

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Santa Clarita

The Second Sunday in Lent

10:30 AM — March 1, 2026

Before the service begins, we encourage you to use the following for meditation.

"You are the light of the world," Jesus tells us, and just as a lamp is not put under a bushel basket but on a lampstand, so are you to let your light shine in a way that people can see it clearly and give thanks to God for it.-Br. David Vryhof, SSJE

-Generally, we stand to give praise, sit to listen (to scripture and sermon), and stand or kneel to pray. These postures help us stay focused on the worship, but there are no strict rules and you should take whatever posture is appropriate to your needs.-

Prelude

Simple Gifts

Joseph Brackett Jr.

Welcome and Announcements

-Processions have long been an important part of liturgical worship. At the beginning of the service they signify an intention to move toward the altar and into direct relationship to worship God. Those who wish to may bow in reverence as the cross passes to acknowledge Christ's sacrifice upon it.-

Please stand as you are able.

Entrance Hymn #401

"The God of Abraham praise" (vs. 1-3)

Leoni



1. The God of A - bra ham praise, who reigns en - throned a - bove;
 2. He by him - self hath sworn: we on his oath de - pend;
 3. There dwells the Lord, our King, the Lord, our Right - eous - ness,
 4. The God who reigns on high, the great arch - an - gels sing,
 5. The whole tri - um - phant host give thanks to God on high;



An - cient of ev - er - last - ing days, and God of love;
 we shall, on ea - gle - wings up - borne, to heaven a - scend:
 tri - um - phant o'er the world and sin, the Prince of Peace;
 and "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly," cry, "Al - might - y King!
 "Hail, Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost" they ev - er cry;



the Lord, the great I AM, by earth and heaven con - fessed:
 we shall be - hold his face, we shall his power a - dore,
 on Zi - on's sa - cred height his king - dom he main - tains,
 Who was, and is, the same, and ev - er - more shall be:
 hail, A - bra ham's Lord di - vine! With heaven our songs we raise;



we bow and bless the sa - cred Name for ev - er blest.
 and sing the won - ders of his grace for ev - er - more.
 and, glo - rious with his saints in light, for ev - er reigns.
 e - ter - nal Fa - ther, great I AM, we wor - ship thee."
 all might and ma - jes - ty are thine, and end - less praise.

-The liturgy is God's community gathered to actively share the Word and the Eucharist. We invite and encourage your participation in this community. Please join in the spoken responses and hymns shown in the service bulletin.-

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

-The opening acclamation is the greeting of the people by the presider and their response, which begins the service. Its purpose is to bring the congregation corporately into dialogue with the presider and set a tone for the celebration.-

Priest: Blessed be the God of our salvation:

People: **Who bears our burdens and forgives our sins.**

Priest: Hear the commandments of God to his people:
I am your God who brought you out of bondage.
You shall have no other gods but me.

People: **Amen. God have mercy.**

Priest: You shall not make for yourself any idol.

People: **Amen. God have mercy.**

Priest: You shall not invoke with malice the Name of God.

People: **Amen. God have mercy.**

Priest: Remember the Sabbath Day and keep it holy.

People: **Amen. God have mercy.**

Priest: Honor your father and your mother.

People: **Amen. God have mercy.**

Priest: You shall not commit murder.

People: **Amen. God have mercy.**

Priest: You shall not commit adultery.

People: **Amen. God have mercy.**

Priest: You shall not steal.

People: **Amen. God have mercy.**

Priest: You shall not be a false witness.

People: **Amen. God have mercy.**

Priest: You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor.

People: **Amen. God have mercy.**

Confession

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

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

Absolution

Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through the grace of Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. **Amen.**

Trisagion Hymn S 102

Archangelsky

Sing 3 times



Ho - ly God, Ho - ly and Might - y, Ho - ly Im-mor-tal One, Have mer - cy up-on us.

-A Collect is a short prayer with a specific structure. Its purpose is to gather into one the individual prayers of the People. The Collect of the Day is a specific prayer that reflects upon the lectionary readings for the given day of the liturgical year.-

The Collect of the Day

Priest: God be with you.
People: **And also with you.**
Priest: Let us pray.

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

Please be seated.

THE LESSONS

The First Reading Genesis 12:1-4a

Reader: Marilyn Pisa

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.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.
People: **Thanks be to God.**

-The Book of Common Prayer has always placed great importance on the Psalms in worship. They are sung or said in every service of the church, and their words make up the petitions and language of our liturgy.

Psalm 121

Reader: Helen Barlow

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

Reader: Helen Barlow

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.

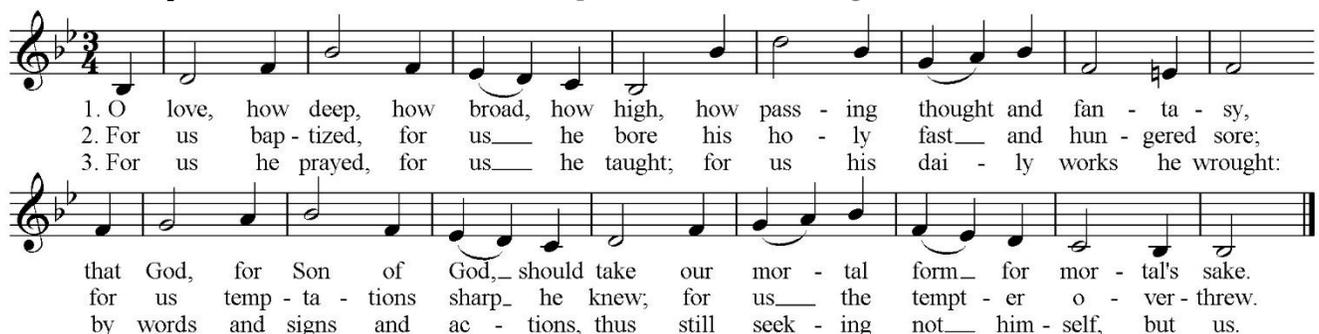
Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

-The Gospel procession moves into the congregation as a liturgical reminder that Jesus walked among us.-

Please stand as you are able.

Gradual Hymn #448 “O love how deep, how broad, how high” (vs. 1-3) *Deus tuorum militum*



1. O love, how deep, how broad, how high, how pass - ing thought and fan - ta - sy,
2. For us bap - tized, for us___ he bore his ho - ly fast___ and hun - gered sore;
3. For us he prayed, for us___ he taught; for us his dai - ly works he wrought:

that God, for Son of God,___ should take our mor - tal form___ for mor - tal's sake.
for us temp - ta - tions sharp_ he knew; for us___ the tempt - er o - ver - threw.
by words and signs and ac - tions, thus still seek - ing not___ him - self, but us.

-The Gospel is comprised primarily of the words Christ himself spoke, and so we stand out of reverence for the good news that has been brought for us and all people.

Those who wish, make the sign of the cross with the right-thumb on the forehead, the lips, and the heart when the Gospel is announced, praying silently, God be in my head and in my thinking. God be in my lips and in my speaking. God be in my heart and my departing.-

The Gospel Reading John 3:1-17

Priest: The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to John.

People: **Glory to you, O 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."

Priest: The Gospel of the Savior.

People: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Please be seated.

-The Sermon or Homily helps us apply the words of the early prophets and Christ in our lives.-

The Sermon

The Very Rev. Christopher Montella
Rector

-The Nicene Creed is the statement of what we believe. It is one of the most ancient and corporate confession of our faith, having been adopted by the first ecumenical council in the year 325. When we recite this creed we are joining a great heritage of the holy universal Church through the centuries.

Some people may choose to bow their heads at the verse, For us and for our salvation...and was made man. This gesture marks the mystery of the Incarnation as the central Christian message of God's love for the world.-

Please stand as you are able.

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.

-Prayer is offered for the Universal Church, the Nation and all in authority, the welfare of the world, concerns of the local community, for those who suffer or who are in any trouble, and for the departed.-

Prayers of the People

Reader: Ken Higginbotham

Beloved, it is God who watches over you. As people sent forth into the world let us pray, saying, "O Gracious God, bless us, so that we may bless others."

Loving God, preserve your Church from all evil. May we, who have been born of water and the Spirit, proclaim your realm in all the world.

The congregation may add their own thanksgivings.

Silence

Priest: O Gracious God, bless us,

People: **So that we may bless others.**

O God, may the leaders of the nations ever seek the truth. Open their hearts to true conversion and divine guidance.

Silence

Priest: O Gracious God, bless us,

People: **So that we may bless others.**

Maker of heaven and earth, you have blessed us with a wondrous and dynamic creation. Protect us from its rage; comfort us by its tranquility. Give us eyes to see your handiwork in the world around us.

Silence

Priest: O Gracious God, bless us,

People: **So that we may bless others.**

Merciful God, your eyes never close on your people. We thank you for your mindfulness of us and our community. Be our help and our safety.

Silence

Priest: O Gracious God, bless us,

People: **So that we may bless others.**

You did not send your Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world may see and experience your salvation. Bring wholeness to those who look to your Son for their help. We pray for all those on the prayer list, especially Jim.

The congregation may add their own petitions.

Silence

Priest: O Gracious God, bless us,

People: **So that we may bless others.**

O God, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist, keep the dying and the dead from this time forth and for evermore. Give eternal life to all those who trust in you.

Silence

Priest: O Gracious God, bless us,

People: **So that we may bless others.**

Priest

Most Holy God, you have promised to hear what we ask in the Name of your Son: Accept and fulfill our petitions, we pray, not as we ask in our ignorance, nor as we deserve in our sinfulness, but as you know and love us in our Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

-The Peace is an extension of Christian greeting and teaching to love our neighbor as ourselves. It symbolizes our intent to forgive as we are forgiven, to live in peace with all people. Members are encouraged to greet one another with a sign of God's peace with the clasping of hands, a reverential bow, a hug, or a peace sign.-

The Peace

Priest: The peace of Christ be always with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Members of the congregation who are joining us via livestream are encouraged to post "Peace be with you" in the comments or to use the "like" or "love" reaction button to take part in the virtual exchange of God's peace with the rest of the congregation at this time.

Please be seated.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

We are pleased to celebrate the following birthday: Laurie Crevier & Susan Northway on March 1st, Thomas Aston on March 2nd, and Yesenia Pappas on March 7th.

Offertory Prayer

The People remain seated and say together:

Loving God, you alone are the source of every good gift. Everything we have, and all that we are, comes from you. Now, help us to be grateful, accountable, and, with praise and thanksgiving, to give of ourselves generously, through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE TABLE

Offertory

O Nata Lux
St. Stephen's Parish Choir

Bryan Sharpe

-A Sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ himself. For Anglicans there are two great sacraments: Eucharist and Baptism.

As continuation of thousands of years of spiritual practice, talent, treasure, and oblations are offered before the altar in our response to God's care and nurture.-

Please stand as you are able.

Doxology

Old 100th

Praise God from whom all blessings flow, Praise God all creatures,
here be - low. Praise God, you hosts in heav'n a -
bove; Praise God the Trin - i - ty of Love. A - men.

-The Sursum Corda (Lift up your hearts) is a form of introduction to prayer handed down over the centuries. This dialogue is an invitation for the people joining in the Eucharistic offering, to raise minds and hearts to "things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God."

Priest: God be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Priest: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them to God.**

Priest: Let us give thanks.

People: **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

-We praise God for the long arc of salvation history. We do not approach with petition but simply with grateful remembrance of all that God has done.-

It is truly right, and good and joyful, to give you thanks, all-holy God, source of life and fountain of mercy through Jesus Christ our Savior, who was tempted in every way as we are, yet did not sin. By his grace we are able to triumph over every evil, and to live no longer for ourselves alone, but for him who died for us and rose again.

Therefore, joining with Angels and Archangels and with the faithful of every generation, we lift our voices with all creation as we say:

-The holiness of God is a strong theme in the Old Testament, present here in the Sanctus, which echoes the words of the high angels in the prophet Isaiah's vision of the dwelling place of God (Isaiah 6:1-3).

Our worshipful cry, "Holy, Holy, Holy," is coupled with the acclamation "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest."

Sanctus

Baity

Ho-ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might, — Ho-ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord,
God of pow-er and might, — Heav-en and earth are full of your glo-ry, heav-en and earth are
full of your glo-ry. Ho-san-na in — the high - est, ho - san-na in — the high - est.
Blest is he — who comes in the name, comes in the name, comes in the name of the Lord.
Ho - san-na in — the high - est, ho - san - na in — the high - est.

Please stand or kneel as you are able.

Blessed are you, gracious God, creator of the universe and giver of life. You formed us in your own image and called us to dwell in your infinite love. You gave the world into our care that we might be your faithful stewards and show forth your bountiful grace.

But we failed to honor your image in one another and in ourselves; we would not see your goodness in the world around us; and so we violated your creation, abused one another, and rejected your love. Yet you never ceased to care for us, and prepared the way of salvation for all people.

Through Abraham and Sarah you called us into covenant with you. You delivered us from slavery, sustained us in the wilderness, and raised up prophets to renew your promise of salvation. Then, in the fullness of time, you sent your eternal Word, made mortal flesh in Jesus. Born into the human family, and dwelling among us, he revealed your glory. Giving himself freely to death on the cross, he triumphed over evil, opening the way of freedom and life.

On the night before he died for us, Our Savior Jesus Christ took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his friends, and said: "Take, eat: This is my Body which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

As supper was ending, Jesus 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 poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

-The epiclesis is the point at which the church, through the voice of the Celebrant, asks God to make holy, 'sanctify', 'send', 'pour', 'breathe', both the gift of bread and wine and also the gathered community.-

Remembering his death and resurrection, we now present to you from your creation this bread and this wine. By your Holy Spirit may they be for us the Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ. Grant that we who share these gifts may be filled with the Holy Spirit and live as Christ's Body in the world. Bring us into the everlasting heritage of your beloved children, that with Stephen and all your saints, past, present, and yet to come, we may praise your Name for ever.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever. AMEN.

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom 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 the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

A period of silence is kept.

-The fraction (breaking of the bread) is a crucial link between what has come before and what comes after it. Christ has offered his life for us, and the breaking of the bread makes it possible for all to share in that life.-

Please remain standing during the Fraction Anthem.

Fraction Hymn #S 161

Hurd

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sins of the world: have mer - cy on us.

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sins of the world: have mer - cy on us.

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sins of the world: grant _____ us peace.

-The outward and visible sign in the sacrament of the Eucharist is the bread and the wine. We eat and drink the sacramental foods. Through the inward and spiritual grace of this sacramental action we are reconstituted as Christ's body, infused with Christ's life, and empowered to be Christ's presence in the world.-

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.

All are welcome to receive communion. The table we set belongs to God. Wherever you find yourself on your spiritual journey you are welcome to receive the Bread and Wine made holy.

The church teaches that temporal isolation cannot constrain the sacrament's ineffable power. Calling us to "massive, corporate, spiritual communion,"

The Invitation to Holy Communion

A spiritual communion is a personal devotional that anyone can pray at any time to express their desire to receive Holy Communion at that moment, but in which circumstances impede them from actually receiving Holy Communion.

Priest and People say together:

Grant, O Christ, that as the hem of your garment, touched in faith, healed the woman who could not touch your body, so the soul of your servant may be healed by like faith in you, whom I cannot now sacramentally receive; through your tender mercy and love. Amen.

Please be seated.

Please follow usher instructions for taking communion.

-In the post communion prayer we give thanks for the sacramental signs of Christ's presence to us and we ask God to empower and accompany us into the world to witness to God's love.-

Please stand as you are able.

Post Communion Prayer

Let us pray.

**God of compassion,
through your Son Jesus Christ
you have reconciled your people to yourself.
As we follow his example of prayer and fasting,
may we obey you with willing hearts
and serve one another in holy love;
through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

-The blessing is God's promise to be with us as we leave communal worship and return to the world to serve God and God's people.-

Blessing

May God,
who does not despise the broken spirit,
give to you a contrite heart.

May Christ,
who bore our sins in his body on the tree,
heal you by his wounds.

May the Holy Spirit,
who leads us into all truth,
speak to you words of pardon and peace.
And the blessing of God Almighty,
the one, holy and undivided Trinity be among
you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

-Processions have long been an important part of liturgical worship. At the conclusion of the service the retiring procession represents the carrying of the Gospel message into the world.

Those who wish to may bow in reverence as the cross passes to acknowledge Christ's sacrifice upon it.-

Closing Hymn #473

"Lift high the cross"

Crucifer

Refrain

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ pro - claim
till all the world a - dore his sa - cred Name.

1. Led on their way by this tri - um - phant sign,
2. Each new - born ser - vant of the Cru - ci - fied
3. O Lord, once lift - ed on the glo - rious tree,
4. So shall our song of tri - umph ev - er be:

Repeat Refrain

the hosts of God in con - quering ranks com - bine.
bears on the brow the seal of him who died.
as thou hast prom - ised, draw the world to thee.
praise to the Cru - ci - fied for vic - to - ry.

-The dismissal asserts the relationship between worship and living. It is a call to mission, a call to live the baptismal and Eucharistic life in the world.-

Dismissal

Priest: Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

People: Thanks be to God.

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