

Pastor Aker's Page

Faith Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, SD
March 2 & 3, 2019

Behold, the Man!

Wednesday, Christians throughout the world will again gather to have ashes smeared on their foreheads and be reminded of their mortality due to sin. Because of this practice, the day has come to be known as "Ash Wednesday". The beauty of the day reflects the beauty of the entire season of Lent! Although the ashes remind us of our impending death, the fact that they are placed upon us in the form of a cross reminds us of life! Life bound in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ! Life that reaches beyond our here and now and points us to the most amazing, grace-filled future we could possibly imagine. So, through the season of Lent we go!

As is our practice, we will again offer midweek services each Wednesday in Lent at noon and 6:30. Our 6:30 services will be preceded by a delicious meal graciously provided by some of our many active groups within the congregation. Our theme this year, "**Behold, the Man**", dives into the life of Jesus Christ and explores the depths He has dove to find and rescue us sinners. From the right hand of God in His glory, Jesus has come into the darkness of our world to bring hope and light. As you join with your brothers and sisters in Christ for these special services each week, you will grow stronger in your faith and relationship with Jesus.

Holy Week will kick off on April 13th and 14th with our Palm Sunday worship and celebration! Palm branches and joyous proclamations that Jesus, the King, has come into His Kingdom, will be upon all our lips, from the youngest of us to the oldest! In order to help us center our hearts and minds on the momentousness of Holy Week, our amazing DCE Rebecca is arranging a new experience for us: Journey to the Cross. We will be invited back to the church on Palm Sunday to follow in the footsteps of Jesus as we walk from room to room in our church and experience in a first-hand way Jesus' last several hours before His crucifixion. As you move from station to

station, you will be encouraged to ponder and meditate on some important moments in Jesus' life. This is sure to deepen our faith and appreciation for our dear Lord!

As Holy Week continues, Pastor Janneke and I will again invite you to schedule a time to meet with us for private Confession and Absolution. This is an immeasurable gift the Lord has given us and we certainly encourage you to seize the opportunity to have any particularly burdening sins removed from your shoulders once for all!

Later that week we will return to remember the night when Jesus was betrayed, when Jesus celebrated one last Passover meal with His disciples, and instituted the Lord's Supper. We will give thanks for this sacred meal as He again comes to us in His true Body and Blood for our pardon! We will watch as the altar and chancel is stripped, reminding us of how Jesus was stripped of everything. We will return again to a somber and darkened sanctuary to remember the Friday in which our Lord died for us and in our place on His cross. On Holy Saturday we will mark the remembrance of Jesus' full-day in the tomb with a candle-light vigil of prayer and readings. All of this culminates with the amazing news that Jesus isn't dead and buried away somewhere, but that He lives!

On this weekend before Lent begins, let that truth sink in just a bit: JESUS CHRIST IS ALIVE! He lives and reigns for you right at this very moment! Because He lives, you have eternal, amazing, unending life. Life that this Wednesday you will be reminded of in the form of a cross made of ashes upon your forehead. A blessed and meaningfully faith-building Lent to you!

In Christ,

Pastor Corey Aker