

A New Thing Is Underway

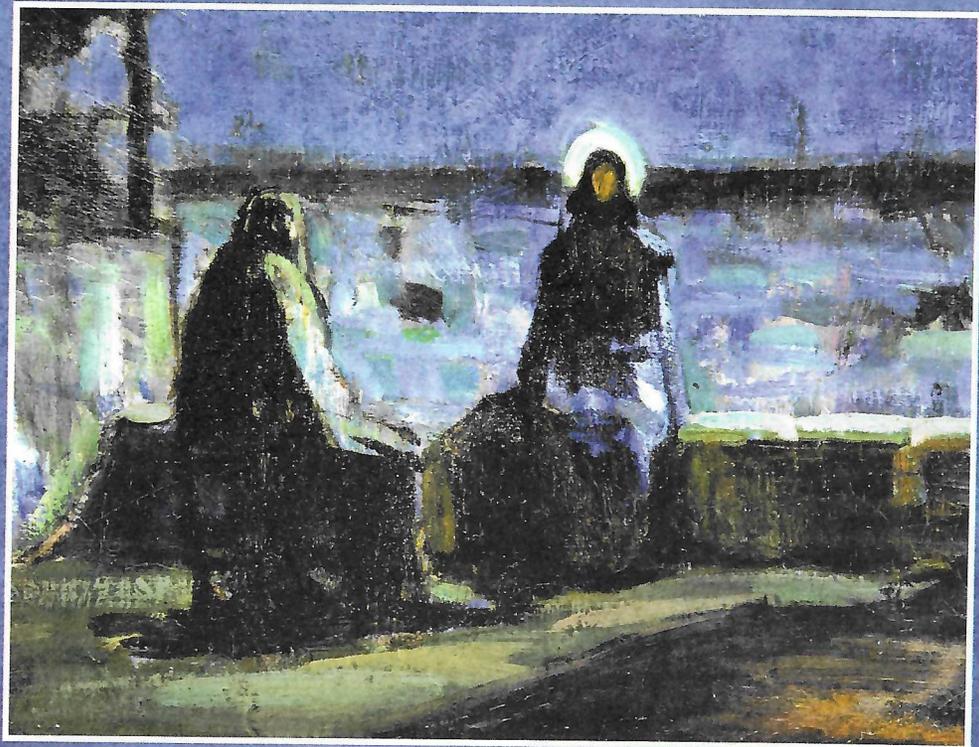
How can anyone be born after having grown old?" asks Nicodemus (John 3:4), articulating a question that we as the church continue to ask today. Change is hard. Transformation seems impossible. And yet, Jesus responds that in baptism we are made as new as if we had been born again, with a new heart able to perceive the reign of God. All things are possible with God!

Nicodemus is justifiably perplexed by this proclamation. We may resonate with his confusion as we look at the world around us and in the mirror before us, wondering if anything can ever truly change. Can the violence and suffering of war ever truly end? Can this broken relationship be mended? Can this illness be healed? Can hatred, oppression, and abuse be thwarted, transformed by the power of love? When we look around us, change may seem in short supply.

And yet, when we get curious, we may also become aware of signs of change, transformation, and rebirth emerging all around us. In northern regions, we can see the melting snow and first shoots of green from rousing plants, signaling the change from winter to spring. We can see mutual aid networks, community care efforts, and collective action emerge in response to social and political chaos. We can sense the tug of the Holy Spirit on our hearts, calling us toward deeper humility, compassion, and solidarity as we live in the hope of Christ.

The Lenten call—to set down what we can to attend more fully to God—draws us into a posture of curiosity that may deepen our awareness of the small but potent ways God's kingdom is already breaking in all around us. "Do not be astonished," says Jesus (v. 7); a new thing is underway.

NICODEMUS came to *Jesus* BY NIGHT



JOHN 3:2

FRIEDENS LUTHERAN CHURCH

Second Sunday in Lent March 1, 2026

*Indicates for the congregation to stand if you are able.

Congregation responses are printed in **bold print**.

Liturgy and hymns are in the green hymnal unless indicated.

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS and PRELUDE

***CONGESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Word who spoke life into being, the Wind stirring the waters.

Amen.

Let us turn in confession to the one who knows us completely.

Mighty God, lover of justice,
you call us to life in community, but we have served our own interests at the expense of our neighbors. We have sown deceit where honesty was needed. We say the right words, but our hearts are far from you. Turn us to seek your face. Knit us together and give us the mind of Christ, that we may do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God.

Amen.

The former things have passed away, and new things God now declares: Like a spring of water that never fails, God covers you in the righteousness of Christ and forgives your sin in † Jesus' name. May the Spirit give you strength to live for others, and bless you with the gift of peace. **Amen.**

*HYMN "My Faith Looks Up to Thee" P. 479

***PRAYER OF THE DAY** Spoken in unison.
O God, our leader and guide, in the waters of baptism you bring us to new birth to live as your children. Strengthen our faith in your promises, that by your Spirit we may lift up your life to all the world through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Save a Date – Lenten Series

March 4, 7:00 PM – Trinity Lutheran, Valley View. Pastor Mark Rothermel, Bethany Road.

March 11, 7:00 PM – Barry Salem UMC, Pitman. Pastor Krista Keisling, The Road to Damascus.

March 18, 7:00 PM – St. James Lutheran, Pitman. Pastor Ray Holland, The Road Home.

March 25, 7:00 PM – Friedens Lutheran, Hegins. Pastor Suzanne Elliott, The Road to Jerusalem.

Prayer Corner

Darlene Gibson; Eric Scheib; Greg Readinger.
Sympathy for the family and friends of Roger Scheib; Beverly Wolfgang.

Today's Leaders

Service, Pastor Barry Spatz, with Holy Communion Lay Assistant, Dave Henninger Lector, Scott Deiter Counters, Ann Miller & Vicki Troutman Head Usher, Ed Teitsworth Ushers, Rick Herring, Mike Deiter, Ed Hornung Greeters, AJ Kline, Ann Miller.

Bulletin – No sponsors.
Flowers – Lent, no sponsors needed.

Attendance: 30 (02/22/2026)	
Offering, February 22, 2026 – Current Exp.:	\$1,251.00
Other Offering:	\$140.00
Total:	\$1,391.00

Donation for Jewel Women's Center	\$4454.25
Donation for Souper Bowl Sunday	\$119.00

Weekly Offering Needed: \$2,362.87

Volunteers the Week of 3/8/2026 - Message, Russ Sowers Organist, Harold Morgan Liturgist, Damaris Merwine Counters, Jean & Gary Kinger Head Usher, Ed Tietsworth Ushers, Larry Klinger, AJ Kline, Ann Miller Greeters, Ruth Wetzel & Orpha Troutman.

FRIEDENS EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Website: [HTTPS://www.thefriedenslutheran.com](https://www.thefriedenslutheran.com)

Church e-mail: friedenslutheran4@gmail.com

Designated Pastor: Pastor Lee A. Diefenderfer, 1295 Red Dale Road,
Orwigsburg, PA 17961, 610-858-4136

Council President: Ed Tietsworth, (570) 292-1061

Worship time – 10:30 AM

In the name of Jesus Christ, we strive to serve all people in our community and world. We extend a warm welcome to all visitors who are worshipping with us today. Please sign the guest register in the narthex and complete a visitor's pew card, placing it in the offering plate.

Second Sunday in Lent ✕ March 1, 2026

During Lent we journey with all those around the world who will be baptized at the Easter Vigil. In today's gospel Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born of water and Spirit. At the font we are given a new birth as children of God. As God made a covenant with Abraham, in baptism God promises to raise us up with Christ to new life. From worship we are sent forth to proclaim God's love for all the world.



Calendar

- March 1, Pastor Barry Spatz with Holy Communion.
- March 8, Russ Sowers. WELCA mtg. after the service, front pews of church.
- March 15, Pastor Barry Spatz.
- March 22, Fountainaires/Otto.
- March 29, Pastor Barry Spatz

Announcements

- 3/1/2026 – Easter Flowers Orders are due today. Sign-up sheets are in the Sunday school room.
- 3/3/2026 – HVACF (Craft Faire), 6:30 PM.
- 3/4/2026 - Worship & Music, 5:00 PM.
- 3/21/2026 – Spring Bazaar, 9 – 11 AM. Hoagies, Soup, Goodies. There are sign-up sheets in the Sunday school room to purchase hoagies, making hoagies, and providing soup and goodies. Order deadline for hoagies is March 8.
- 4/29/2026 – Mr. Sticky sale. Pre-order by due by 4/19/26. (We need a minimum number of orders to hold the event.

FIRST READING Genesis 12:1-4a

¹The Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ²I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³I 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." ^{4a} So Abram went, as the Lord had told him, and Lot went with him.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm: 121

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 The LORD will not let your foot be moved nor will the one who watches over you fall asleep.

⁴ **Behold, the keeper of Israel will neither slumber nor sleep;**

⁵ the LORD watches over you; the LORD is your shade at your right hand;

⁶ **the sun will not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.**

⁷ The LORD will preserve you from all evil and will keep your life.

⁸ **The LORD will watch over your going out and your coming in, from this time forth forevermore.**

SECOND READING Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

¹ What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? ² For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³ For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." ⁴ Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. ⁵ But to one who does not work but trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

¹³ 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. ¹⁴ For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵ For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law, neither is there transgression.

¹⁶ For this reason the promise depends on faith, in order that it may rest on grace, so that it may be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (who is the father of all of us, ¹⁷ 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.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

LENTEN VERSE

Spoken in unison.

Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and abounding in steadfast love.

The Holy Gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL: John 3:1-17

¹ Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. ² 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 unless God is with that person." ³ Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." ⁴ 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?" ⁵ Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶ What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' ⁸ 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." ⁹ Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" ¹⁰ Jesus answered him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things? ¹¹ "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. ¹² If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴ And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶ "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. ¹⁷ "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."

CHILDREN'S AND CONGREGATIONAL MESSAGE, Pastor Barry Spatz.

HYMN "Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling". WOV (Blue) P. 734

***PRAYERS** Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

*SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

OFFERING/OFFERTORY

*DOXOLOGY

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

*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

(Spoken)

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.** Lift your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

*PREFACE

*"HOLY, HOLY, HOLY"

(Spoken)

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

*WORDS OF INSTITUTION

*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.

*COMMUNION

*COMMUNION PRAYER

*BLESSING

***SENDING HYMN** "In the Hour of Trial."

P. 106

*DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

Postlude