

“Bonded in Christ’s love, we teach, preach, and equip God’s people for discipleship here and throughout the world.



Third Sunday in Lent

March 8, 2026

Rev. Dr. Renae Koehler

For those who are hearing challenged, Zion has digital listening devices for your use during worship. Please ask a council member for one and they will show you how to use it.

Prelude & Ringing of the Bell

Welcome

Gathering our Spirits for Worship *(As you are able please stand)*

P - We hear about King David grieving his son Absalom.

C - And we too, come with complicated hearts and unhealed stories.

P - Here, grief and tears are sacred rivers carving mercy through stone.

C - We have been hurt.

P - We have known loss

C - At times, we have had to shake the dust from our sandals and move on.

P - And still, Love calls us forward.

C - God who holds David in his sobbing,

P - who strengthens Paul in his parting,

C - who sends disciples two by two into risky towns,

P - Is already healing what we cannot fix.

Gathering Hymn - Lift High the Cross ELW #660

Refrain:

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim
till all the world adore his sacred name.

Come, Christians, follow where our captain trod,
our king victorious, Christ, the Son of God. [Refrain]

All newborn servants of the Crucified
bear on their brows the seal of him who died. [Refrain]

O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree,
as thou hast promised, draw us all to thee. [Refrain]

So shall our song of triumph ever be:
praise to the Crucified for victory! [Refrain]

Prayer of Opening our Hearts to God

P - Almighty God,

**C - You are the breath in David's cry, the ache in Paul's
goodbye, and the courage when we need to walk away. Today
we do not pretend that love is tidy. We do not pretend that
parting is easy or that boundaries mean we stopped caring.
We declare that Your Spirit is mending what was broken inside
of us. Let grief be honored, forgiveness be possible and letting
go be sacred. Empower us to walk forward lighter than we
arrived. Amen. *(Please be seated)***

Reading of the Scriptures

First Reading - 2 Samuel 18:33-19:4 David grieves the death of his son Absalom

The king was deeply moved and went up to the chamber over the
gate and wept, and as he went he said, "O my son Absalom, my

son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!" It was told Joab, "The king is weeping and mourning for Absalom." So the victory that day was turned into mourning for all the troops, for the troops heard that day, "The king is grieving for his son." The troops stole into the city that day as soldiers steal in who are ashamed when they flee in battle. The king covered his face, and the king cried with a loud voice, "O my son Absalom, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

Psalm 55:12-17 *(Please read responsively)*

It is not enemies who taunt me

I could bear that;

it is not adversaries who deal insolently with me

I could hide from them.

But it is you, my equal,

my companion, my familiar friend,

with whom I kept pleasant company;

we walked in the house of God with the throng.

Let death come upon them;

let them go down alive to Sheol,

for evil is in their homes and in their hearts.

But I call upon God,

and the Lord will save me.

Evening and morning and at noon

I utter my complaint and moan,

and he will hear my voice.

Second Reading - Acts 15:36-41 Paul and Barnabas separate.

After some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Come, let us return and visit the brothers and sisters in every city where we proclaimed the word of the Lord and see how they are doing." Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark. But Paul decided not to take with them one who had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not accompanied them in the work. The disagreement became so

sharp that they parted company; Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus. But Paul chose Silas and set out, the brothers and sisters commending him to the grace of the Lord. He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches. *Here ends this reading.*

Gospel - Luke 9:1-6 Shake the dust off your sandals and move on. (Please stand as you are able)

Then Jesus called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. He said to them, "Take nothing for your journey: no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money not even an extra tunic. Whatever house you enter, stay there, and leave from there. Wherever they do not welcome you, as you are leaving that town shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them." So they departed and went through the villages, bringing the good news and curing diseases everywhere.

Gospel - Sing Response (Tune #787 On Eagles Wings - final refrain)

And he will raise you up on eagle's wings, bear you on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of his hand. And hold you, hold you in the palm of his hand. (Please be seated.)

Special Music - Kids of the Kingdom

Children's Message

Sing Blessing of our Children - (Children of the Heavenly Father ELW #781 vs 1)

**Children of the heav'nly Father, safely in his bosom gather;
nestling bird nor star in heaven such a refuge e'er was given.**

Homily - Rev. Dr. Renae Koehler

Offering Hymn - Abide With Me ELW #629

Abide with me, fast falls the eventide
The darkness deepens, Lord with me abide
When other helpers fail and comfort flee
Help of the helpless, O abide with me

Swift to it's close ebbs out life's little day
Earth's joys grow dim, it's glories pass away
Change and decay in all around I see
O Thou who changest not, abide with me

I need Thy prescence every passing hour
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's power
Who like Thy Self my guide and stay can be
Through cloud and sunshine, O abide with me

I fear no foe with Thee at hand to bless
Ills have no weight and tears no bitterness
Where is death's sting? Where grave, Thy victory
I tuiumph still if Thou abide with me

Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes
Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies
Heaven's morning breaks and earth's vain shadows flee
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me

(Please stand as the offering is brought forward.)

Offering Sing Response - (Tune Doxology, Old 100th)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Christ all creatures here below; praise God above ye heavenly hosts, praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Offering Blessing

P - Almighty God,

C - everything we have placed upon this altar, first flowed from You. Thank you for blessing our offering and multiplying our gifts. We know that our time, talent and treasure are already healing those who are hurting, bringing gladness to our community, and courage to those who are weary. Multiply our gifts and let all these blessings flow. Amen. *(Please be seated)*

Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the holy spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again.

**He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of the Church - *When the pastor says, "Lord in your mercy" please respond with "Here our Prayer."*

Lord's Prayer

**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.**

Benediction Litany

P - Take the sacred from today into your whole week,

C - **We will love fiercely, share mercy, and do acts of kindness.**

P - May God who held David in grief,

C - **who steadied Paul in separation,**

P - and who sent disciples to move on in freedom when needed.

C - **Walk with us into every holy beginning and every necessary goodbye.**

P - You are blessed in the name of the Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit.

C - **Amen.**

Announcements in the Life of the Church

C - **ZION... a place to belong, a place to believe, a place to become!**

Sending Hymn - How Great Thou Art ELW #856

O Lord my God When I in awesome wonder Consider all the works
Thy hands have made, I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
Thy pow'r throughout The universe displayed!

Chorus

Then sings my soul, My Savior God, to Thee; How great Thou art,
How great Thou art! Then sings my soul, My Savior God, to Thee;
How great Thou art, How great Thou art!

Verse 2 When thru the woods And forest glades I wander And hear
the birds Sing sweetly in the trees, When I look down From lofty
mountain grandeur And hear the brook And feel the gentle breeze,
[Chorus]

Verse 3 And when I think That God, His Son not sparing, Sent Him
to die, I scarce can take it in - That on the cross, My burden gladly
bearing, He bled and died To take away my sin! [Chorus]

Verse 4 When Christ shall come With shout of acclamation And
take me home, What joy shall fill my heart! Then I shall bow In
humble adoration And there proclaim, My God, how great Thou art!
[Chorus]

P - Go in peace and serve the Lord.

C - Thanks be to God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to worship! A Warm Welcome to all our visitors. We are so glad you are here & would love to have you visit again! Please sign a visitor card located in the pews and place the information section of the card in the offering plate. We hope to see you again!

THIS WEEKS BULLETIN IS SPONSORED BY: Irene Busboom and family.

IF INTERESTED IN SPONSORING A WEEKLY BULLETIN you may do so by contacting the Church secretary and making a check out to Zion Church for \$75.00.

THANK YOU - To the Kids of the Kingdom for providing special music today.

THANK YOU - Thank you to all who made my 90th Birthday special. ~Irene Busboom

GRACE CIRCLE - A reminder to the Grace Circle group for the March 11th meeting. We will be covering session one in the Gather Magazine, which is found on page 26.

SPRING & SUMMER CAMPS – There are several options for Spring and Summer camp for our youth. If interested, you can find more information displayed on the Welcome Center.

THRIVENT DEADLINE – The deadline to direct 2025 Thrivent Choice Dollars is **March 31, 2026**. Eligible members must direct these funds annually by this date, or it will expire and be repurposed by Thrivent.

NEXT HOSPITALITY EVENT – Another fun event coming your way by the hospitality committee. Mark your calendar for April 19th and keep your eye out for more info in the April Newsletter and bulletins on Plant BINGO.

online
GIVING
easy. fast. effective.

GIVING OPTION - Simply scan the QR Code to the right to access Zion's Venmo account and submit your offering.

Offering envelopes and online giving via Vanco are still available to members as well. **Any members with questions regarding these options can reach out to a church council member.**



Bailey Pointe - Vivian Schuster

Gold Crest - Janice Jurgens, Doreen Wallman, Marilyn Robinson

Homestead House - Anora Schoen, Rosanna Miller, Marsha Zulauf

Our Homes Assisted Living - Randy Oltman