

The Second Sunday in Lent
March 1, 2026
9:30 a.m.



St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
1935 The Plaza
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Schenectady, NY 12309
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If you or someone you know is in need, please call Mother Lisa at (518) 637-7736

So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him.

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

The Psalm

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

Lector: 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.

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

The Sequence Hymn

Hymnal #668

The Holy Gospel

John 3:1-17

Celebrant: The Holy Gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ, according to John.
People: **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

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.”

Celebrant: The Gospel of the Lord.
People: **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

The Sermon

The Rev. Lisa J. Busby

The Nicene Creed

Page #358

All: **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.

Prayers of the People for the Second Sunday in Lent -

God's Love for the Sojourner (Deuteronomy 10:18-19)

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- Intercessor:* For those who are vulnerable and far from home,
People: **May we reflect your love, O God, who defends and provides for all.**
- Intercessor:* For the fatherless and the widow,
People: **Uphold them in your mercy.**
- Intercessor:* For those who feel unseen or unheard,
People: **Let your light shine upon them.**
- Intercessor:* For those who hunger for belonging,
People: **Satisfy them with your presence.**
- Intercessor:* For advocates and allies,
People: **Strengthen their resolve for justice.**
- Intercessor:* For those who offer food and clothing to the needy,
People: **Bless their generosity.**
- Intercessor:* For communities that welcome strangers and newcomers,
People: **Fill them with joy and unity.**
- Intercessor:* For those who remember their own journeys,

People: **Inspire empathy and understanding.**

Intercessor: For leaders who shape the future of immigrants,
People: **Guide them with wisdom and compassion.**

Intercessor: For ourselves, that we may love as you love,
People: **Make us bearers of your grace.**

Intercessor: For those who have died far from home or without refuge,
People: **Grant them rest and peace in you.**

Intercessor: O God of refuge and strength,
People: **Draw all people into your embrace. Amen.**

The Celebrant adds a concluding Collect.

The Peace

Page #360

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People: **And also with you.**

The Holy Communion

The Offertory Anthem

“God So Loved the World”
 from *The Crucifixion*

John Stainer (1840-1901)

The Doxology

Hymnal #380, v. 3

The Great Thanksgiving - Eucharistic Prayer A

Page #361

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.
People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.
People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People: **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Celebrant: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

The Celebrant adds the Proper Preface, and continues

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Sanctus

Hymnal S-124 *Hymn numbers beginning with S are found in the front of the Hymnal.*

All: **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
 heaven and earth are full of your glory.
 Hosanna in the highest.
 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
 Hosanna in the highest.**

Celebrant: Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

All: **Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.**

Celebrant: We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever.

People: **AMEN.**

The Lord's Prayer

Page #364

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

All: **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today 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.**

The Breaking of the Bread

Page #364

Celebrant: Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us:

People: **Therefore let us keep the feast.**

Agnus Dei Hymnal S-161 *Hymn numbers beginning with S are found in the front of the Hymnal.*

All: **Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace**

The Invitation Page #364

The Communion Hymn Hymnal #337

Post-Communion Prayer Page #366

Celebrant: Let us pray.

All: **Almighty and everliving God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now, Father, send us out to the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.**

The Concluding Rite

The Blessing Page #366

The Recessional Hymn Hymnal #449

The Dismissal

Celebrant: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

The Postlude “Fantasia” from *Variations on a Tudor Psalm* Alfred Fedak (b. 1953)

Al Fedak’s powerful interpretation of Thomas Tallis’ *Third Mode Melody* is played on the pedals alone.

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Serving Today:

Altar Guild: Jean Stefanski

Ushers: Doreen May
Ron Stefanski

Eucharistic Minister: Basil Dewdney

Acolyte: George Woodzell

Lector: John Artieda

Intercessor: Ruth Basantes

Counter: Doreen May

Coffee Hour: Sara & Joe Palko