



# first community

March 22, 2026

11 am NORTH

Lent 5

GREETING – John

PRELUDE – May, organ

*Meditation*

Léon Boëllmann (1862-1897)

CALL TO WORSHIP – John

One: From the cross, Jesus spoke forgiveness.

**Many: Mercy came before understanding.**

One: God reconciles the world through love,

**Many: and entrusts that love to us.**

One: Come, let us worship the God of mercy.

**Many: Let us worship with grateful hearts.**

## OPENING HYMN

*Now the Green Blade Rises* NOEL NOUVELET  
(#238 New Century) - verses 1, 2, and 4

**Now the green blade rises from the buried  
grain;  
wheat that in dark earth for many days has  
lain;  
Love lives again, that with the dead has  
been:  
Love is come again like wheat that rises  
green.**

**In the grave they laid their love whom hate  
had slain,  
thinking that their love would never wake  
again.  
Laid in the earth like grain that sleeps  
unseen:  
Love is come again like wheat that rises  
green.**

**When our hearts are wintry, grieving, or in  
pain,  
Christ's warm touch can call us back to life  
again,  
Fields of our hearts that dead and bare  
have been:  
Love is come again like wheat that rises  
green.**

WELCOME – John

CHILDREN'S MOMENT – John

ANTHEM- Julie Cannell, soprano,  
Gwen Carmack, alto, and Suzanne  
Newcomb, piano

*Wondrous Love* arr. Richard Walters

PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE  
LORD'S PRAYER – John

**Alternate Version from the New Zealand  
Anglican Prayer Book**

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-  
giver,

Source of all that is and that shall be,

Father and Mother of us all,

Loving God, in whom is heaven:

The hallowing of your name echo through the  
universe!

The way of your justice be followed by the  
peoples of the world!

Your heavenly will be done by all created  
beings!

Your commonwealth of peace and freedom  
sustain our hope and come on earth.

With the bread we need for today, feed us.  
In the hurts we absorb from one another,  
forgive us.  
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.  
From trials too great to endure, spare us.  
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

For you reign in the glory of the power that is  
love, now and for ever.  
Amen.

## OFFERTORY

### **Invitation to Dream – John**

### **Receiving the People's Gifts**

**Offertory – Julie Cannell, soprano, Gwen  
Carmack, alto, and Suzanne Newcomb,  
piano**

*Come, Thou Fount*

arr. Craig Courtney (b. 1948)

### **Presentation of Gifts and Prayer of Dedication– John**

ONE: As the gifts are presented, will all rise in  
body or spirit?

**ALL: Merciful God, you have reconciled us to yourself in Christ. Receive these gifts as signs of our gratitude and make us instruments of reconciliation in a divided world. Amen.**

Doxology Old 100th  
**Praise God throughout these forty days. Praise Christ, our Lord, whom God did raise. And praise the Spirit who imparts God's love in Christ into our hearts. Amen.**

## SCRIPTURE READING - Deacon

### **Luke 23:32-43**

<sup>32</sup> Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. <sup>33</sup> When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. [[<sup>34</sup> Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."]] And they cast lots to divide his clothing. <sup>35</sup> And the people stood by watching, but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!" <sup>36</sup> The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine <sup>37</sup> and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" <sup>38</sup> There was also an

inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews."

<sup>39</sup> One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" <sup>40</sup> But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? <sup>41</sup> And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." <sup>42</sup> Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come in your kingdom." <sup>43</sup> He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

## SERMON – Mary Kate

*The Shape of Love:*

*Seeing God Clearly at the Cross*

Part 5: **The Shape of Love Is Mercy**

## CLOSING HYMN

*This Is a Day of New Beginnings BEGINNINGS*  
(#417 New Century) - verses 1-4

**This is a day of new beginnings,  
time to remember and move on,  
time to believe what love is bringing,  
laying to rest the pain that's gone.**

**For by the life and death of Jesus,**

**God's mighty Spirit, now as then,  
can make for us a world of difference,  
as faith and hope are born again.**

**Then let us, with the Spirit's daring,  
step from the past and leave behind  
our disappointment, guilt, and grieving,  
seeking new paths, and sure to find.**

**Christ is alive, and goes before us  
to show and share what love can do.  
This is a day of new beginnings -  
our God is making all things new.**

**BENEDICTION – Mary Kate**

**POSTLUDE – May, organ**

*Grand Jeu Dialogue from Organ Suite #1  
(1708) Pierre DuMage (1674-1751)*