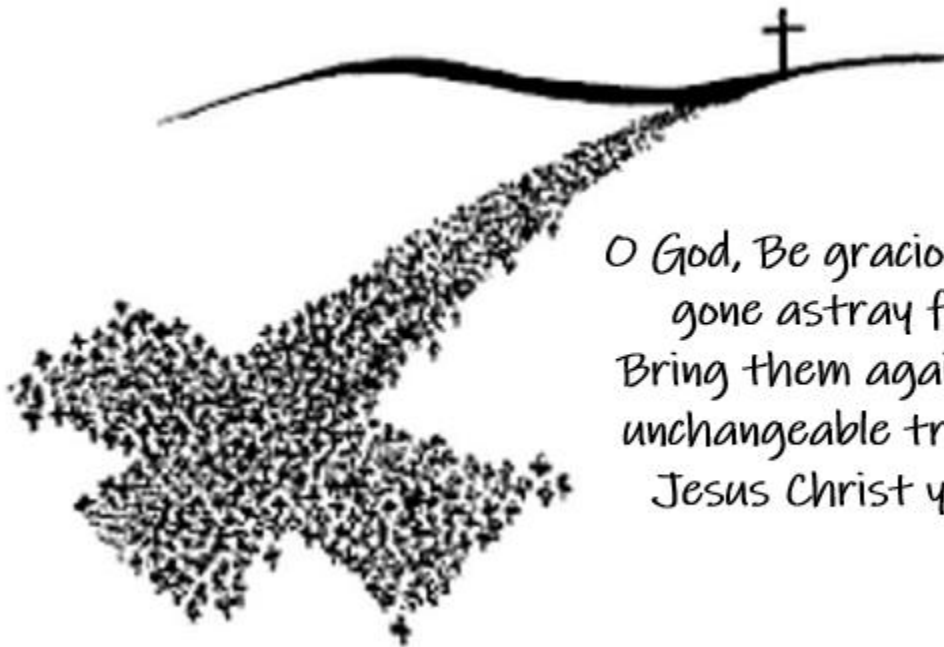




**The Second Sunday in Lent**  
**March 1, 2026      8:00 a.m.**



*O God, Be gracious to all who have  
gone astray from your ways.  
Bring them again to embrace the  
unchangeable truth of your Word,  
Jesus Christ your Son. Amen.*

**Welcome to Church of the Ascension**

Church of the Ascension provides opportunities to  
**Connect** with God and one another,  
**Grow** in faith and understanding, and  
**Serve** the Lord, one another, and the world around us.

We are an active community of faith committed to welcoming all  
and sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ.

**Christ-centered + Spirit-filled + Mission-minded**

## The Liturgy of the Word of God

✠ *Please stand as you are able.*

### ✠ **A Penitential Order: Rite I**

*Celebrant:* Bless the Lord who forgiveth all our sins.

*People:* **His mercy endureth for ever.**

*Celebrant:* Hear what our Lord Jesus saith: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets. *Matthew 22:37-40*

Let us humbly confess our sins unto Almighty God.

*Silence is kept*

**Most merciful God,  
we confess that we have sinned against thee  
in thought, word, and deed,  
by what we have done,  
and by what we have left undone.  
We have not loved thee with our whole heart;  
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.  
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.  
For the sake of thy Son Jesus Christ,  
have mercy on us and forgive us;  
that we may delight in thy will,  
and walk in thy ways,  
to the glory of thy Name. Amen.**

*Celebrant:*

The Almighty and merciful Lord grant you absolution and remission of all your sins, true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and consolation of his Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

*Celebrant:* Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One,

*People:* **Have mercy upon us.**

### The Collect

The Lord be with you. **And with thy spirit.** Let us pray.

O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy: Be gracious to all who have gone astray from thy ways, and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of thy Word, Jesus Christ thy Son; who with thee and the Holy Spirit liveth and reigneth, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### **The First Lesson: Genesis 12:1-4a**

A Reading from the Book of Genesis

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. 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. 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." So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

### **Psalm 121**

- 1 I lift up my eyes to the hills; \* from where is my help to come?
- 2 My help comes from the LORD, \* the maker of heaven and earth.
- 3 He will not let your foot be moved \*  
and he who watches over you will not fall asleep.
- 4 Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel \* shall neither slumber nor sleep;
- 5 The LORD himself watches over you; \*  
the LORD is your shade at your right hand,
- 6 So that the sun shall not strike you by day, \* nor the moon by night.
- 7 The LORD shall preserve you from all evil; \*  
it is he who shall keep you safe.
- 8 The LORD shall watch over your going out and your coming in, \*  
from this time forth for evermore.

### **The Second Lesson: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17**

A Reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans

What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness. 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. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation. For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, 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. The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

### **✠The Gospel: John 3:1-17**

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John **Glory be to thee, O Lord.** There was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. 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 apart from the presence of God." Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from

above." 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?" Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' 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." Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? 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. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. 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. 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."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise be to thee, O Christ.**

### **The Sermon**

The Rev. Dr. William Pugliese

### **✠ The Nicene Creed**

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.**

**He has spoken through the Prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.**

**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

### **The Prayers of the People**

*Celebrant:* In this holy season of self-examination and repentance, as we journey with Christ into the wilderness, let us pray for the Church and for the world.

*Intercessor:* For the Church throughout the world, that in this Lenten season we may resist the temptations of power, fear, and self-sufficiency, and learn again to trust in God alone; for Sean our Presiding Bishop, Carrie our Bishop, and for all clergy and lay ministers;

that the Church may faithfully proclaim the Good News in word and deed, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For this nation and for all nations; for Donald our President, for Congress and the courts, for state and local leaders; that those entrusted with authority may seek justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For a world wounded by violence, disaster, and division; for those who live in fear; and for the healing of creation itself; that we may learn to depend not on bread alone, but on every word that comes from God, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit, especially Lianne, Stacy, Bill, Jack, Jackie, Dewey, Noah, Liz, Karen, Scott, Drew, Mary, Steve, Rick, Danny, Darrell, Cathy, Reed, Bob, and those we now name, either silently or aloud (pause); that Christ, who was tested in every way yet without sin, may strengthen and sustain them, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For the poor, the lonely, the hungry, and the homeless; that in denying ourselves this Lent we may grow in compassion and mercy, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For those celebrating birthdays and anniversaries this week: Domenic, Gary, Luke, Sandy, Linda, David and Jill; for the quiet blessings of daily life; that we may recognize God's faithful presence even in the wilderness seasons of our lives, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For those who have died in the hope of the resurrection; that they may rest in peace and rise in glory, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

*Celebrant:* Gracious God, whose Son fasted forty days in the wilderness and overcame the tempter: strengthen us in our Lenten discipline, sustain us in our weakness, and bring us at last to the joy of Easter; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

✠ **The Peace:** The Peace of the Lord be always with you. **And with thy spirit.**

### **Birthday and Anniversary Prayer**

**O God, our times are in thy hands: look with favor, we pray, on thy servants as they begin another year. Grant that they may grow in wisdom and grace. Send thy blessings upon them, that their homes may be a haven of peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### **Announcements**

Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is put away! *Psalm 32:1*

### **The Celebration of the Holy Communion**

*Thank you for your financial support! To make an online offering, please scan the QR code:*

#### ✠ **At the Presentation**

All things come of thee, O Lord, **and of thine own have we given thee.**



### **The Great Thanksgiving: Eucharistic Prayer II**

The Lord be with you. **And with thy spirit.**

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

Let us give thanks unto our Lord God. **It is meet and right so to do.**

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who was in every way tempted as we are, yet did not sin; by whose grace we are able to triumph over every evil, and to live no longer unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us and rose again. Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and saying,

**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts: Heaven and earth are full of thy Glory.**

**Glory be to thee, O Lord Most High. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

All glory be to thee, O Lord our God, for that thou didst create heaven and earth, and didst make us in thine own image; and, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to take our nature upon him, and to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption. He made there a full and perfect sacrifice for the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks to thee, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink this, all of you; for this is my Blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me."

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, we thy people do celebrate and make, with these thy holy gifts which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; and looking for his coming again with power and great glory. And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us, and, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, to bless and sanctify these gifts of bread and wine, that they may be unto us the Body and Blood of thy dearly-beloved Son Jesus Christ. And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, whereby we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies. Grant, we beseech thee, that all who partake of this Holy Communion may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, and be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction; and also that we and all thy whole Church may be made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord; By whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. **AMEN.**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

And now, as our Savior Christ hath taught us, we are bold to say:

**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, for ever and ever. Amen.**

### **Breaking of the Bread**

**Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; Therefore let us keep the feast.**

**O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, Have mercy upon us.**

**O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, Have mercy upon us.**

**O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, Grant us thy peace.**

**We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.**

The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving. **Amen.**

**Communion:** *All baptized persons are welcome to receive Holy Communion. When directed by an Usher, please come forward to receive Holy Communion kneeling or standing at the Communion Rail.*

### **Post Communion Prayer**

**Let us pray. Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank thee for that thou dost feed us, in these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of thine everlasting kingdom. And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.**

### **The Prayer Over The People**

*During the season of Lent, in place of a final blessing, the presider offers a Prayer over the People.*

**Bow down before the Lord.**

*The people kneel or bow as able. Keep this your family, Lord, with your never-failing mercy, that relying solely on the help of your heavenly grace, they may be upheld by your divine protection; through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

### **✠The Dismissal:**

**Let us go forth in the name of Christ. Thanks be to God.**

<b>Worship Assistants</b>	<b>March 1</b>	<b>March 8</b>
Usher	<i>1 needed</i>	<i>1 needed</i>
Lector	Roberta Wilhelm	Roberta Wilhelm
Acolyte	Jennie Grabill	Charlie Aler

**March Altar Guild:**

Kim Tompkins, Charlie Aler, Beverly Baker, Helen Lang  
*In loving memory of Jenny Beeker*

**Attendance – February 22**

8:00 am – 29    10:15 am: In-person – 41    YouTube – 7    Facebook – 5    **Total: 82**

**Readings for Next Sunday: Third Sunday in Lent - A**

Exodus 17:1-7    Psalm 95    Romans 5:1-11    John 4:5-42

**Joint Episcopal – United Methodist Prayer for the March 3 Feast Day for Charles and John Wesley**  
February 25, 2026

The Episcopal Church observes the Feast Day of John and Charles Wesley on March 3 by honoring the brothers as influential priests in the Church of England and founders of the Methodist movement within the Anglican tradition. This year all United Methodists and Episcopalians are invited to mark this day with prayer for each other and our shared relationship. As many in both churches work toward a full communion relationship, we offer this prayer:

*Loving God, you inspired your servants Charles and John Wesley to sing and speak boldly the promises of our shared faith. You warmed their hearts and filled them with a passion to care for others and introduce them to you. You endowed them with eloquence, determination, and courage.*

*Grant those same characteristics to us as well. On this day, we ask you to move us closer to you and closer to each other, even as we speak and sing your truth to a hurting society. May the marking of this day be a means of grace. Kindle within us such fervor that we might be faithful witnesses to your world-changing grace. Open our minds and hearts to recognize you in each other and in the widow, orphan, and foreigner. Fill our hearts with the courage we need to bring both love and justice into our communities.*

*As we pray for the coming of your kingdom, we seek your guidance for the relationship between The Episcopal Church and the United Methodist Church. We pray for a more visible expression of the bond we share. Make us to be your light and witness to those who have not known Christ. Make us one, for the sake of the Christ who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.*

*Amen.*

Pierre-Henry+