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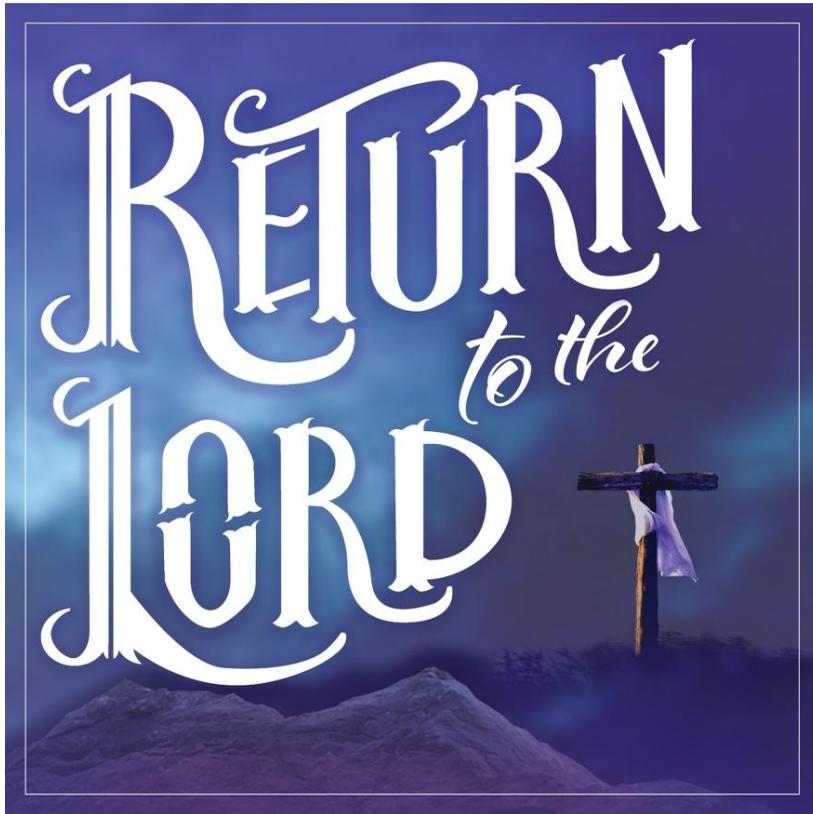
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February 18, 2026

Ash Wednesday



✠ Preparation for Worship: Read Psalm 51 (Lutheran Service Book or Pew Bible) ✠

Ash Wednesday Greeting and prayer: (Pastor)

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.

For centuries the season of Lent has been kept as a time of special devotion, self-denial, and humble repentance born of a faithful heart that dwells confidently on God's Word and draws from it life and hope.

In the Bible, ashes symbolize repentance. Today is called "Ash Wednesday" as a call to repentance and a reminder that "we are dust and to dust we shall return." Many Christians place ashes on their foreheads today to symbolize this, and these ashes are in the shape of a cross, as a reminder that through the cross of Christ our sins are forgiven.

Let us pray that our Savior would richly bless this Lenten season for us, and may He move each one of us by His Holy Spirit, as we will hear the prophet Joel direct us tonight, to "Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love" (Joel 2:13). Let us pray...

P Steadfast Lord, You remain a solid foundational rock, even when we are shaky and weak. We thank and praise You for Your gracious invitation to return to You, not only during this Lenten season, but day by day. We are prone to wander. Yet Your love for us never wavers, and You constantly call us to return to You. Bless our Lenten journey. Let it be for us a time of daily returning to You, that we may be Your own and live under You in Your kingdom and serve You in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness. We pray this through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Opening Hymn: 418 *O Lord, Throughout These Forty Days*

LSB 418

SERVICE OF THE WORD

Invocation

We invoke ("call upon") the name of the one true God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

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

C Amen.

Confession and Absolution

We come before our Holy God recognizing that we are sinful and daily need His forgiveness.

P Return to the LORD, your God,

C **for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger,
and abounding in steadfast love.** (Joel 2:13)

P Let us confess our sins to God our Father.

C **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean.
We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved You with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment.
For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us.
Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will
and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

P In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for His sake God forgives us all our sins. To those who believe in Jesus Christ He gives the power to become the children of God and gives them the Holy Spirit. May the Lord, who has begun this good work in us, bring it to completion in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C Amen.

Psalm of Repentance – Psalm 51:1-3; 7-9 (Worship Supplement – p. 28)

HAVE MERCY UPON ME, O GOD

Antiphon



Psalm Tone



Have mercy upon me, Ó God,*
According to Your loving kindness;
According to the multitude of Your tender mercies,*
Blot out my transgressions.
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,*
And cleanse me from my sin.
For I acknowledge my transgressions,*
And my sin is ever before me.

Antiphon

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;*
Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
Make me to hear joy and gladness,*
That the bones which You have broken may rejoice.
Hide Your face from my sins,*
And blot out all my iniquities.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,*
is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Antiphon

Prayer of the Day

P We pray:

Merciful God, You call us to turn from sin, turn to You, and live. Help us to recognize our sin for what it is, confess it to You, and then receive the forgiveness of our sins accomplished by our Lord Jesus on the cross; who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. We pray this through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

G Amen.

Scripture Reading

THE PASSION HISTORY OF CHRIST - Part 1

When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out to the Mount of Olives as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him. And Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee."

But Peter answered and said to Him, "Even though all may fall away because of You, I will never fall away."

And Jesus said to him, "Truly I say to you that today, even this night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times."

But Peter spoke more vehemently: "Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You." And so said all the disciples.

They went over the brook Kidron, and they came to a garden named Gethsemane. When He came to the place, Jesus said to His disciples: "Sit here while I go and pray over there. Pray that you may not enter into temptation."

And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, James and John, and He was withdrawn from the others about a stone's throw. And He began to be sorrowful, troubled, and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me."

And He went a little farther, and He knelt down. He fell to the ground on His face and prayed, that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. And He said: "Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will. Not My will, but Yours, be done."

Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. And being in agony He prayed more fervently; and His sweat became like great drops of blood, falling down to the ground.

When He rose up from prayer, He came to His disciples and found them sleeping from sorrow. He said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? What, could you not watch with Me one hour?" He said

to them, "Why do you sleep? Rise, watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing and ready, but the flesh is weak."

He went away again a second time and prayed, saying the same words, "O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done."

And He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him. So He left them and went away again and prayed the third time, saying the same words once more. Then He came to His disciples the third time, and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough. Behold, the hour has come; it is at hand. Behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up, let us be going. Behold, he who betrays Me is at hand."

Choir Song: "Rock of Ages"

Rock of Ages cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood, From Thy wounded side that flowed,
Be of sin the double cure: Save from wrath and make me pure.

All the labors of my hands could not meet Thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know, Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone, Thou must save, and Thou alone.

Nothing in my hand I bring, Simply to the cross I cling;
Naked here before your face, Helpless I cry out for grace;
Foul, I to the fountain fly, Wash me Savior, or I die.

While I draw this fleeting breath, When my eyes will close in death;
When I soar to worlds unknown, see Thee on Thy judgment throne;
Rock of Ages cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee.

Scripture Reading THE PASSION HISTORY OF CHRIST - Part 1(continued)

Now Judas, one of the twelve, who betrayed Jesus, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples. Then Judas, having received a detachment of troops and officers from the chief priests and the scribes and the Pharisees and elders of the people, came there with lanterns and torches, and weapons: swords and clubs. And immediately, while Jesus was still speaking, a great multitude came, and the one called Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them and went before them. Now he who betrayed Jesus had given them a sign, saying, "Whomever I kiss, He is the one; take Him, and lead Him away safely."

Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, "Whom are you seeking?"

They answered Him, "Jesus of Nazareth."

Jesus said to them, "I am He." Then, when He said to them, "I am He," they went backward and fell to the ground.

Then He asked them again, "Whom are you seeking?"

And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth."

Jesus answered, "I told you that I am He; therefore if you seek Me, let these go their way," that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, "Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none."

Judas drew near to Jesus to kiss Him. He went up to Him, and said to Him, "Hail, Master!" and kissed Him. And Jesus said to him, "Friend, why have you come? Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

When those who were around Jesus saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, "Lord, shall we strike with the sword?" Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him. And suddenly Simon Peter, one of those who stood by with Jesus, stretched out his hand and drew out his sword, and struck the high priest's servant and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

But Jesus answered and said, "Permit even this!" And He touched his ear and healed him. Then Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into the sheath; for all who take the sword will die by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? But how then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus? Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given me?"

In that hour Jesus said to the chief priests and captains of the temple and elders who had come to Him, "Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? I sat daily with you in the temple, teaching, and you did not lay hands on Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness. All this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. The Scriptures must be fulfilled.

Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled. Now a certain young man followed Him, having a linen cloth thrown around his naked body; and the young men laid hold of him. And he left the linen cloth and fled from them naked.

P Here ends our Passion History reading.

**C All we like sheep have gone astray,
and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.
By his wounds we are healed.**

Confession of Faith: 2nd Article of the Apostle's Creed (Luther's Catechism, Sydow p. 87)

**C "I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried;
He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead;
He ascended into heaven**

→

and sits on the right hand of God, the Father Almighty;
from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity,
and also true man, born of the virgin Mary is my Lord.

He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person,
purchased and won me from all sin, from death,
and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver,
but with His holy, precious blood and His innocent suffering and death.

He did this that I should be His very own, live under Him in His kingdom,
and serve Him in eternal righteousness, innocence, and joy;
just as He is risen from death, lives and reigns in eternity.

This is most certainly true!"

Hymn of the Day: 616 *Baptismal Waters Cover Me*

LSB 616

Sermon Text: Joel 2:12-13 (ESV)

¹² Even now, declares the LORD, return to me with all your heart,
with fasting and weeping and grief.

¹³ Tear your heart and not your clothing.
Return to the LORD your God,
for he is gracious and compassionate,
slow to anger and abounding in mercy,
and he relents from sending disaster.

Sermon Theme: "Return to the LORD" – A Call to Return

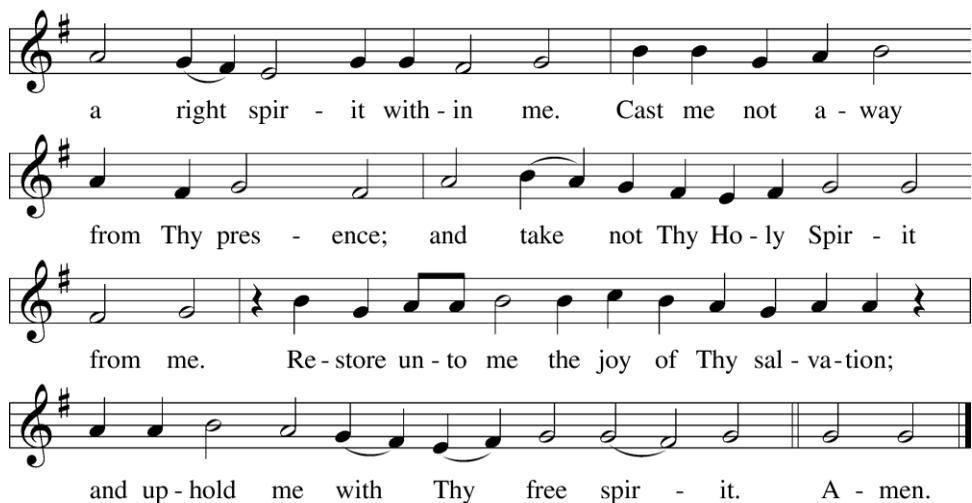
Notes:



Offertory

LSB 956





a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way
 from Thy pres - ence; and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it
 from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va - tion;
 and up - hold me with Thy free spir - it. A - men.

Text & Tune: Public Domain

Sermon Hymn: "Break Your Hearts"



1 Break your hearts with mourn - ing And your pride in two,
 2 See your Sav - ior dy - ing, Hung up - on the tree.
 3 Gath - er all in num - ber From both far and near;
 Ash and grief a - dorn - ing Your re - pen - tance true.
 It is vain de - ny - ing What is plain to see:
 E - ven those in slum - ber Wait for trum - pets clear.
 With your tears and fast - ing, From your God dis - cern
 While His heart is break - ing, Still your God will earn
 When the Lord grants bless - ing, Bro - ken hearts will learn
 His ways ev - er - last - ing: To your Lord re - turn.
 Free - dom in the mak - ing. To your Lord re - turn.
 Joy be - yond ex - press - ing; To your Lord re - turn.

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Offering *We offer our gifts to the Lord, remembering that He has first given to us that we might have to give to Him.*

Prayer of the Church *We bring our prayers to God.*

P With repentant hearts, we turn to You, O God in prayer, for the Church, the world, and all who are in need, trusting that You, O God are gracious and merciful to us in Jesus, abounding in steadfast love.

For the Church, that this Lenten season draws us closer to You, O God and to one another as we focus on Jesus' redemptive acts for us and the life that He calls us to live—marked by repentance, prayer, and acts of love toward our neighbors.

C In prayer, and with repentant hearts, we return to You, O Lord.

P For leaders throughout the world, that all leaders—national, regional, and local—serve with wisdom, uphold justice, and provide means of caring for those most vulnerable among us, including the homeless, the unborn and the elderly.

C In prayer, and with repentant hearts, we return to You, O Lord.

P For those in our community who struggle with poverty, addiction, or unemployment, that during this Lenten time, You reenergize Your Church to serve them and love our neighbors in need as You loved and served the poor and outcast during Your earthly ministry.

C In prayer, and with repentant hearts, we return to You, O Lord.

P For those who are sick, injured, hospitalized, or dying, that they experience healing according to Your will, and that in the midst of their suffering they would experience the presence of Jesus in His Words of hope and acts of love by the people He sends to care for them.

C In prayer, and with repentant hearts, we return to You, O Lord.

P For this congregation, that our focused repentance, reflection on Your Word, and prayer lead us to live in renewed ways, dying to sin with Christ in Holy Baptism each day, and being raised to new life every day and into eternity.

C In prayer, and with repentant hearts, we return to You, O Lord.

P For our loved ones who faithfully followed Jesus in this life and are now with Him in heaven, we give You thanks. Bring us to that day when all Your believers, past, present, and future, are returned to You for all eternity.

C **With repentant hearts, we return to You, O Lord.**

P By the words of the prophet Joel and by the living voice of Jesus in our ears, You call us to return to You, O Lord. According to Your gracious mercy and abounding love, hear these prayers that we have spoken, as well as the prayers we have that are too deep for words, we now bring to You our personal confessions and prayers...

(silent prayer and personal confession)

Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Your Son, Jesus, Who also taught us to pray:

Lord's Prayer

LSB 209

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.**

Service of the Sacrament

*Now we approach the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in which Jesus comes to bless us with His very body and blood.
We move toward the Sacrament with prayers of thanksgiving and songs of adoration.*

The Words of Institution

The words spoken by Jesus the night He instituted the Lord's Supper, by which our Lord assured to His Church the real presence of His body and blood in the Sacrament.

Prayer Before the Lord's Supper

Adapted from The Lutheran Hymnal, p. 4

C **Dear Savior, upon Your gracious invitation I come to Your altar.
Let me find favor in Your eyes that I may approach Your table in true faith
and receive the Lord's Supper for the forgiveness of my sins and the
strengthening of my faith. Amen**

P The peace of the Lord be with you always!

G Amen.

Hymn of Preparation - 628 v. 1-3 "Your Table I Approach"

LSB 628 v. 1-3



1 Your ta - ble I ap - proach; Dear Sav - ior, hear my prayer.
2 Lord, I con - fess my sins And mourn their wretch - ed bands;
3 Your bod - y and Your blood, Once slain and shed for me,



Let not an un - re - pen - tant heart Prove hurt - ful to me there.
A con - trite heart is sure to find For - give - ness at Your hands.
Are tak - en at Your ta - ble, Lord, In blest re - al - i - ty.

Text: Gerhard Wolter Molanus, 1633–1722; tr. Matthias Loy, 1828–1915, alt.

Tune: Trente quatre Pseaumes de David, 1551, Geneva, ed. Louis Bourgeois Text and tune: Public domain

The Distribution

- † For the distribution we will start with those who would like to partake of the Lord's Supper from the pew. After that, those who would like to come up to the altar steps will partake as directed by our ushers.

Note to our Guests: We are so glad you are worshiping with us this morning. The Word of God treats the Lord's Supper with great care. The Word of God considers the Lord's Supper to be a wonderful Means of Grace – a way in which Christ forgives and blesses. It is also considered an opportunity for congregations to express unity and oneness (1 Corinthians 10:16-17) – that is, to say to the world "This is what we believe!" But God's Word also warns against taking the Sacrament to our judgment (1 Corinthians 11:27-30). For these reasons our congregation asks that you fully understand our teachings before partaking. We respectfully ask that those who have joined this congregation through public confession of faith, or who are members of another congregation of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC) approach the altar at the usher's direction. By following this practice we do not make any judgment on your faith. Rather we do this out of love for you, as a public confession of our unity, and out of obedience to and love for God's Word. Speak to our pastor anytime and he will be glad to provide the information you would need – and want. We look forward to communing together, Lord willing, in the future.

Communion Hymns: 608 LSB; 610 LSB

Prayer of Thanksgiving After the Lord's Supper

C Forgiven God, we thank You for providing Christ's body and blood as nourishment tonight and throughout our Lenten journey. As we travel through these forty days, guide us to greater depth and breadth in following Jesus, that as the Body of Christ, our witness to the love of Jesus may permeate the world. We pray this through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

P Go in peace. Serve the Lord with gladness!

The Thanksgiving - 632 O Jesus, Blessed Lord, to Thee

LSB 632

1 O Je - sus, bless - ed Lord, to Thee My heart - felt
2 Break forth, my soul, for joy and say: What wealth is
thanks for - ev - er be, Who hast so lov - ing -
come to me this day! My Sav - ior dwells with -
ly be - stowed On me Thy bod - y and Thy blood.
in my heart: How blessed am I! How good Thou art!

Text: Thomas Hansen Kingo, 1634–1703; tr. Arthur J. Mason, 1851–1928
Tune: Trente quatre Pseaumes de David, 1551, Geneva, ed. Louis Bourgeois Text and tune: Public domain

Benediction *The blessing given by God for the blessing of His people (Numbers 6:24-26).*

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 upon you and ✠ give you peace.

C A - men, a - men, a - men.

Closing Hymn: "Before the Throne of God Above" (please stand for last verse) 561 CW21

1 Be - fore the throne of God a - bove I have a strong and per - fect
 2 When Sa - tan tempts me to de - spair and tells me of the guilt with -
 3 Be - hold him there, the ris - en Lamb, my per - fect, spot - less right - eous -

plea; a great High Priest whose name is Love, who ev - er lives and pleads for
 in, up - ward I look and see him there who made an end of all my
 ness, the great un - change - a - ble I AM, the King of glo - ry and of

me. My name is grav - en on his hands, my name is writ - ten on his
 sin. Be - cause the sin - less Sav - ior died, my sin - ful soul is count - ed
 grace. At one with him, I can - not die; my soul is pur - chased by his

heart. I know that while in heav'n he stands no tongue can
 free; for God the just is sat - is - fied to look on
 blood. My life is hid with Christ on high, with Christ my

bid me thence de - part, no tongue can bid me thence de - part.
 him and par - don me, to look on him and par - don me.
 Sav - ior and my God, with Christ my Sav - ior and my God.

Text: Charitie Lees DeCheney Bancroft, 1841–1923
 Music: Vikki Cook, b. 1960
 Text: public domain
 Music: © 1997 Sovereign Grace Worship (ASCAP) (adm. at CapitolCMGPublishing.com)

Announcements



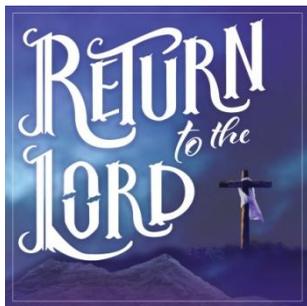
Welcome! We welcome all our visitors this evening.
 Please sign our guest book and come worship with us again soon.

This Week: Thursday – **Church Council Meeting – 6pm**

Church Cleaning: Team #7 (2/14-2/20), Team #8 (2/21-2/27)

Sunday: **Choir – 8am**
Worship – 9am
Sunday School & Bible Class – 10:15am
Sunday School Teachers’ Meeting – 11:15am

Wednesday Lent Worship Services / Preaching Schedule (2/18 – 3/25) @ 6:30pm



Please make plans to join us for our Wednesday Lent worship services **at 6:30pm**. The theme of our Wednesday Lent series this year is **“Return to the Lord.”** The theme comes from Joel 2:13 “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” (Joel 2:13). God’s invitation and promise finds its fullness in Jesus Christ, who personifies and accomplishes all that God declares. During this season of Lent, we will consider this theme “Return to the Lord,” and examine how the call to return played out in practical ways for the

people who walked alongside Christ as He demonstrated and carried out God’s grace and mercy on our behalf, taking God’s wrath upon Himself, setting the stage for God to “turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind Him” (Joel 2:14). →

Each sermon in this series focuses on a particular event in the Passion, with a special focus on the people involved in the event. We pray that by studying the events and people of various parts of Jesus' Passion this helps us to see how we too have turned away from the Lord, and to reinforce and rejoice in God's call for us to return to Him with all our heart.

Preaching at Messiah Next Wednesday:
February 25th – Pastor Luke Bernthal

Sermon Theme: "Return from Denial"

Peter stands in the courtyard, watching his Lord and master being wrongfully accused, having promised that he was ready to follow Jesus both to prison and to death. But when asked directly, Peter denies Jesus. But Jesus will have the last word. He calls us to return to Him . . . to return from denial.