An abstract artwork with a vibrant red background. A golden cross is centered on the page, with a bright yellow and orange sun-like circle at its intersection. The background is filled with intricate, textured patterns, including circular motifs and fine lines, creating a rich, layered visual effect. The overall composition is balanced and visually striking.

Where your
treasure is,
there
your heart
will be
also

MATTHEW 6:21



+ Ash Wednesday +

February 22, 2023

AS WE GATHER

We are reminded on Ash Wednesday that we were destroyed by sin and come to the Lord for cleansing and renewal. We come because Jesus has beckoned us by the Holy Spirit and has called us to repentance. We rely on the great mercy of God and cry out to our King for clean hearts. We respond today, throughout Lent, and for the rest of our lives, by coming to our Savior and receiving His forgiveness and love.

REGARDING HOLY COMMUNION: *Beginning on Ash Wednesday, the forty days of Lent mark off our journey to Easter. When we were baptized into the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the sign of the cross was made upon our foreheads and hearts to mark us as people redeemed by the cross of the Christ. We rose to newness of life through the resurrection of Jesus and began a life of pilgrimage in faith. The cross of ash made on our foreheads at the beginning of Lent reminds us that the Christian life is one of repentance (or change from wrongs done) ... a life of constant returning to our Lord's Table to be forgiven and renewed, for here we have the bread of Christ's Body and the wine of his Blood as strength for the journey. **Since Christian denominations have differing understandings of Holy Communion, if you are not a member of a Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod congregation and have not communed here before, we ask that you speak with the pastor or elder prior to communing with us the first time. Those not communing are invited to cross their arms over their chests and approach the pastor for a blessing during the distribution. Also, if certain factors prohibit you from partaking of regular wine, non-alcoholic wine is available in the center circle of the tray. If you would like to begin sharing this sacred meal with us on a regular basis, please ask the pastor for a time of faith instruction and formation.***

Liturgical Color:

Purple is the color of humility and repentance.

Each week as we head toward Good Friday, a candle is extinguished on the Lenten wreath since darkness comes before the bright dawn of Easter morning.

Near the large cross by the pulpit is a basket with slips of paper, pencils, and tacks. Feel free to write down any of your burdens, worries, wrongs, and sins and tack them to the cross at any time during this season of Lent. They will not be read but removed on Good Friday and burned in the Easter Vigil fire on Holy Saturday. Our Lord takes our darkness and replaces it with his light!

✠ THE CROSS OF ASHES ✠

Why ashes? On Ash Wednesday, many congregations practice the imposition of ashes. But why? The imposition of ashes can be a powerful, tactile reminder of both Law and Gospel in which worshipers of any age can take part. The words “remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return” are spoken as ashes are received on the forehead. These words remind us that as a result of sin and the fall, death is a reality. Ashes also call to mind the practice in Scripture of wearing sackcloth and ashes as a sign of sorrow and repentance of sin. Typically, the ashes are marked in the shape of the cross, pointing us to the promise of forgiveness of sin through Jesus’ crucifixion for us. After leaving worship, we will each eventually wash off the ashen cross. As we splash water on our foreheads, we remember our Baptism, where we were cleansed of sin through water and the Word. Whether literally marked with ashes or not, we all enter this penitential season of Lent praying that God Almighty would have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

✠ PREPARATION ✠

Prelude

Choral Invitation to Lent “Seek the Lord”

Stand

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

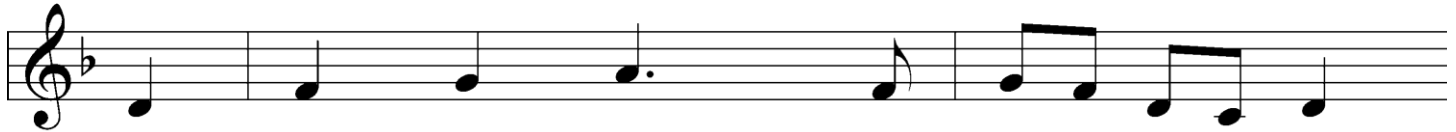
Address for Imposition of Ashes

P Dear brothers and sisters of our Lord Jesus Christ, on this day the Church begins a holy season of prayerful and penitential reflection. Our attention is especially directed to the holy sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

From ancient times, the season of Lent has been kept as a time of special devotion, self-denial, and humble repentance borne of a faithful heart that dwells confidently on His Word and draws from it life and hope.

Let us pray that our dear Father in heaven, for the sake of His beloved Son and in the power of His Holy Spirit, might richly bless this Lententide for us so that we may come to Easter with glad hearts and keep the feast in sincerity and truth.

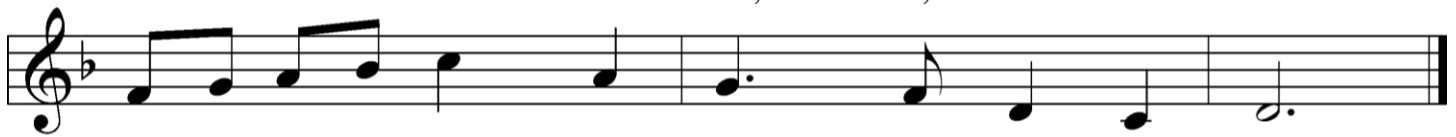
Hymn.....“Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive” #843



1 “For - give our sins as we for - give,”
 2 How can Your par - don reach and bless
 3 In blaz - ing light Your cross re - veals
 4 Lord, cleanse the depths with - in our souls



You taught us, Lord, to pray; But You a - lone can
 The un - for - giv - ing heart That broods on wrongs and
 The truth we dim - ly knew: What triv - ial debts are
 And bid re - sent - ment cease; Then, bound to all in



grant us grace To live the words we say.
 will not let Old bit - ter - ness de - part?
 owed to us, How great our debt to You!
 bonds of love, Our lives will spread Your peace.

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Confession and Absolution(from Psalm 51)

- P** Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your steadfast love;
- C** according to Your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.
- P** Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
- C** and cleanse me from my sin!
- P** For I know my transgressions,
- C** and my sin is ever before me.
- P** Against You, You only, have I sinned and done what is evil in Your sight,
- C** so that You may be justified in Your words and blameless in Your judgment.
- P** Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
- C** and in sin did my mother conceive me.
- P** Behold, You delight in truth in the inward being,
- C** and You teach me wisdom in the secret heart.
- P** Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
- C** wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
- P** Let me hear joy and gladness;
- C** let the bones that You have broken rejoice.
- P** Hide Your face from my sins,

C and blot out all my iniquities.

P On this day of ashes, we reflect on our sin-filled lives and seek God's forgiveness.

(Silence)

P Most merciful Father in heaven,

C I am a sinner. I have no one to blame. The fault is my own. I deserve to be punished. I am truly sorry for my sins. Yet, for the sake of the loving sacrifice of Your only Son, Jesus Christ, I dare to beg for Your forgiveness. Remove from me the guilt of my sin and wash me that I may be whole again. Help me to be faithful today, tomorrow, and each day, by the power of Your Holy Spirit.

P Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy on us and has given His only Son to die for us and for His sake forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray

Almighty and everlasting God, You despise nothing You have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and contrite hearts that lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness we may, like David before us, receive from You full pardon and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

✠ SERVICE OF THE WORD ✠

Sit

Old Testament **Joel 2:12-19**

“Yet even now,” declares the LORD,
“return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
and rend your hearts and not your garments.”
Return to the LORD, your God,

for he is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love;
and he relents over disaster.

Who knows whether he will not turn and relent,
and leave a blessing behind him,
a grain offering and a drink offering
for the LORD your God?

Blow the trumpet in Zion;
consecrate a fast;
call a solemn assembly;
gather the people.

Consecrate the congregation;
assemble the elders;
gather the children,
even nursing infants.

Let the bridegroom leave his room,
and the bride her chamber.

Between the vestibule and the altar
let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep
and say, "Spare your people, O LORD,
and make not your heritage a reproach,
a byword among the nations.

Why should they say among the peoples,
'Where is their God?'" . . .

Then the LORD became jealous for his land
and had pity on his people.

The LORD answered and said to his people, grain, wine, and oil,
and you will be satisfied;
and I will no more make you
a reproach among the nations."

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Response Hymn *"As Rebels, Lord, Who Foolishly Have Wandered"* #612



1 As reb - els, Lord, who fool - ish - ly have wan - dered
2 Still we re - turn, our con - trite words re - hears - ing,
3 A feast of love for us You are pre - par - ing;



Far from Your love— un - fed, un - clean, un - clothed—
 Speech, that with - in Your warm em - brace soon dies;
 We who were lost, You give an hon - ored place!



Dare we re - call Your wealth so rash - ly squan - dered,
 All of our guilt, our shame, our pain re - vers - ing
 “Come, eat; come, drink, and be no more de - spair - ing—



Dare hope to glean that boun - ty which we loathed?
 As tears of joy and wel - come fill Your eyes.
 Here taste a - gain the trea - sures of My grace.”

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Epistle.....2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For he says,

“In a favorable time I listened to you,
 and in a day of salvation I have helped you.”

Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. We put no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Response Hymn *“On My Heart Imprint Your Image” #422*

On my heart im - print Your im - age, Bless - ed Je - sus, King of grace,
That life's rich - es, cares, and plea - sures Nev - er may Your work e - rase;
Let the clear in - scrip - tion be: Je - sus, cru - ci - fied for me,
Is my life, my hope's foun - da - tion, And my glo - ry and sal - va - tion!

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Stand

Holy Gospel **Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21**

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the sixth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:] “Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

“Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. . .

“And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. . .

“And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face,

that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. . .

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Hymn of the Day *“There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy”*



1 There’s a wide - ness in God’s mer - cy, Like the wide - ness
2 There is wel - come for the sin - ner, And a prom - ised
3 For the love of God is broad - er Than the mea - sures
4 ’Tis not all we owe to Je - sus; It is some - thing



of the sea; There’s a kind - ness in His jus - tice
grace made good; There is mer - cy with the Sav - ior;
of our mind; And the heart of the e - ter - nal
more than all: Great - er good be - cause of e - vil,



Which is more than lib - er - ty. There is no place
There is heal - ing in His blood. There is grace e -
Is most won - der - ful - ly kind. There is plen - ti -
Larg - er mer - cy through the fall. If our love were



where earth’s sor - rows Are more felt than up in heav’n.
nough for thou - sands Of new worlds as great as this;
ful re - demp - tion In the blood that has been shed;
but more sim - ple, We should take Him at His Word;



There is no place where earth's fail - ings
 There is room for fresh cre - a - tions
 There is joy for all the mem - bers
 And our lives would be all sun - shine



Have such kind - ly judg - ment giv'n.
 In that up - per home of bliss.
 In the sor - rows of the head.
 In the sweet - ness of our Lord.

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Sit

Homily.....“The Lord’s Mercy is Great!”

Stand

Nicene Creed

**I believe in one God,
 the Father Almighty,
 maker of heaven and earth
 and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
 the only-begotten Son of God,
 begotten of His Father before all worlds,
 God of God, Light of Light,
 very God of very God,
 begotten, not made,
 being of one substance with the Father,
 by whom all things were made;
 who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
 and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
 and was made man;
 and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
 He suffered and was buried.
 And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
 and ascended into heaven
 and sits at the right hand of the Father.**

And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.

And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Offering & Offertory

Prayer of the Church

- P** In peace, let us pray to the Lord
- C** Lord, have mercy.
- C** Amen (at end).

✠ SACRAMENT ✠

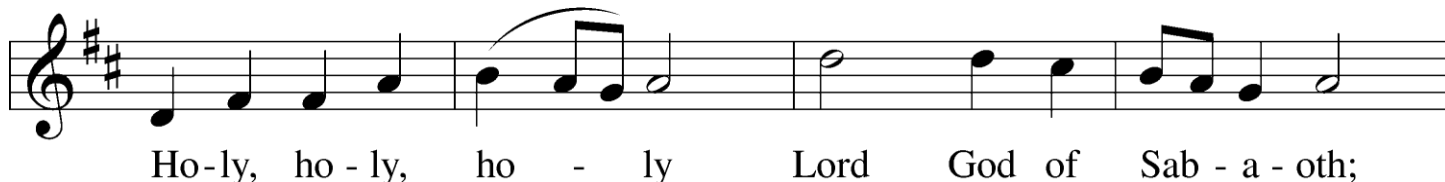
Preface

- P** The Lord be with you.
- C** And also with you.
- P** Lift up your hearts.
- C** We lift them to the Lord.
- P** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
- C** It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

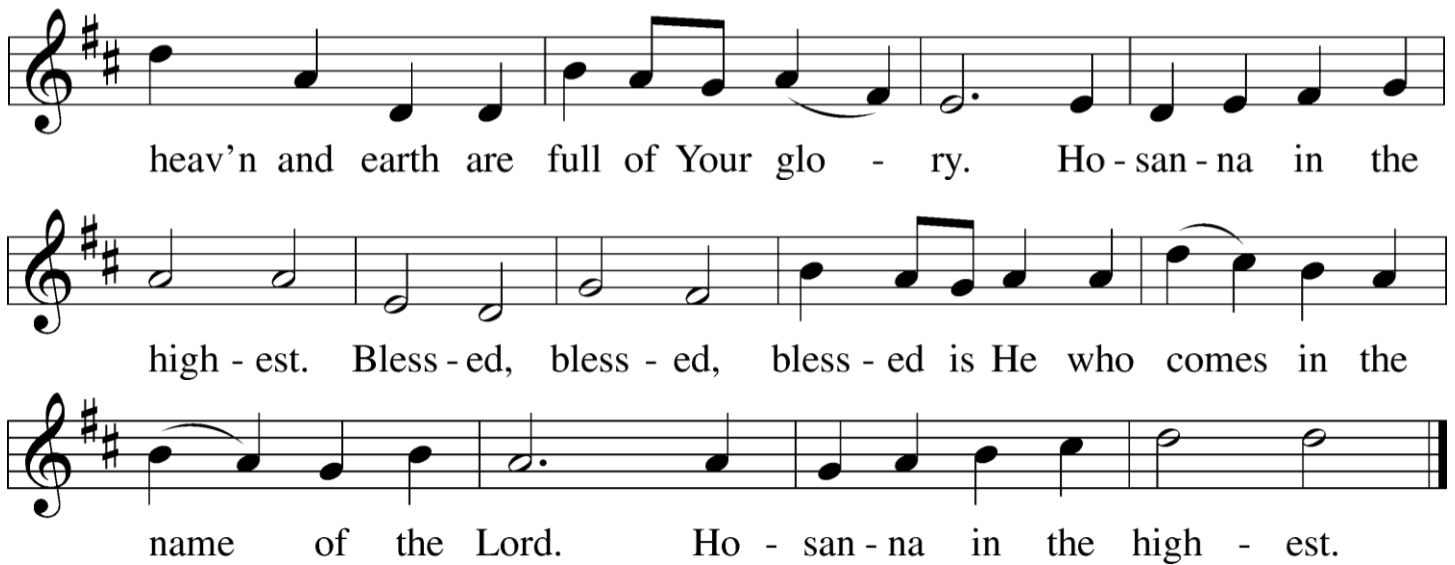
Proper Preface

- P** It is truly good, right, and beneficial. . . together with the Son and Holy Spirit, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

Sanctus..... *“Holy, Holy, Holy” #961*



Ho-ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth;



heav'n and earth are full of Your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the
 high - est. Bless - ed, bless - ed, bless - ed is He who comes in the
 name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

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Prayer of Thanksgiving

- P** Blessed are You, . . . with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

The Words of Our Lord

- P** Our Lord Jesus Christ . . . This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

Proclamation of Christ

- P** As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.
- C** Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.
- P** O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father . . . , So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

Lord’s Prayer

Pax Domini

- P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.
- C** Amen.

Agnus Dei Hymn *“Lamb of God” #550*

1 Your on - ly Son, no sin to hide, But You have
 2 Your Gift of love they cru - ci - fied, They laughed and
 3 I was so lost, I should have died, But You have

sent Him from Your side To walk up - on this guilt - y
 scorned Him as He died: The hum - ble King they named a
 brought me to Your side To be led by Your staff and

sod, And to be - come the Lamb of God.
 fraud, And sac - ri - ficed the Lamb of God.
 rod, And to be called a lamb of God.

Refrain

O Lamb of God, sweet Lamb of God, I love the ho - ly Lamb of God!

O wash me in His pre - cious blood, My Je - sus Christ, the Lamb of God.

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Sit

The Meaning of Ashes

Throughout the Bible, ashes have been associated with humility, repentance, and mortality. In Genesis, we read of the great patriarch: "Abraham answered and said, 'Behold, I have undertaken to speak to the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes'" (Genesis 18:27). In Job, we read that the long-suffering Job said of his life: "I have become like dust and ashes" (Job 30:19b). Daniel the prophet states: "Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking Him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes" (Daniel 9:3). Ash Wednesday brings us the opportunity to follow the pattern set by our spiritual ancestors and to begin the observance of "a holy Lent" as we come before the Lord in ashes.

(Those receiving ashes, a blessing, and/or Holy Communion will be ushered out of their pews to approach the altar.)

The Imposition of Ashes and Distribution of Communion

To receive a cross of ash on your forehead, simply raise your head up while at the altar rail—the elder will make that sign of the cross before the pastor comes with either the Communion host or a blessing. If partaking of the Lord's Supper, the words spoken about hardship and death [Gen. 3:19] are met by Jesus words about partaking his flesh and blood and being raised up from death to life on the last day [John 6:54].

Instrumental

Distribution Hymn..... *"Baptismal Waters Cover Me" #616*



1 Bap - tis - mal wa - ters cov - er me As I ap -
2 I look to Christ up - on the tree, His bod - y
3 Lord, may Your wound - ed hand im - part Your heal - ing
4 From Your own mouth comes forth a word; Your shep - herd
5 Bap - tis - mal wa - ters cov - er me; Christ's wound - ed



proach on bend - ed knee; My Fa - ther's mer - cy
bro - ken there for me; I lay be - fore Him
to my bro - ken heart; Your love a - lone can
speaks, but You are heard; Through him Your hand now
hand has set me free. Held in my Fa - ther's



here I plead, For griev - ous sins of thought and deed.
all my sin, My dark - est se - crets from with - in.
form in me A heart that serves You joy - ful - ly.
stretch - es out, For - giv - ing sin, de - stroy - ing doubt.
strong em - brace, With joy I praise Him for His grace.

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Distribution Hymn..... *"Jesus Sinners Doth Receive" #609*



1 Je - sus sin - ners doth re - ceive; Oh, may all this
2 We de - serve but grief and shame, Yet His words, rich
3 Sheep that from the fold did stray No true shep - herd
4 I, a sin - ner, come to Thee With a pen - i -



say - ing pon - der Who in sin's de - lu - sions live
 grace re - veal - ing, Par - don, peace, and life pro - claim;
 e'er for - sak - eth; Wea - ry souls that lost their way
 tent con - fes - sion. Sav - ior, mer - cy show to me;



And from God and heav - en wan - der! Here is hope for
 Here our ills have per - fect heal - ing. Firm - ly in these
 Christ, the Shep - herd, gent - ly tak - eth In His arms that
 Grant for all my sins re - mis - sion. Let these words my



all who grieve: Je - sus sin - ners doth re - ceive.
 words be - lieve: Je - sus sin - ners doth re - ceive.
 they may live: Je - sus sin - ners doth re - ceive.
 soul re - lieve: Je - sus sin - ners doth re - ceive.

5 Oh, how blest it is to know:
 Were as scarlet my transgression,
 It shall be as white as snow
 By Thy blood and bitter passion;
 For these words I now believe:
 Jesus sinners doth receive.

6 Now my conscience is at peace;
 From the Law I stand acquitted.
 Christ hath purchased my release
 And my ev'ry sin remitted.
 Naught remains my soul to grieve:
 Jesus sinners doth receive.

7 Jesus sinners doth receive;
 Also I have been forgiven;
 And when I this earth must leave,
 I shall find an open heaven.
 Dying, still to Him I cleave:
 Jesus sinners doth receive.

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Stand

Post-Communion Thanksgiving

- P** Let us pray.
 O God, You desire not the death of sinners, . . . , who lives and reigns with You
 and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

Benediction

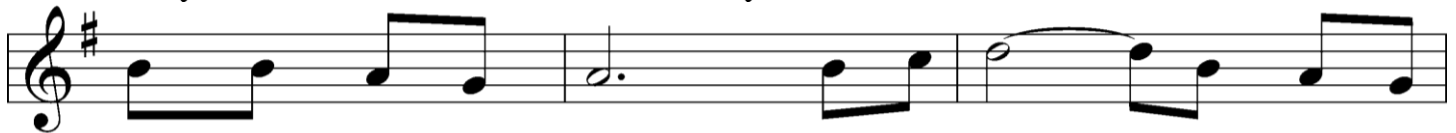
P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

C Amen.

Sending Hymn..... "Stay with Us" #879



1 Stay with us, till night has come: Our praise to
2 Walk with us, our spir - its sigh: Hear when our
3 Walk with us, the road will bend: Make all our
4 Talk with us, till we be - hold A joy - ful
5 Stay with us, till day is done: No tears nor



You this day be sung. Bless our bread, O - pen our
wea - ry spir - its cry, Feel a - gain Our loss, our
weep - ing, wail - ing end. Wipe our tears, For - give our
life You will un - fold: Heal our eyes To see the
dark shall dim the sun. Cheer the heart, Your grace im -



eyes: Je - sus, be our great sur - prise.
pain: Je - sus, take us to Your side.
fears: Je - sus, lift the heav - y cross.
prize: Je - sus, take us to the light.
part: Je - sus, bring e - ter - nal life.

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Dismissal

P Go in peace as you serve the Lord.

C Thanks be to God!

Postlude

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Ash Wednesday offerings will be donated to Survival House to assist in their work of showing mercy to those in situations of abuse.

Offering envelopes for Ash Wednesday are located in the pew racks with the hymnals.

Serving us this evening:

Elders.....Jack Easterwood, Alan Miller
Musicians Lorraine Miller, Rich Vanderburgh, Roy Schache
Altar Committee.....Darlene Laubenstein (Chair), Julie Crespo,
Karon Harding, Georgia Luker, Amy Martin
Flower Committee Penny Humphrey (Chair), Lori Sloan

This Week's Schedule

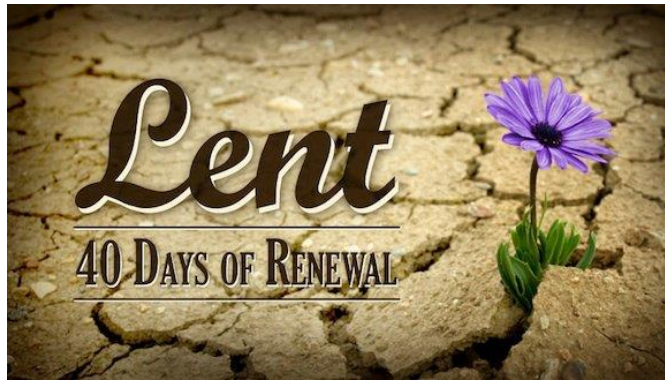
Thursday	9:30 a.m.	Pastor at Warrensburg Christian School
	1:00 p.m.	Games and Cards Group
Friday		<i>Cindy's Vacation Day</i>
	9:30 a.m.	Exercise Class
	10:30 a.m.	Pastor at SPLHS in Concordia for Chapel
Saturday	5:30 p.m.	Worship
Sunday	8:00 a.m.	The Lutheran Hour broadcast on 96.9
	9:00 a.m.	Radio Broadcast 98.5 (can also be heard at www.blchurch.com , under the Sermons tab)
	9:15 a.m.	Sunday School/Adult Bible Class
	10:30 a.m.	Worship
	3:15 p.m.	Youth Catechesis

Grazing Grace

Lent 2023

All Midweek Lenten Services begin at 7:00 p.m.

Lent 1	March 1	A Saved Wretch!
Lent 2	March 8	My Shield & Portion!
Lent 3	March 15	Rescued!
Lent 4	March 22	Prevailing Grace!
Lent 5	March 29	No Less Days!



QUESTION: What is the significance of Lent?

ANSWER: Early in the Church's history, the major events in Christ's life were observed with special observances, such as His birth, baptism, death, resurrection and ascension.

As these observances developed, a period of time was set aside prior to the major events of Jesus' birth and resurrection as a time of preparation.

During Lent, the Church's worship assumes a more penitential character. The color for the season is purple, a color often associated with penitence. The "Hymn of Praise" is omitted from the liturgy. The word "Alleluia" is usually omitted as well.

By not using the alleluia—a joyful expression meaning "Praise the Lord" — until Easter, the Lenten season is clearly set apart as a distinct time from the rest of the year.

Additionally, it forms a powerful contrast with the festive celebration of Jesus' resurrection when our alleluias ring loud and clear.

Finally, the penitential character of Lent is not its sole purpose. In the ancient Church, the weeks leading up to Easter were a time of intensive preparation of the candidates who were to be baptized at the Easter vigil on Holy Saturday.

This time in the Church's calendar was seen as an especially appropriate time for Baptism because of the relationship between Christ's death and resurrection and our own in Holy Baptism (see Rom. 6:1-11).

This focus would suggest that the season of Lent serves not only as a time to meditate on the suffering that Christ endured on our behalf but also as an opportunity to reflect upon our own Baptism and what it means to live as a child of God. (lcms.org/about/beliefs).

Contact Information

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 607 N. Maguire, Warrensburg, MO 64093

Our Mission

· Grow in Christ · Live in Love · Share the Faith

Our Vision

To be a community of believers, disciples, and servants while we deepen our personal faith and reach others for Christ.



Rev. Joel R. Kurz

Tuesday & Thursday: 8am–5pm, Wednesday & Friday: 10am-5pm

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Please note that Bethlehem Lutheran Church has a closed-circuit video system. This allows for live streaming on the web, viewing of the service on screens in the building and helps to enhance our security. Please see a trustee or an elder if you have any questions.