

**Sunday, March 8, 2026**

**Third Sunday in Lent**

**The Good News is... together, the impossible is possible**

**PRELUDE**

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

If you need good news,

**settle into this space.**

**We have good news to share.**

If you need a word of hope,

**then trust us when we say,**

**there is hope enough to go around.**

If you need a glimmer of joy,

**then you're in luck!**

**We have resilient joy abounding.**

If you need to feel God's presence in your midst,

**then know that this is God's house.**

This is the good news of the gospel.

**God is here. Love is real. Joy is on the move.**

**Let us worship our with-us God!**

**KYRIE (Call Us Home, 3)**

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Friends, we are like the disciples. The day that Jesus fed 5,000, his disciples could not imagine a solution to the crowd's hunger. They told Jesus to send the crowds away. We often do the same. Like the disciples, we try to follow Jesus around, but when we run into issues, we often cannot imagine how we could play a part.

That is why we need the Prayer of Confession.

For in this prayer, we remember that we can make a difference.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Friends, let us pray:

Holy God,

**with you the impossible is possible.**

**5,000 can be fed.**

**The blind can see.**

**The hopeless can find hope.**

**With you the impossible is possible,**

**but we are quick to forget that.**

**We look at our hurting world and tell ourselves that nothing can be done.**

**We forget that you empowered the disciples to feed the crowd.**

**We forget that you are always with us.**

**Forgive our small-minded ways.**

**Forgive us for doubting that change could ever come.**

**But even more so, forgive us when we refuse to be a part of it.**

**With hope for a better tomorrow we pray, amen.**

Family of faith,

no matter how many mistakes the disciples made,

Jesus still washed their feet. Jesus still fed them. Jesus still called them beloved.

The same is true for you and me, so hear and believe this good news:

**today is a new day, and once again, we belong to God.**

**We are forgiven. We are called. We are not alone.**

**What good, good news. Amen!**

**GATHERING HYMN**     ACS 1036 Commonwealth is God's Commandment

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray:

**Holy God, we could press our ear to the page, hoping to hear you more clearly. We could silence all the alarms and notifications, hoping to catch a murmur of your voice. We could still our beating hearts, and still we might miss your voice. So today we pray, open up space in our**

**hearts, in our spirits, in our minds, to feel your presence among us.  
With you, anything is possible. We believe. Help our unbelief. Amen.**

## **KIDS SERMON**

### **HOPE FOUND AROUND US: A passage from *In the Name of Jesus* by Henri Nouwen**

Let us listen for God's hope and grace as it comes to us from unexpected sources.

**Our hearts and minds are open to the spirit.**

First of all, Jesus sends the twelve out in pairs (Mark 6:7). We keep forgetting that we are being sent out two by two. We cannot bring good news on our own. We are called to proclaim the Gospel together, in community. There is a divine wisdom here. "If two of you on earth agree to ask anything at all, it will be granted to you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three meet in my name, I am there among them" (Matthew 18:19-20). You might already have discovered for yourself how radically different traveling alone is from traveling together. I have found over and over again how hard it is to be truly faithful to Jesus when I am alone. I need my brothers or sisters to pray with me, to speak with me about the spiritual task at hand, and to challenge me to stay pure in mind, heart, and body. But far more importantly, it is Jesus who heals, not I; Jesus who speaks words of truth, not I; Jesus who is Lord, not I. This is very clearly made visible when we proclaim the redeeming power of God together. Indeed, whenever we minister together, it is easier for people to recognize that we do not come in our own name, but in the name of the Lord Jesus who sent us.

God, be in our understanding.

**Let the Spirit be heard.**

*I invite you to stand in body or spirit as we prepare our hearts for the scriptures:*

**RETURN TO THE LORD** (Call Us Home, 7)

### **HOPE FOUND IN THE SCRIPTURE**

Let us listen for God's hope and grace as it comes to us in scripture.

**Our hearts and minds are open to the spirit.**

### **Mark 6:31-44**

Jesus said to (the disciples), “Come away by yourselves to someplace more remote, and rest awhile.” For there were many people coming and going, and the apostles hadn’t had time to eat. So they went away in a boat to a deserted area.

The people saw them leaving and many recognized them, so they ran together on foot from all the cities and got there ahead of the apostles. When Jesus went ashore, there was a large crowd waiting for him, and he felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began to teach them many things.

By now it was getting very late, and his disciples came up to him and said, “This is a deserted place and it’s very late. Why not dismiss them so they can go to the nearby farms and villages and buy something to eat?” Jesus replied, “Give them something to eat yourselves.” They answered, “You want us to spend half a year’s wages on bread for them to eat?”

“How many loaves do you have?” Jesus asked. “Go look.” When they found out they reported back, “Five, and two fish.” Jesus told them to have the people sit down on the grass in groups of hundreds and fifties. Then Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, raised his eyes to heaven and said the blessing. Jesus broke the loaves and handed them to the disciples to distribute among the people. He also passed out the two fish among them. They all ate until they had their fill. The disciples gathered up the leftovers and filled twelve baskets of broken bread and fish. In all, five thousand families ate that day.

### **Ephesians 3:20-21**

To God—whose power now at work in us can do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine—to God be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus through all generations, world without end! Amen.

The word of God for the people of God,

**Thanks be to God.**

### **SERMON**

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

Human Minds Just Can't Imagine

We will now take a moment of reflection, to listen to the spirit. This is also a time to prepare our hearts for the offering. We all have so much to share: time, talent, tithe. In the bulletins, there is a piece called Joyful Giving to share what you will give the community this week. Those slips can be placed in the offering basket.

## **TIME OF REFLECTION**

**OFFERING**      The Bread of Life (Call Us Home, 12)

## **OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray.

**O God, maker of heaven and earth, your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts we offer today, let us share your hope and grace with all the world. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.**

## **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

**I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.  
It sounds like welcome and feels like home.  
It sounds like laughter and feels like mercy.  
It sounds like love and feels like a seat at the table,  
so I believe in the good news of Jesus Christ.**

**I have seen it alive in the world.  
And even when my heart aches, even when wars rage,  
even when mercy feels out of reach,  
I remember the one who welcomed the children  
and led with nonviolence.  
I remember the one who cared for the vulnerable  
and inspired those around him.  
I remember that the good news really is good news,  
for I have seen it alive in the world.  
Thanks be to God! Amen.**

**PRAYER SONG** ELW 752 Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Calling and equipping God, many years ago, on a hillside in Galilee, you looked at your disciples and said, “You give them something to eat.”

We read these ancient words again and are struck with the realization that from the very beginning, you have seen good in us.  
From the very beginning, you have known that we are capable of great love.  
From the very beginning, you have believed that we could make a difference.

Calling God, help us to see that truth in ourselves.  
Help us to see your fingerprints in our lives.  
Help us to see the ways you have equipped us to serve.  
Help us to see the ways that we are capable,  
instead of only seeing the ways we stumble and get in our own way.

God, we long to see ourselves as you do because we know that like that day in the Galilee, there is still work to do.  
Like that day on the hillside, this world is full of people who are hungry.  
We are hungry for justice,  
hungry for companionship, hungry for reasons to hope.  
Like that day on the hillside, this world is full of people who need healing. We need healing for our bodies, healing for our minds, healing for broken relationships.

We also ask that you be with those we name aloud or quietly in our hearts, especially (PRAYER LIST)...

Again, like that day on the hillside, there is surely enough to go around, but we doubt and deny that truth. So call us again, loving God. Say our names. Hand us the baskets of bread and fish. Tell us it's our turn. Help us see ourselves the way you see us, for we know that together the impossible is possible. Until your promised day when all are fed, all are healed, and hunger is no more, we will continue to pray.

**Amen.**

**PRAYER SONG** ELW 752 Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying

**PASSING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**GREAT THANKSGIVING** (Call Us Home, 13)

**PREFACE**

Truly it is right and joyous to offer thanks and praise to our Gracious God in all places and in all circumstances of life. But especially so on this day as we prepare our hearts for the mystery of salvation in Jesus' great sacrifice. And so with all the saints and angels in heaven and on earth, we raise our voices with this never-ending hymn of praise:

**Holy, Holy, Holy** (Call Us Home, 14)

**EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

**CALL US HOME** (Call Us Home, 16)

**THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us, in the language or version of our hearts:

**Heavenly God, giver of life, holy is your name. Your realm come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For you reign in power and glory, now and forever. Amen.**

**Distribution**

**Communion Hymns** Lamb of God - Call Us Home

ELW 469 By Your Hand You Feed Your People

**Prayer after Communion**

Let us pray:

**God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Let us be strengthened to become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Redeemer. Amen.**

**Blessing**

As you leave this place,  
when you meet anger, speak with love.  
When you meet fear, speak with hope.  
When you meet pain, speak with gentleness.  
But no matter what, speak this good news.  
For if you won't, then who will?  
Remember, the good news of the gospel is  
love and justice for all.  
It is joy that surprises,  
and nonviolence that transforms.

The good news of the gospel is alive in the world,  
so go forth speaking, knowing the Creator, + Redeemer  
and Sustainer are with you always.  
Amen.

**Sending Song**      ELW 674 Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ

**Dismissal**

Go in peace, share the good news!

**Thanks be to God.**