

Salem Lutheran Church and School

February 18, 2026

How Lovely Is Your Dwelling Place **Eden**

ASH WEDNESDAY



Lutheran Church



Missouri Synod

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Divine Services:

Sunday 10:00 AM; Wednesday 7:00 PM

WELCOME to the Lord's House today! May God help us to worship Him in spirit and in truth! Before you leave, guests are requested to sign the guest book, which is located in the narthex. Both guests and members are asked to fill out an attendance card, located in the pews, returning it as you leave. We invite you to return and worship with us again. If you do not have a regular church home, then we invite you to join our family. May this celebration of the mercy of God enrich your spiritual life and be uplifting for each one of you.

INDIVIDUAL HEARING ASSISTANCE SETS are available for those with impaired hearing. Please ask an usher for assistance.

LARGE PRINT BULLETINS and **PRINTED COPIES OF THE SERMON** are available in the narthex.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY BAGS are available in the narthex. The bags contain a coloring book, drawing paper, reading books, crayons, and a pencil. Parents are welcome to grab a bag for their children to use during the service. Please remember to replace the bag following worship.

DOORS ARE LOCKED after the service begins. If you need to exit the building, please let an usher know, and they'll wait at the door to let you back inside.

On the cover: early Christian depiction of Adam and Eve in the Catacombs of Marcellinus and Peter (4th Century)

*We are Salem, a family nurturing God's children
to live loving lives in faith.*

ASH WEDNESDAY

Ashes have been a sign of repentance and contrition over the centuries. They are a reminder that, without the mercy of almighty God, we deserve the spiritual death of God's warning in Eden. Ashes are not sacramental, and they are not essential. But tonight, ashes are offered for those who find them a meaningful expression—of their sin, of their personal responsibility for their sin, of the hurtful effects of sin, and of their faith in God's grace and forgiveness. We are indeed dust, and to dust we shall return.

PRAYER BEFORE CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Almighty, everlasting God, for my many sins I justly deserve eternal condemnation. In Your mercy You sent Your dear Son, my Lord Jesus Christ, who won for me forgiveness of sins and everlasting salvation. Grant me a true confession that, dead to sin, I may be raised up by Your life-giving absolution. Grant me Your Holy Spirit that I may be ever watchful and live a true and godly life in Your service; through Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE

Preacher: Pastor Martin Dressler

Organist/Pianist: Elin Hogan-Gomez

(Please silence your cell phones)

ORDER OF SERVICE

WELCOME

OPENING HYMN: Savior When In Dust to Thee (LSB 419)

1 Sav - ior, when in dust to Thee Low we bow the a -
2 By Thy help - less in - fant years, By Thy life of
3 By Thine hour of dire de - spair, By Thine ag - o -
4 By Thy deep ex - pir - ing groan, By the sad se -

dor - ing knee; When, re - pen - tant, to the skies
want and tears, By Thy days of deep dis - tress
ny of prayer, By the cross, the nail, the thorn,
pul - chral stone, By the vault whose dark a - bode

Scarce we lift our weep - ing eyes; O, by all Thy -
In the sav - age wil - der - ness, By the dread, mys -
Pierc - ing spear, and tor - turing scorn, By the gloom that
Held in vain the ris - ing God, O, from earth to

pains and woe Suf - fered once for us be - low, Bend - ing
te - rious hour Of the in - sult - ing tempt - er's pow'r, Turn, O
veiled the skies O'er the dread - ful sac - ri - fice, Lis - ten
heav'n re - stored, Mighty - y, re - as - cend - ed Lord, Bend - ing

from Thy throne on high, Hear our pen - i - ten - tial cry!
turn a fa - v'ring eye; Hear our pen - i - ten - tial cry!
to our hum - ble sigh; Hear our pen - i - ten - tial cry!
from Thy throne on high, Hear our pen - i - ten - tial cry!

Text: Robert Grant, 1779-1838, alt.

Tune: Joseph Parry, 1841-1903

LITANY OF CONFESSION

P: In the name of  Jesus.

C: Amen.

P: Today marks the beginning of Lent. Throughout these forty days, we reflect and ponder how God established His Kingdom in this broken world. He brought His Kingdom through suffering and death, through the cross of Jesus Christ. And so as we prepare to begin our journey to that cross, we bow our heads and our hearts before God, confessing our sin and brokenness to Him, confessing that *we* are the ones who made His death necessary. We begin by pleading for mercy for the sake of His Son.

Silence for reflection

P: For hardness of heart toward the poor, the homeless, and the needy,
C: **Jesus, forgive me.**

P: For an unwillingness to understand those who are different from ourselves,

C: **Jesus, forgive me.**

P: For sloth and a casual stance to the vocations God has given us,
C: **Jesus, forgive me.**

P: For neglecting the call to bear witness to the Gospel,
C: **Jesus, forgive me.**

P: For cold songs and heartless praise, for thoughtless prayers and stagnant personal devotion,

C: **Jesus, forgive me.**

P: For our abuse of grace and its subsequent toying with sin,
C: **Jesus, forgive me.**

P: For doubting God's care and provision,
C: **Jesus, forgive me.**

P: For grumbling against what God has given and coveting what others have,

C: **Jesus, forgive me.**

P: For playing life safe when boldness of faith was called for,
C: **Jesus, forgive me.**

P: For unkind words spoken and encouraging words left unsaid,
C: **Jesus, forgive me.**

P: For valuing our rights and freedoms above our brothers and sisters,
C: **Jesus, forgive me.**

P: For a lack of compassion for those who are lost, caught in sin and addiction, stranded in cycles of abuse and anger,
C: **Jesus, forgive me.**

P: For all our sins of thought, word, and deed,

C: **Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.**

Silence for reflection

HYMN OF CONFSSION: Father, We Have Sinned

(Stuart Townend and Keith Getty)



Fath - er, we have sinned in word, and

deed, and thought; Through ig - nor - ance, through

weak - ness, through de - lib - 'rate fault. We've

sinned a - gainst our neigh-bours and a - gainst You, Lord. Yet

we are tru - ly sor - ry, and we

turn to You once more..

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

P: The sin we recall to mind does not capture the whole reality. It but points to the truth we so often choose to ignore:

C: I am sinful, rebellious dust and to dust I shall return.

P: Then come and receive upon your brow the reminder of your brokenness.

All are invited to come forward to receive the ashes.



(Please stand)

COLLECT OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

C: 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 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.

(Please be seated)

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Genesis 2:5-9

When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground— then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

P: O Lord, our God,

C: have mercy upon us.

EPISTLE

1 John 2:1-6

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoever says "I know him" but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may be sure that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

P: O Lord, our God,
C: **have mercy upon us.**

(Please stand)

HOLY GOSPEL

John 9:1-7

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the ninth chapter.
C: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." Having said these things, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then he anointed the man's eyes with the mud and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.

P: O Lord, our God,
C: **have mercy upon us.**

(Please be seated)



HYMN: There In God's Garden (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 342)

1. There in God's gar - den stands the Tree of
 2. Its name is Je - sus, name that says, "Our
 3. Thorns not its own are tan - gled in its
 4. See how its branch - es reach to us in
 5. This is my end - ing, this my re - sur -
 6. All heav'n is sing - ing, "Thanks to Christ whose

Wis - dom, whose leaves hold forth the
 Sav - ior!" There on its branch - es
 fo - liage; our greed has starved it,
 wel - come; hear what the Voice says,
 rec - tion; in - to your hands, Lord,
 pas - sion of - fers in mer - cy

heal - ing of the na - tions: Tree of all
 see the scars of suf - f'ring; see there the
 our de - spite has choked it. Yet, look! it
 "Come to me, ye wea - ry! Give me your
 I com - mit my spir - it. This have I
 heal - ing, strength, and par - don. Peo - ples and

knowl - edge, Tree of all com - pas - sion,
 ten - drils of our hu - man self - hood
 lives! its grief has not de - stroyed it
 sick - ness, give me all your sor - row,
 searched for; now I can pos - sess it.
 na - tions, take it, take it free - ly!"

Tree of all beau - ty.
 feed on its life - blood.
 nor fire con - sumed it.
 I will give bless - ing."
 This ground is ho - ly.
 A - men! My Mas - ter!

SERMON: “The Home We Never Knew” Genesis 2:7 Pastor Dressler

(Please stand)

PSALM 51: 1-12, 16-17

P: Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.

**C: Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin!**

P: For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.

**C: Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight,
so that you may be justified in your words
and blameless in your judgment.**

P: Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
and in sin did my mother conceive me.

**C: Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being,
and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.**

P: Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

**C: Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones that you have broken rejoice.**

P: Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.

**C: Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.**

P: Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

**C: Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit.**

P: For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it;
you will not be pleased with a burnt offering.

**C: The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.**

ABSOLUTION

P: Our spirits are broken.

C: God's Law has broken our hearts and made them contrite.

P: But because of Jesus' sacrifice,

C: the Father looks on me with eyes of love.

P: Come forward, then. Do not doubt, but believe—*trust!* This Word that I speak is God's promise. It is God's word of forgiveness for you.

All are welcome to come forward as invited by the usher.

P: I forgive you your sins in the name of the Father, and of the  Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.



REFLECTION: I Will Bring You Home

Michael Card

*Though you are homeless, though you're alone,
I will be your home.*

*Whatever's the matter, whatever's been done,
I will be your home.*

*I will be your home.
In this fearful, fallen place, I will be your home.*

*When time reaches fullness, when I move My hand,
I will bring you home,
Home to your own place in a beautiful land.
I will bring you home.*

*I will bring you home,
from this fearful fallen place, I will bring you home.*

+++

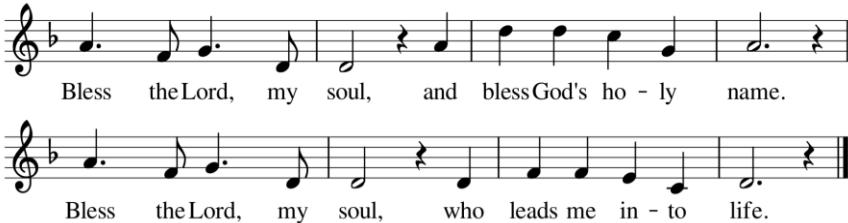
P: Standing before God free of sin and with a clear conscience, we now express our thanks for His grace and serve our neighbor with our offerings.

OFFERING

(Please stand)

P: Having been made new through absolution, we join together in prayer, asking Jesus to give us eyes like His.

PRAYERS – *Each petition concludes with “Lord, hear our prayer.” Congregation responds with verse below.*



Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's ho - ly name.

Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me in - to life.

LORD'S PRAYER

P: Lord, remember us in Your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

C: **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.

BENEDICAMUS AND BENEDICTION

P: Let us bless the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord lift up His countenance and give you peace.

C: **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN: Stay with Us (LSB 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.

Text: Herbert F. Brokering, 1926-2009

Tune: Walter L. Pelz, 1926

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Acknowledgments

Lutheran Service Book

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