

1st Sunday in Lent

February 22, 2026

GATHERING BEFORE THE WORD

Prelude *Jesus Walked this Lonesome Valley* arr. Jack Schrader

Greeting and Announcements **Opening Sentences**

***Doxology** - all to sing No. 592

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

***Prayer of Praise**

***Call to Worship**

Leader: We are the body of Christ, and we depend on God's grace.

People: We pray to God in times of distress, knowing that we are freed from sin and preserved from trouble.

Leader: Steadfast love surrounds those who trust in the Lord.

People: We will be glad in the Lord and shout for joy!

Leader: Let us worship God.

***Opening Hymn** "[Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days](#)"

***Call to Confession**

Leader: When we stay silent, when we do not acknowledge what we need to change, we waste away. Our guilt turns into shame that eats away at us like a poison. God calls us to repent and be healed; let us turn to God.

***Prayer of Confession** (in unison)

Merciful One, we are so easily tempted. We turn away from your word so quickly. We seek anything that claims to save us from discomfort, inconvenience, pain, fear, and emptiness. But these are false idols, dissolving in the wind. You are our true hope and salvation, our hiding place, our guide, our guardian. We confess our transgressions to you: forgive our sins, we pray.

A Time of Silent Prayer

***Assurance of Forgiveness**

Leader: Let us be glad in the Lord and rejoice! God does not count our sins against us, but offers us a free gift of righteousness. This is good news!

All: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God.

***Response of Praise**-all to sing "Gloria Patri" No. 579

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen. Amen.*

***We Share God's Peace**

Leader: May the peace of the Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

(You are invited to share God's peace as you greet those around you.)

Special Music *There is a Balm in Gilead* arr. Jay Rouse

LISTENING FOR THE WORD

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Reading [Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7 \(NRSV\)](#)

Hymn (seated) "Jesus Loves Me" No. 304

*Jesus loves me! This I know. For the Bible tells me so;
Little ones to Him belong; They are weak, but He is strong.
Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.*

Children's Message

(Children grades K-8 may be dismissed to Sunday School)

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

Prayer for Illumination

New Testament Reading [Matthew 4:1-11 \(NRSV\)](#)

Sermon "*Into the Wilderness*"
in the garden
The Rev. M. Rex Espiritu

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Prayers of the People...The Lord's Prayer ('debts' and debtors')

BEARING THE WORD INTO THE WORLD

*Sending Hymn "[O Word of God Incarnate](#)"

*Charge and Benediction

Postlude *Amazing Grace* arr. Jack Schrader

(We invite you to remain seated through the Postlude.)

*Indicates that those who are able may stand.

Lectionary readings for March 1, 2026

Genesis 12:1-4a; Psalm 121
Romans 4:1-5, 13-17; John 3:1-17