February 18, 2026 4:15/6:30pm **Ash Wednesday**

ASH WEDNESDAY AND THE 40 DAYS OF LENT

Through the words of prophets in Old Testament times, God called to His people and commanded that they turn from their sinful and idolatrous ways and return to Him for grace and blessings. The forty days of Lent are a time to be repentant as we review our own sinfulness. Our Lord's death and resurrection was the way God chose to show us grace by rescuing us from our fallen sinful condition. Through our worship today, we return to the Lord and are marked with ashes as a reminder of our mortality. We find in the ashen cross a reminder of God's grace and mercy through the work of Jesus on the cross.

WELCOME AND INVOCATION

OPENING HYMN **"Chief of Sinners Though I Be"** **LSB 611, vv. 1-2**

Chief of sinners though I be,
Jesus shed His blood for me,
Died that I might live on high,
Lives that I might never die.
As the branch is to the vine,
I am His, and He is mine.

Oh, the height of Jesus' love,
Higher than the heav'ns above,
Deeper than the depths of sea,
Lasting as eternity!
Love that found me—wondrous thought!
Found me when I sought Him not.

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CALL TO REPENTANCE

Gracious Lord, ashes remind us of our human frailty and mortality. As a sign of our heart-felt repentance and sorrow, the sign of the cross is made on our foreheads.

Keep us mindful, O Lord, of our need for grace.

When man fell into sin, judgment and death came to all.

“Ashes to ashes, dust to dust.” Dust we are, and to dust we shall return.

For we have sinned against You, Lord God, and we deserve the curse of the dust.

We are but dust and ash of the ground and we deserve nothing more than to return to the dust.

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

As Ushers dismiss you, you may approach the altar to receive the sign of the cross in ashes upon the hand or forehead. Ashes have been a symbol of contrition since biblical times: "I repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:6b). They are also vivid reminders of mortality: "For dust you are and to dust you shall return (Genesis 3:19). Therefore the imposition of ashes has been a fitting beginning for the season of Lent. Ashes usually consist of the remains of the previous Palm Sunday's burned palms, and are applied to the forehead in the sign of the cross. Although powerfully speaking the law (contrition and mortality), ashes also speak the Gospel---applied in the shape of the cross, where sin and death were conquered.

SONG “Ashes to Ashes” Dan Schutte

Soloist/Choir will sing first chorus. Congregation sings on each following chorus.

Chorus:

Ashes to ashes, from dust unto dust.
The cross on our forehead,
your promise, O God.
Ready us to follow the way of your Son,
to rise from these ashes,
redeemed in the fire of your love.

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HYMN "Savior, When in Dust to Thee" LSB 419, vv. 1-3

Savior, when in dust to Thee
Low we bow the_adoring knee;
When, repentant, to the skies
Scarce we lift our weeping eyes;
O, by all Thy pains and woe
Suffered once for us below,
Bending from Thy throne on high,
Hear our penitential cry!

By Thy helpless infant years,
By Thy life of want and tears,
By Thy days of deep distress
In the savage wilderness,
By the dread, mysterious hour
Of the_insulting tempter's pow'r,
Turn, O turn a fav'ring eye;
Hear our penitential cry!

By Thine hour of dire despair,
By Thine agony of prayer,
By the cross, the nail, the thorn,
Piercing spear, and torturing scorn,
By the gloom that veiled the skies
O'er the dreadful sacrifice,
Listen to our humble sigh;
Hear our penitential cry!

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CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

"Ashes to ashes, dust to dust," for we have sinned against You, Lord God, and we deserve the curse of the dust. "Cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life." *(Genesis 3:14)*
Lord, we come to you with the sign of ashes upon our lives, the sins of who we are and what we have been. With repentant hearts, we come to You, begging You for forgiveness and life, for more than the sign of "ashes to ashes, dust to dust".

We cry out to you for mercy!
Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

"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 (*Joel 2:12-13).*

The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses your heart from all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of the Word I now forgive you of your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen!

RESPONSED TO GOD'S GRACE **"Christ, the Life of All the Living" LSB 420, v. 1**

Christ, the life of all the living,
Christ, the death of death, our foe,
Who, Thyself for me once giving
To the darkest depths of woe:
Through Thy suff'rings, death, and merit
I eternal life inherit.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.

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OLD TESTAMENT READING **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, "Behold, I am sending to you grain, wine, and oil, and you will be satisfied; and I will no more make you a reproach among the nations."

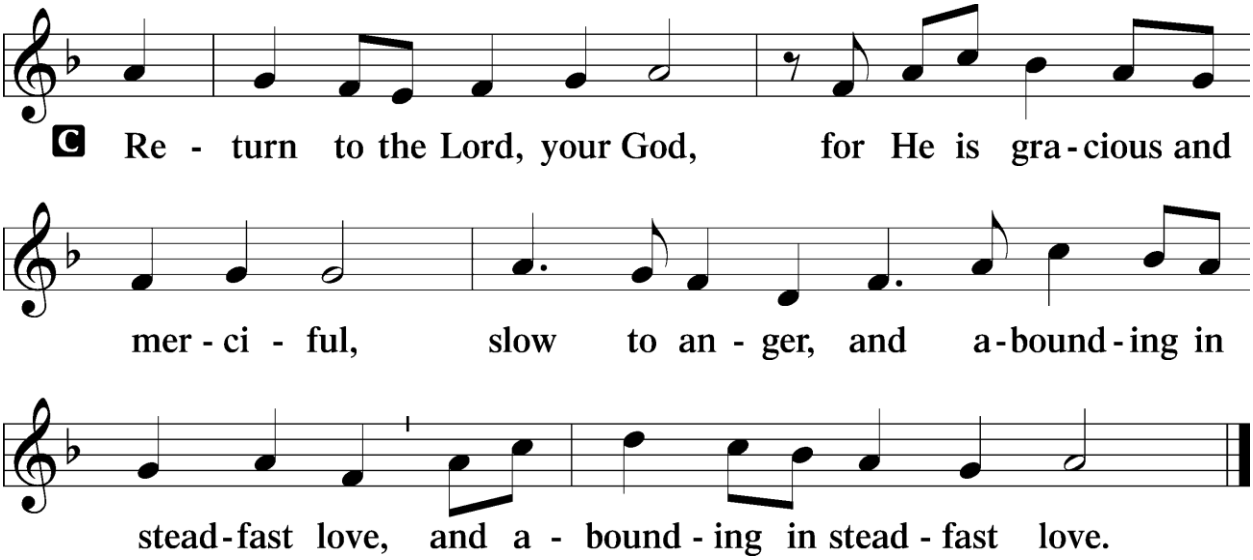
This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

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.

This is the Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

LENTEN VERSE **LSB 157**



HOLY GOSPEL **Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21**

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the sixth chapter.
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 by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, 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.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to You, O Christ.

Please be seated.

HYMN OF THE DAY **"Today Your Mercy Calls Us"** **LSB 915, v. 1**

Today Your mercy calls us to wash away our sin.
However great our trespass, whatever we have been,
However long from mercy, our hearts have turned away,
Your precious blood can wash us and make us clean today.

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SERMON **"That'll Leave a Mark"** **Pastor Snow**

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 the 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.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

As we travel through the penitential journey of Lent toward the Easter feast, let us turn to God who is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.

For the Church, marked with the sign of the cross, as we begin the journey to the celebration of our Lord's saving death and resurrection, let us pray to the Lord,
Lord, have mercy.

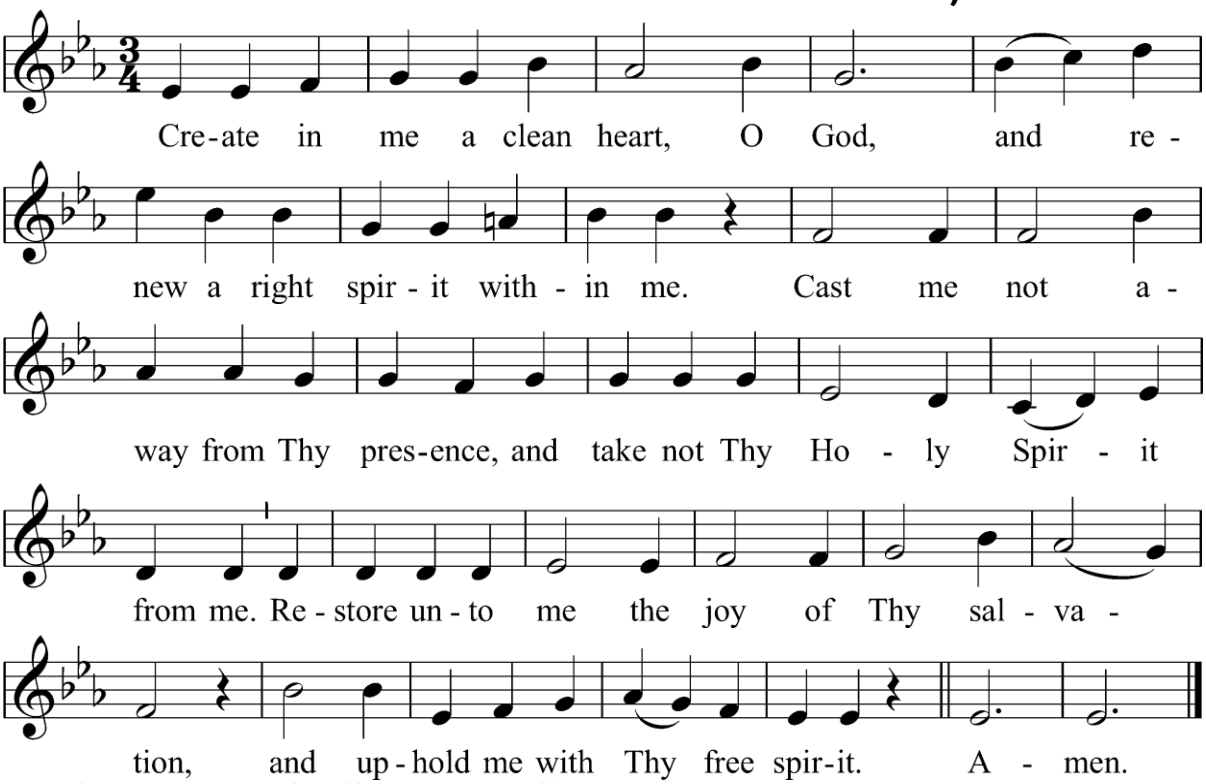
For all whom our world easily forgets: the hungry, the homeless, and the lonely. For those who experience heartache or sorrow, confusion, or despair. For those who suffer with sickness or physical injury, that they find balm and healing in Christ, let us pray to the Lord,
Lord, have mercy.

For ourselves as we fast, pray, and care for those in need, that others may see Christ in us and be drawn to the life-giving Gospel, let us pray to the Lord,
Lord, have mercy.

Gracious God, hear the prayers of Your people whose hunger and thirst You satisfy in Christ Jesus our Lord.
Amen.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY "Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God" LSB 192



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PREFACE

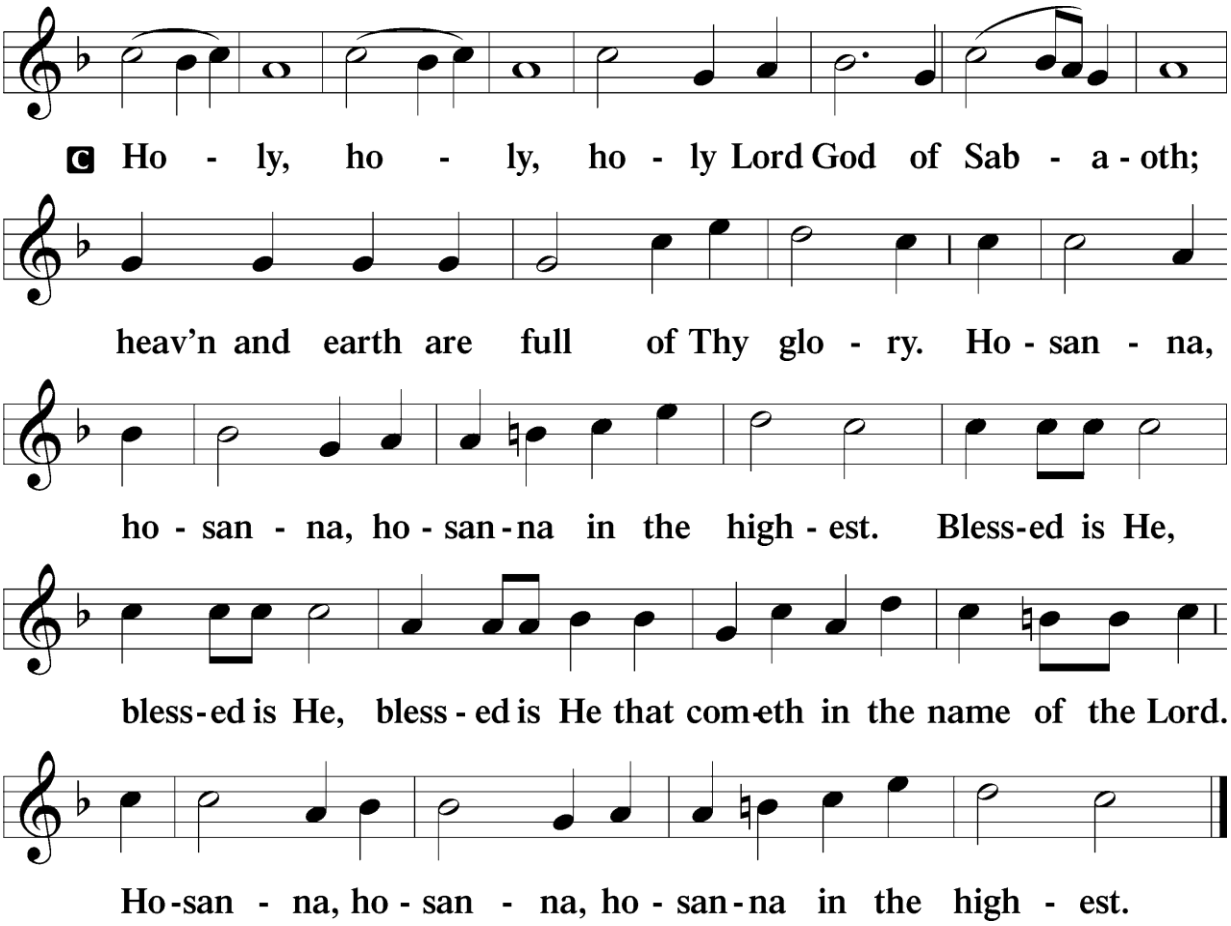
The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

It is good and right that we should at all times and in all places give You thanks and praise through Jesus Christ whom You sent to be our Savior and Redeemer. By His death upon the cross He has paid the cost of our redemption, and through His wounds we are healed. Therefore, with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and singing:

SANCTUS **LSB 195**



PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. We give You thanks that on Calvary You spared not Your only Son but sent Him to offer His life as a ransom for many. As we eat and drink His body and blood, grant us to trust in Your promise now fulfilled in Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

THE 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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

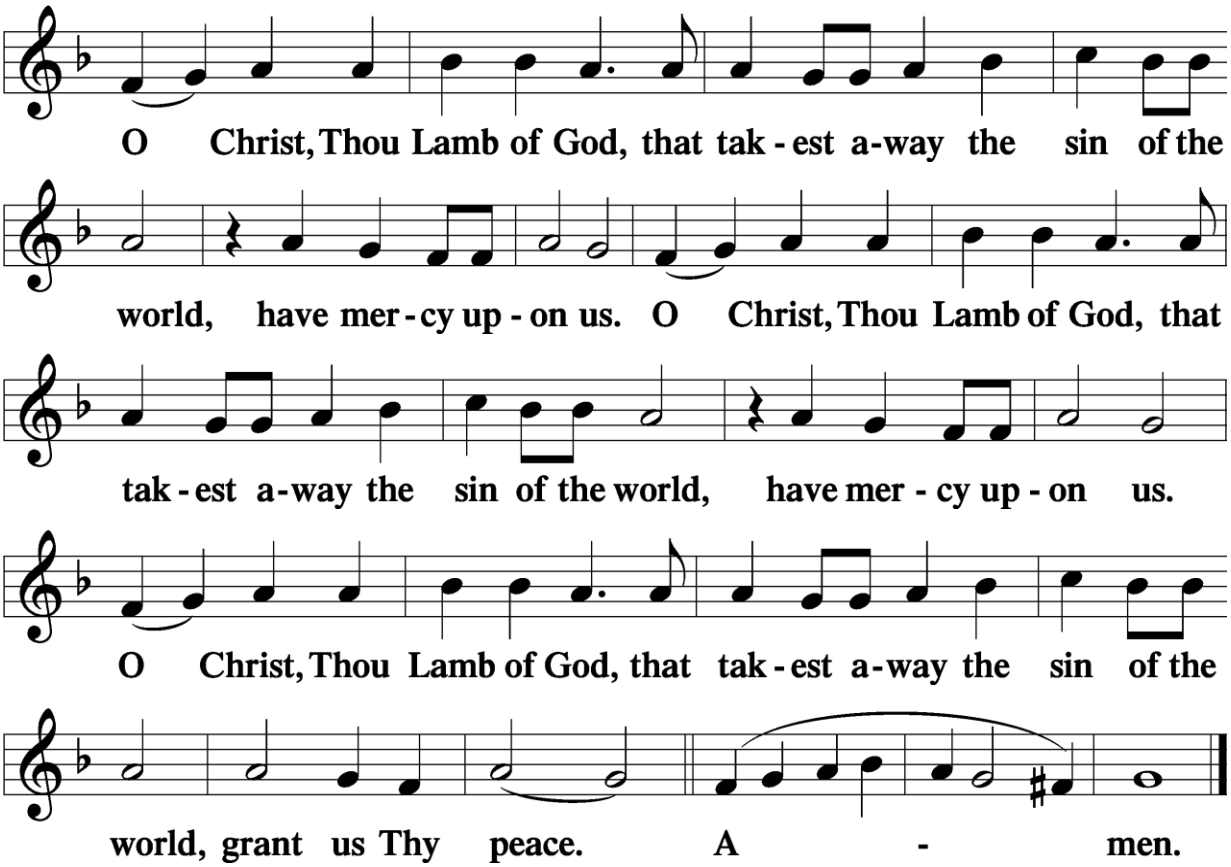
Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: Drink of it, all of you; this is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.

PAX DOMINI **LSB 197**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
Amen.

AGNUS DEI **LSB 198**



Please be seated.

COMMUNION AT ST. JOHN'S

The Lord's Supper is celebrated at this congregation in the confession and glad confidence that, as He says, our Lord gives into our mouths not only bread and wine, but His very body and blood. This we eat and drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with Him and with one another. Our Lord invites to His table those who trust His words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as He forgives and loves us, that they may show forth His death until He comes. Because those who eat and drink our Lord's body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm, and because Holy Communion is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar, any who are not yet instructed, in doubt, or who hold to a confession differing from that of this congregation and The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, and yet desire to receive the sacrament, are asked to first speak with the pastor or an elder. For further readings in Scripture, we suggest Matthew 5:23f.; 10:32f.; 18:15-35; 26:26-29; 1 Cor. 11:17-34.

· Communicants will receive elements in a continuous fashion.

· If you would like the pastor to bring communion to you, please inform an usher anytime during the service.

· Children of all ages may join their parents and receive a special blessing.

· For those who desire it, non-alcoholic wine is available in the center ring of the tray of individual cups.

DISTRIBUTION

CHORAL ANTHEM (6:30) "Jesus, Refuge of the Weary" arr. J.S. Bach

HYMN "Chief of Sinners Though I Be" LSB 611, vv. 3-5

Only Jesus can impart
Balm to heal the wounded heart,
Peace that flows from sin forgiv'n,
Joy that lifts the soul to heav'n,
Faith and hope to walk with God
In the way that Enoch trod.

Chief of sinners though I be,
Christ is all in all to me;
All my wants to Him are known,
All my sorrows are His own.
He sustains the hidden life
Safe with Him from earthly strife.

O my Savior, help afford
By Your Spirit and Your Word!
When my wayward heart would
stray, Keep me in the narrow way;
Grace in time of need supply
While I live and when I die.

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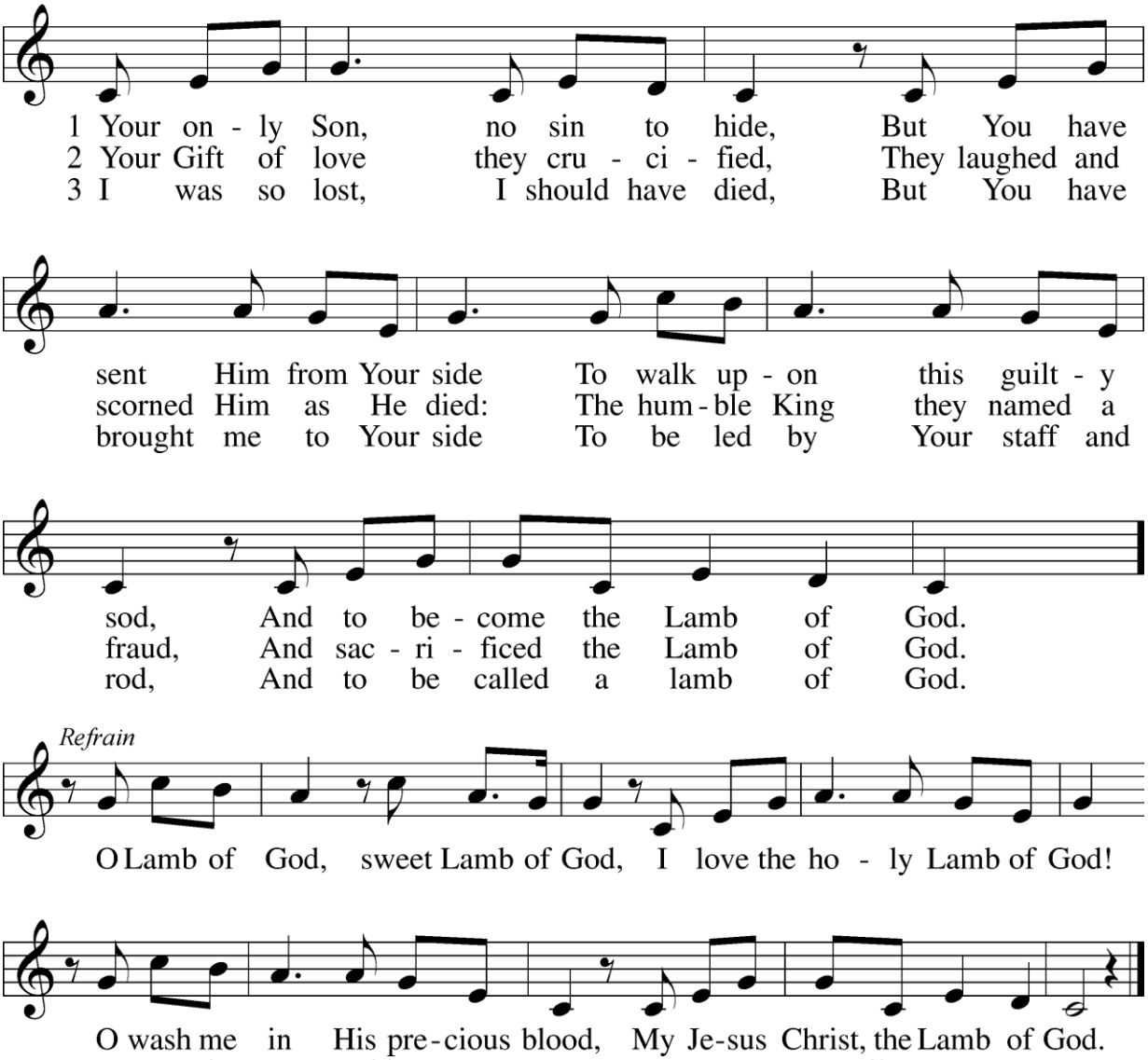
HYMN **“Lamb of God”** **LSB 550**



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HYMN **“Lord Jesus, Think on Me”** **LSB 610**

Lord Jesus, think on me
And purge away my sin;
From worldly passions set me free
And make me pure within.

Lord Jesus, think on me,
By anxious thoughts oppressed;
Let me Your loving servant be
And taste Your promised rest.

Lord Jesus, think on me
Amid the battle’s strife;
In all my pain and misery,
O be my health and life!

Lord Jesus, think on me
Nor let me go astray;
Through darkness and perplexity
Point out Your chosen way.

Lord Jesus, think on me
That, when this life is past,
I may the_eternal brightness see
And share Your joy at last.

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DISMISSAL

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

Almighty and everlasting God, as we begin our Lenten pilgrimage, we do so in a spirit of repentance. We are sinful and depend completely upon Your mercy. Strengthen us by Your Holy Spirit so that we might follow You in paths of righteousness. We pray through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

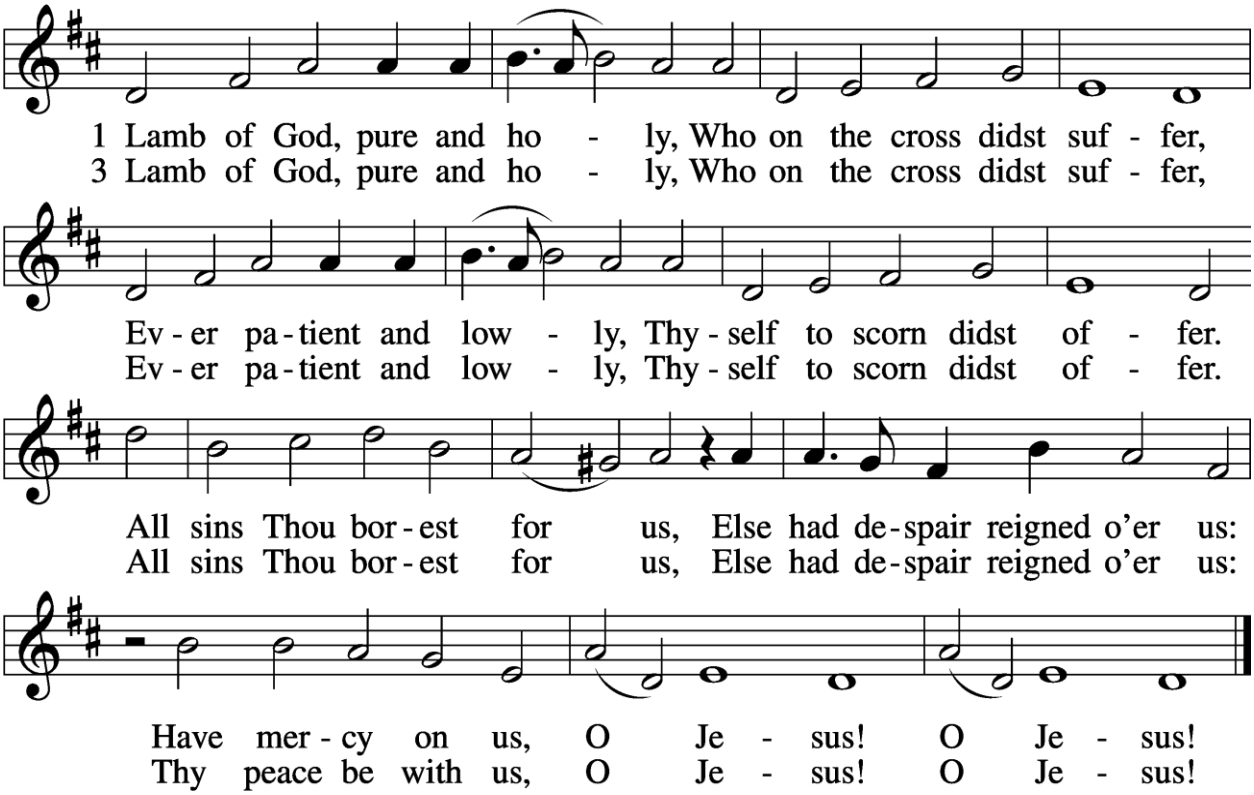
Amen.

BENEDICTION

May our merciful God, who is faithful and just to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness, empower you to live according to His good and gracious will, through Jesus Christ to whom be the glory forever.

Amen.

CLOSING HYMN "Lamb of God, Pure and Holy" LSB 434, vv. 1, 3



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SENDING

Go in peace, serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

THANK YOU FOR WORSHIPING WITH ST. JOHN'S TODAY! If this is your first time at St. John's, we invite you to fill out a CONNECTCard located at the Welcome Desk or by using the QR code. We look forward to CONNECT-ing with you.

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WORSHIP LEADERS
Preacher: Pastor Snow
Liturgist: Pastor Barry
Pianist: Kristin Johnson
Soloist: Elizabeth Hennen (4:15)
Choir: Women's Choir, directed by Dr. Katie Rolf (6:30)

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS
Acolytes: 4:15 Nolan Buesgens/6:30 Zoey Lewis
Communion Assistants: 4:15 Chris Mundahl, Daniel Schlueter, Bruce Wolf
6:30 Jon DeBoer, Zac Lewis, Ben Wiegert
Elders: 4:15 Brian Honebrink/6:30 Pete Siedelman
Usher Team: 4:15 Ted Beise, Craig Pauling/6:30 Mark Young
Welcome Team: 4:15 Jana Beckendorf, Gary Herber
Tech Crew: 4:15 Buesgens Family/6:30 Jason Eickhoff

Season of Lent at St. John's

Sundays of Lent
February 22, March 1, 8, 15 & 22
8:00am, 9:30am, & 10:45am

Lenten Midweek Worship
February 25, March 4, 11, 18, & 25
4:15pm & 6:30pm

No Lenten meals due to ongoing renovations.