & Choir

Maundy Thursday, April 2nd: 6:00 PM

Good Friday, April 3rd: 6:00 PM

Easter Sunday, April 5th: 9:00 AM with Praise Band, Choir & Brass

