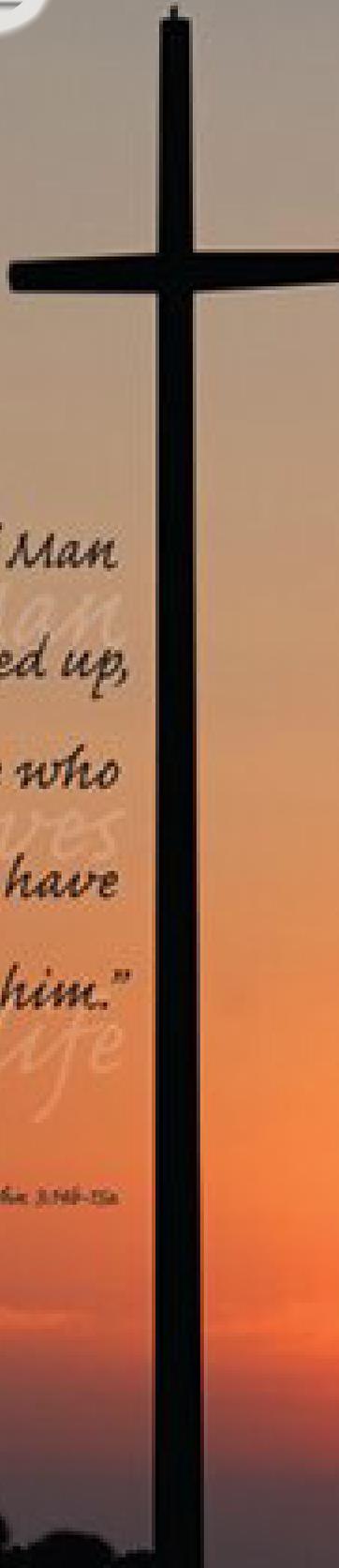




**NORTHWESTERN
PUBLISHING HOUSE**

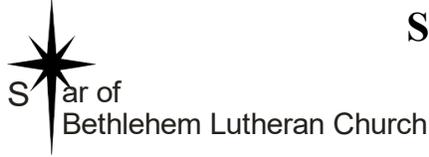


*"The son of Man
must be lifted up,
that everyone who
believes may have
eternal life in him."*

John 3:14-15a



**NORTHWESTERN
PUBLISHING HOUSE**



4465 South Blosser Road
Santa Maria, CA 93455
Office: 805-937-0339
www.starlutheran.org
Pastor Michael Foley

Worship Service

Sunday, March 1, 2026 10:00 a.m.

Second Sunday in LENT

Theme of the day: The gift of God comes by faith. Not a holy life or acts of obedience, but simple trust in the promise of God brings the gift of living water for thirsty souls. Abraham believed God's promise. He had faith in God who justifies the wicked, and God credited it to him as righteousness. By this same faith, Christ gives righteousness to all who believe.

WELCOME

A warm welcome to our friends and visitors! Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Church is eager to share with you the blessings of its Christ-centered ministry. If you are a new or long-time resident of the Central Coast looking for a church home, we invite you to meet with us at the close of this worship service or at your convenience. All are welcome to stay for refreshments in the fellowship hall.

Families are encouraged to worship together. If you need to step out with your children, the service can be seen and heard in the fellowship hall or narthex area. Feel free to enter and return at any time.

OUR MISSION

Our congregation exists for the purpose of "HOLDING OUT THE WORD OF LIFE." This is accomplished by faithfully preserving and proclaiming all of God's inerrant word, and administering the Sacraments as they were instituted by Christ.

HYMN: # 687 “If Then You Have Been Raised with Christ”
(alternate melody)

♪ **If then you have been raised with Christ,
look not to earthly things,
for Christ’s own death has saved your life
from sin and death’s sharp sting.
Set hearts and minds on things above,
on Christ who reigns on high.
In Christ your life will be revealed and with him you will rise.**

**As chosen ones, beloved by God, put on the clothes of grace:
compassion, kindness, patience, love,
forgiveness in Christ’s name.
And may your hearts be filled with peace, in perfect harmony.
Be thankful as Christ’s word takes root;
in him you are set free.**

Please stand for last verse:

**With gratitude for all good gifts
sing psalms and hymns and songs.
In word or deed, do ev’rything
in Christ, whose name is strong.
All glory to the Trinity: the Father and the Son,
and glory to the Spirit blest. All praise the Three in One!**

Minister: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

Congregation: **And also with you.** *(spoken)*

Confession of Sins

M: God invites us to come into his presence to worship him with
humble and penitent hearts. Therefore, let us acknowledge our
sinfulness and ask him to forgive us.

C: **Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful,
and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and
actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good.
For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity.
But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior
Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

M: God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

M: For all that we need in life and for the wisdom to use all your gifts with gratitude and joy, hear our prayer, O Lord.

C: ♪ Lord, have mercy.

M: For the steadfast assurance that nothing can separate us from your love and for the courage to stand firm against the assaults of Satan and every evil, hear our prayer, O Christ.

C: ♪ Christ, have mercy.

M: For the well-being of your holy Church in all the world and for those who offer here their worship and praise, hear our prayer, O Lord.

C: ♪ Lord, have mercy.

M: Merciful God, maker and preserver of life, uphold us by your power and keep us in your tender care:

C: ♪ Amen.

M: The works of the Lord are great and glorious; his name is worthy of praise.

**♪ O Lord, our Lord, how glorious is your name in all the earth.
Almighty God, merciful Father,
you crown our life with your love.
You take away our sin; you comfort our spirit;
you make us pure and holy in your sight.
You did not spare your only Son, but gave him up for us all.
O Lord, our Lord, how glorious is your name in all the earth.
O Son of God, eternal Word of the Father,
you came to live with us;
you made your Father known;
you washed us from our sins in your own blood.**

**You are the King of glory; you are the Lord!
O Lord, our Lord, how glorious is your name in all the earth.**

M: Almighty God, you see that we have no power to defend ourselves. Guard and keep us both outwardly and inwardly from all adversities that may happen to the body and all evil thoughts that may assault and hurt the soul; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C:  Amen.

Please be seated.

FIRST LESSON: Genesis 12:1-8

Now the LORD said to Abram, “Get out of your country and away from your relatives and from your father’s house and go to the land that I will show you. ²I will make you a great nation. I will bless you and make your name great. You will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse anyone who dishonors you. All of the families of the earth will be blessed in you.”

⁴So Abram went, as the LORD had told him. Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. ⁵Abram took Sarai his wife, Lot his brother’s son, and all the possessions they had accumulated and the people that they had acquired in Haran, and they set out to travel to the land of Canaan. Eventually they arrived in the land of Canaan. ⁶Abram passed through the land until he came to the Oak of Moreh at the place called Shechem. The Canaanites were in the land at that time.

⁷The LORD appeared to Abram and said, “I will give this land to your descendants.” Abram built an altar there to the LORD, who had appeared to him.

⁸He moved on from there to the hill country east of Bethel and pitched his tent there, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. There he built an altar to the LORD and proclaimed the name of the LORD.

PSALM OF THE DAY: Psalm 121

Refrain



Keep me, keep me as the ap - ple of your eye.



Hide me, hide me in the shad-ow of your wings.

Psalm tone



*

**I lift up my eyes to the hills.*
Where does my help come from?**

**My help comes from the LORD,*
the maker of heaven and earth.**

**He will not let your foot slip,*
he who watches over you will not slumber;**

**indeed, he who watches over Israel*
will neither slumber nor sleep.**

Refrain

**The LORD watches over you,*
the LORD is your shade at your right hand.**

**The LORD will keep you from all harm,*
he will watch over your life;**

**the LORD will watch over your coming and going*
both now and forevermore.**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
and to the Holy Spirit,**

as it was in the beginning,*
is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Refrain

GOSPEL LESSON: John 3:1-17

There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. ²He came to Jesus at night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these miraculous signs you are doing unless God is with him.”

³Jesus replied, “Amen, Amen, I tell you: Unless someone is born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

⁴Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born, can he?”

⁵Jesus answered, “Amen, Amen, I tell you: Unless someone is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God! ⁶Whatever is born of the flesh is flesh. Whatever is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not be surprised when I tell you that you must be born from above. ⁸The wind blows where it pleases. You hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

⁹“How can these things be?” asked Nicodemus.

¹⁰“You are the teacher of Israel,” Jesus answered, “and you do not know these things? ¹¹Amen, Amen, I tell you: We speak what we know, and we testify about what we have seen. But you people do not accept our testimony. ¹²If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? ¹³No one has ascended into heaven, except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man, who is in heaven.

¹⁴“Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵so that everyone who believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

¹⁶“For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

HYMN: # 868 “By Faith”

♪ **By faith we see the hand of God
in the light of creation’s grand design,
in the lives of those who prove his faithfulness,
who walk by faith and not by sight.**

**By faith our fathers roamed the earth
with the pow’r of his promise in their hearts,
of a holy city built by God’s own hand,
a place where peace and justice reign.
We will stand as children of the promise;
we will fix our eyes on him, our soul’s reward.
Till the race is finished and the work is done,
we’ll walk by faith and not by sight.**

**By faith the prophets saw a day
when the longed-for Messiah would appear
with the pow’r to break the chains of sin and death
and rise triumphant from the grave.**

**By faith the church was called to go
in the pow’r of the Spirit to the lost
to deliver captives and to preach good news
in ev’ry corner of the earth
We will stand as children of the promise;
we will fix our eyes on him, our soul’s reward.
Till the race is finished and the work is done,
we’ll walk by faith and not by sight.**

**By faith this mountain shall be moved
and the pow’r of the gospel shall prevail,
for we know in Christ all things are possible
for all who call upon his name.
We will stand as children of the promise;
we will fix our eyes on him, our soul’s reward.
Till the race is finished and the work is done,
we’ll walk by faith and not by sight.**

MESSAGE: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

What then will we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered according to the flesh? ²If indeed Abraham had been justified by works, he would have had a reason to boast—but not before God. ³For what does Scripture say? “Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness.”

⁴Now to a person who works, his pay is not counted as a gift but as something owed. ⁵But to the person who does not work but believes in the God who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited to him as righteousness.

¹³Indeed, the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not given to Abraham or his descendants through the law, but through the righteousness that is by faith. ¹⁴To be sure, if people are heirs by the law, faith is empty and the promise is nullified. ¹⁵For law brings wrath. (Where there is no law, there is no transgression.) ¹⁶For this reason, the promise is by faith, so that it may be according to grace and may be guaranteed to all of Abraham’s descendants—not only to the one who is a descendant by law, but also to the one who has the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. ¹⁷As it is written: “I have made you a father of many nations.”

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,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary,
and became fully human.**

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,
who in unity with the Father and the Son
is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy Christian 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.**

Holy Communion, will be celebrated in today's service. The Bible teaches us that Jesus offers us his body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins in the Lord's Supper. The Bible also instructs us that receiving the Lord's Supper together is a public expression of our complete "oneness," or unity of faith.

Because the Lord's Supper is an expression of our unity in faith, we invite to the Lord's Supper only those who have expressed that unity with us through membership in our congregation or one of our sister congregations in the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), or our sister church body, the ELS.

If you are a guest from another Christian church, we kindly ask that you simply refrain from participation in our celebration of the Lord's Supper today. We don't want to be presumptuous and put you in the position of declaring your agreement with our beliefs before you have had a chance to learn more.

OFFERING

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

C: 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 forever and ever. Amen.

The Holy Sacrament

M: The Lord be with you.

C: **♪ And also with you.**

M: Lift up your hearts.

C: **♪ We lift them up to the Lord.**

M: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: **♪ It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

M: Praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In love he has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. He made his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ. To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and thanks and honor and glory forever and ever.

**♪ Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.
The whole earth is full of your glory.
You are my God, and I will exalt you.
I will give you thanks, for you have become my salvation.
Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.
The whole earth is full of your glory.**

The Words of Institution

M: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: **♪ Amen.**

**♪ O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.
O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.
O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
grant us your peace. Amen.**

COMMUNION HYMN: # 429:1,4-7

“O Sacred Head, Now Wounded”

♪ **O sacred head, now wounded,
with grief and shame weighed down,
now scornfully surrounded, with thorns your only crown,
O sacred head, no glory now from your face does shine;
yet, though despised and gory, I joy to call you mine.**

**My burden in your passion, Lord, you have borne for me,
for it was my transgression, my shame, on Calvary.
I cast me down before you; wrath is my rightful lot.
Have mercy, I implore you; Redeemer, spurn me not!**

**What language shall I borrow to thank you, dearest Friend,
for this, your dying sorrow, your pity without end?
O make me yours forever, and keep me strong and true;
Lord, let me never, never outlive my love for you.**

**My Savior, then be near me when death is at my door,
and let your presence cheer me; forsake me nevermore!
When soul and body languish, O leave me not alone,
but take away my anguish by virtue of your own!**

**Lord, be my consolation, my shield when I must die;
remind me of your passion when my last hour draws nigh.
My eyes will then behold you, upon your cross will dwell;
my heart will then enfold you — who dies in faith dies well!**

THANKSGIVING - HYMN # 953, verses 1,4,5

Please stand.

♪ **Holy God, we praise your name;
Lord of all, we bow before you.
All on earth your scepter claim;
all in heav'n above adore you.
Infinite your vast domain,
everlasting is your reign.**

**You are King of glory, Christ, Son of God, yet born of Mary,
for us sinners sacrificed, on the cross our sins did carry;
first to break the bars of death,
you have opened heav'n to faith.**

**Holy Father, holy Son, Holy Spirit, three we name you,
though in essence only one, undivided God we claim you,
and, adoring, bend the knee while we own the mystery.**

M: Hear the prayer of your people, O Lord, that the lips which have praised you here may glorify you in the world, that the eyes which have seen the coming of your Son may long for his coming again, and that all who have received in his true body and blood the pledge of your forgiveness may be restored to live a new and holy life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C:  **Amen.**

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace.
Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness.
The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

C:  **Amen. Amen. Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN: # 811 "My Faith Looks Up to Thee"

 **My faith looks up to thee, thou Lamb of Calvary,
Savior divine.
Now hear me while I pray; take all my guilt away;
O let me from this day be wholly thine!**

**May thy rich grace impart strength to my fainting heart;
my zeal inspire!
As thou hast died for me, oh, may my love to thee
pure, warm, and changeless be, a living fire!**

**While life's dark maze I tread and griefs around me spread,
be thou my guide.
Bid darkness turn to day, wipe sorrow's tears away,
nor let me ever stray from thee aside.**

**When ends life's transient dream,
when death's cold, sullen stream shall o'er me roll,
blest Savior, then, in love, fear and distrust remove;
O bear me safe above, a ransomed soul!**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYERS: Remember to pray for: little Elias, Dennis Douglas, George Caravana, Molly Webb, Kathy Jones, Art Amarillas, Melinda Brown, Alice Taubman, Monica, Louise Perry, Rylan Downs, Jeff Brown, Aaron Taubman, Marlene Washburn, Helen Cummings, Delores Bass, Rick Stovall, Suzy Garvin, Linda Wilkinson, and Kathie Stillwater.

THIS WEEK

Tuesday ESL (English as a Second Language), 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday Lenten Worship Service, 7:00 p.m.
Thursday ESL, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
Saturday night — set clocks ahead
Sunday Bible Class and Sunday School, 9:00 a.m.
Worship, 10:00 a.m.
Fellowship Meal & Voters after

COMING UP

Clean-up/Work Day: Saturday, March 28, 9:00 a.m. - noon
HOLY WEEK: Passion Sunday - March 29
Maundy Thursday (Communion) - April 2, 7:00 p.m.
Good Friday - April 3, 7:00 p.m.
Easter Sunday - April 5
Fellowship Brunch

PERSONAL PREPARATION FOR HOLY COMMUNION

(cf. page 156 in the front of Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal)

Q: What does God tell me about myself in his holy Word?

A: He says that I am a sinner and deserve only his punishment.

Q: What should I do if I am not aware of my sins or am not troubled by them?

A: I should examine myself according to the Ten Commandments and ask how well I have carried out my responsibilities as a husband or wife or single person, as a parent or child, an employer or employee, a teacher or student. Have I loved God with all my heart, gladly heard his Word, and patiently endured affliction? Have I been disobedient, proud, or unforgiving? Have I been selfish, lazy, envious, or quarrelsome? Have I lied or deceived, taken something not mine, or given anyone a bad name? Have I abused my body or permitted indecent thoughts to linger in my mind? Have I failed to do what is right and good?

Q: When I realize that I have sinned against God and deserve his punishment, what should I do?

A: I will confess before God all my sins, those which I remember as well as those of which I am unaware. I will pray to God for his mercy and forgiveness.

Q: How do I receive his gracious forgiveness?

A: His Word assures me that Jesus led a pure and holy life for me and died on the cross for me to pay the full price for all my sins. Through faith in Jesus, I have been clothed in my Savior's perfect righteousness and holiness.

Q: What further assurance do I have that Jesus is mine and I am his?

A: In Holy Communion he gives me his body and blood together with the bread and wine as a truly life-giving food and drink to unite me with him and my fellow believers. By means of this sacrament, Jesus not only forgives my sins but sweeps away all my doubts about his love for me, gives me his own strength to live a God-pleasing life, and grants me a joyful foretaste of heaven.

Q: How can I be sure that I receive all these blessings in the Lord's Supper?

A: I have his own word spoken as his last will and testament on the night before he died. There he tells me: "Take and eat; this is my body. Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me."

Q: How will I respond to this priceless gift from Jesus?

A: I will daily thank and praise him for his love to me. With his help I will fight temptation, do my best to correct whatever wrongs I have done, and serve him and those around me with love and good works.

Lord Jesus, with joy and gratitude I now come to your table to receive the precious food of your life-giving body and blood. May it strengthen me to remain in you as you remain in me, so that I bear much fruit in devoted service to you and in acts of kindness to others. Amen.

