

Midweek Lenten Service – March 18, 2026

Mercy, Passion and Joy

Welcome and Announcements

Litany ¹

We humbly come to you this Lent, O Lord, and say,
“Be merciful to me, a sinner.”

Now let us rejoice at this good news:

You are gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. Therefore, our sins are forgiven.

Through your passion and death, O Lord,
you have destroyed death and the power of the devil forever.

By your sacrifice on the cross, O Lord,

You have opened the way to everlasting life for all who believe.

So we praise you for your mercy, we thank you for your passion and we join you in your joy with all the redeemed, proclaiming:

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing! Amen.

Without you we are lost, unaware and at a dead end because of sin.

Be the Way, Truth and Life for us always, O Lord. Amen.

Gathering Hymn *“I Want Jesus to Walk With Me”* #325

1. I want Jesus to walk with me;
I want Jesus to walk with me;
all along my pilgrim journey,
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.
2. In my trials, Lord, walk with me;
in my trials, Lord, walk with me;
when my heart is almost breaking,
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.
3. When I'm in trouble,
Lord, walk with me;
when I'm in trouble,
Lord, walk with me;
when my head is bowed in sorrow,
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.

¹ Litany from *Mercy, Passion and Joy* © 2026 Creative Communications for the Parish
(www.creativecommunications.com), Fenton, MO

Holden Evening Prayer (page numbers are for the pew edition)

p.2 *Service of Light*

p.3 *Evening Hymn*

p.4 *Evening Thanksgiving*

p.4 *Psalmody "Let my prayer rise up"* Psalm 141

p.8 *Meditation and Prayer*

Scripture Reading: 1 John 4: 11-19²

¹Dear friends, if God loved us this way, we also ought to love each other. ¹²No one has ever seen God. If we love each other, God remains in us and his love is made perfect in us. ¹³This is how we know we remain in him and he remains in us, because he has given us a measure of his Spirit. ¹⁴We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the savior of the world. ¹⁵If any of us confess that Jesus is God's Son, God remains in us and we remain in God. ¹⁶We have known and have believed the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who remain in love remain in God and God remains in them. ¹⁷This is how love has been perfected in us, so that we can have confidence on the Judgment Day, because we are exactly the same as God is in this world. ¹⁸There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear, because fear expects punishment. The person who is afraid has not been made perfect in love. ¹⁹We love because God first loved us.

² Scripture readings are Common English Bible translation from biblegateway.com

Gospel Verse for Lent “Return to God” (from *Now the Feast and Celebration*)

**Return to God with all your heart, the source of grace and mercy;
Come, seek the tender faithfulness of God.** (*repeat*)

Gospel Reading: Matthew 11: 25-30³

²⁵ At that time Jesus said, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you’ve hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have shown them to babies. ²⁶ Indeed, Father, this brings you happiness.

²⁷ “My Father has handed all things over to me. No one knows the Son except the Father. And nobody knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wants to reveal him.

²⁸ “Come to me, all you who are struggling hard and carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Put on my yoke, and learn from me. I’m gentle and humble. And you will find rest for yourselves. ³⁰ My yoke is easy to bear, and my burden is light.”

The light shines in the darkness.
And the darkness has not overcome it.

Brief Reflection on the Scripture Readings⁴

Hymn of the Day “Spirit, Open My Heart” All Creation Sings #1043

Refrain:

**Spirit, open my heart
To the joy and pain of living.
As you love may I love,
In receiving and in giving.
Spirit, open my heart.**

³ Scripture readings in Common English Bible translation from biblegateway.com

⁴ Sources referenced in the reflection:

Anzaldua, Gloria E. “(Un)natural bridges, (Un)safe spaces.” In *This Bridge We Call Home: Radical Visions for Transformation*, edited by Gloria E. Anzaldua and Analouise Keating, 1-5. New York and London: Routledge, 2002.

Keating, Analouise. “Charting Pathways, Marking Thresholds... A Warning, An Introduction.” In *This Bridge We Call Home: Radical Visions for Transformation*, edited by Gloria E. Anzaldua and Analouise Keating, 6-20. New York and London: Routledge, 2002.

Lasair, Simon. “Truth in Pastoral Practice: A Firmer Foundation for Contested Territory.” *International Journal of Practical Theology* 25, no. 2 (2021): 166–83.

McGarrah Sharp, Melinda. “Sharing in Vulnerability.” In *Misunderstanding Stories: Toward a Postcolonial Pastoral Theology*, 105-132. Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2013.

1. **God, replace my stony heart
With a heart that's kind and tender.
All my coldness and fear
To your grace I now surrender.**

Refrain:

**Spirit, open my heart
To the joy and pain of living.
As you love may I love,
In receiving and in giving.
Spirit, open my heart.**

2. **Write your love upon my heart
As my law, my goal, my story.
In each thought, word, and deed,
May my living bring you glory.**

Refrain:

**Spirit, open my heart
To the joy and pain of living.
As you love may I love,
In receiving and in giving.
Spirit, open my heart.**

3. **May I weep with those who weep;
share the joy of friend and neighbor.
As I live from day to day,
Love will be my finest labor.**

Refrain:

**Spirit, open my heart
To the joy and pain of living.
As you love may I love,
In receiving and in giving.
Spirit, open my heart.**

Offering & Offering Prayer ⁵

(An offering plate is placed on the altar, followed by the prayer)

Let us pray:

Mighty God and Father, you overwhelm us with your great mercy.
 At the time of our greatest need you surprised us with your wondrous love.
 Jesus offered his life for us to remove our dreadful curse.
 As you draw us into this renewing relationship of love,
 may we respond with gratitude
 as we offer the substance of our souls to continue the ministry of Christ.
 For his name and glory we pray and present our gifts. Amen!

Holden Evening Prayer continued

p.8 *The Magnificat*

p.10 *Litany and Prayers*

The Lord's Prayer (sung version)

p.12 *Final Blessing*

Blessing ⁶

May the God of love, who shared his love,
 strengthen us in our love for others.
 May the Son who shared his life
 grant us grace, that we might share our life.
 And may the Holy Spirit dwelling in us
 empower us to be only and always for others.
Amen.

Commission

Go in peace, inspired by Christ, to love and serve.
Thanks be to God.

⁵ *Offering Prayer* from **The Worship Sourcebook, Second Edition** © 2013, Faith Alive Christian Resources, Grand Rapids, MI

⁶ *Blessing* from **The Worship Sourcebook, Second Edition** © 2013, Faith Alive Christian Resources, Grand Rapids, MI