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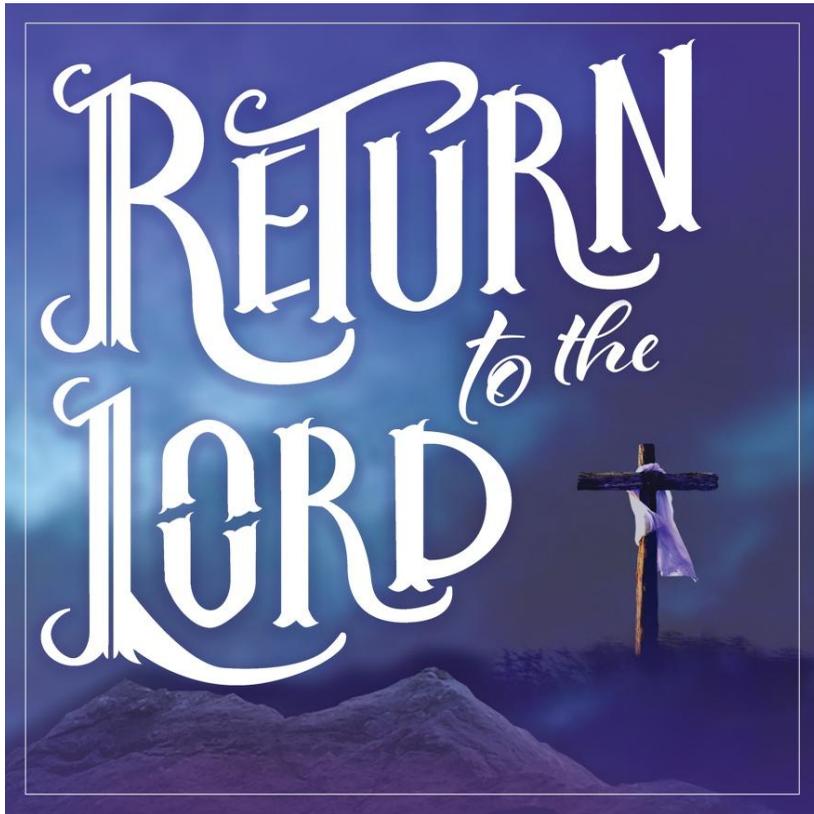
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February 25, 2026

Wednesday Lent 2



✠ Preparation for Worship: Read Psalm 118 (Lutheran Service Book or Pew Bible) ✠

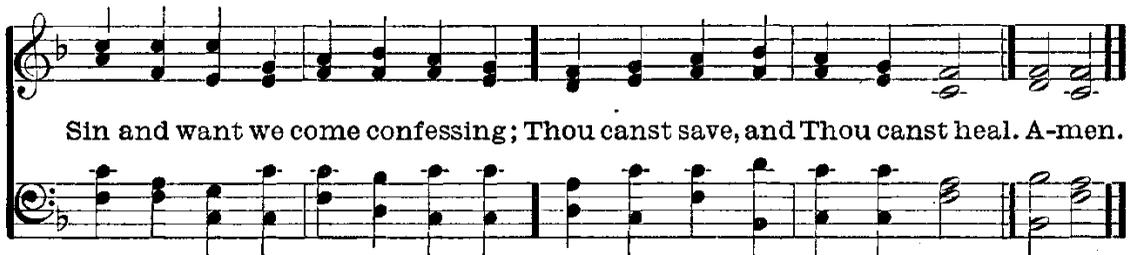
**Greeting and prayer:** (Pastor)

**Opening Hymn: "Savior, Breathe an Evening Blessing"**

TLH 565 (1<sup>st</sup> tune)



1 Sav - ior, breathe an eve - ning bless - ing Ere re - pose our spir - its seal.



Sin and want we come confessing; Thou canst save, and Thou canst heal. A - men.

2 Though destruction walk around us,      3 Though the night be dark and dreary,  
    Though the arrows past us fly,              Darkness cannot hide from Thee;  
Angel guards from Thee surround us;      Thou art He who, never weary,  
    We are safe if Thou art nigh.              Watcheth where Thy people be.

4 Should swift death this night o’ertake us  
    And our couch become our tomb,  
    May the morn in heaven awake us,  
    Clad in light and deathless bloom.

## **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 the Day – Psalm 118:19-29 (Responsive)

**P** Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the LORD.

**C** **This is the gate of the LORD; the righteous shall enter through it.**

**P** I thank You that You have answered me and have become my salvation.

**C** **The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.**

**P** This is the LORD's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.

**C** **This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.**

**P** Save us, we pray, O LORD! O LORD, we pray, give us success!

**C** **Blessèd is He who comes in the name of the LORD!  
We bless You from the house of the LORD.**

**P** The LORD is God, and He has made His light to shine upon us. Bind the festal sacrifice with cords, up to the horns of the altar!

**C** **You are my God, and I will give thanks to You; You are my God; I will extol You.**

**P** Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good;

**C** **for His steadfast love endures forever!**

### **Prayer of the Day**

**P** We pray:

Lord Jesus Christ, grant us love for You and firmness of faith that we may resist the temptation to deny You and compromise our confession of faith. Strengthen us on the journey of life that we may always walk with You and joyfully acknowledge You as our Savior, in whom is all our hope. This we ask in Your precious and mighty name, for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** **Amen.**

### **Scripture Reading**

### **THE PASSION HISTORY OF CHRIST - Part 2**

Then the detachment of troops and the captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound Him. And they led Him away and brought Him into the high priest's house. They led Him to Annas first; for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. Now it was Caiaphas who gave counsel to the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

And Simon Peter followed Jesus at a distance, and so did the other disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest. But Peter stood at the door outside. Then the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to her who kept the door and brought Peter in, right into the courtyard of the high priest.

And the servants and officers, who had made a fire of coals in the midst of the courtyard, stood there; for it was cold. And they warmed themselves. And Peter stood with them and warmed himself at the fire. And after they had sat down together, Peter sat down with the servants to see the end.

The high priest then asked Jesus about His disciples and His doctrine. Jesus answered him, "I spoke openly to the world; I always taught in synagogues, and in the temple, where the Jews always meet, and in secret I have said nothing. Why do you ask Me? Ask those who have heard Me what I said to them; indeed they know what I said."

And when He had said these things, one of the officers who stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, "Do You answer the high priest like that?"

Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why do you strike Me?"

Then Annas sent Jesus bound to Caiaphas the high priest; and with him were assembled all the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes. And the chief priests, the elders, and all the council sought false testimony against Jesus to put Him to death; and found none, even though many false witnesses came forward. For many bore false witness against Him, but their testimonies did not agree.

But at last two false witnesses came forward and bore false witness against Him, saying, "This Fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.' We heard Him say, 'I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.'" But not even then did their testimony agree.

And the high priest stood up in the midst and asked Jesus, saying, "Do You answer nothing? What is it that these men testify against You?"

But Jesus kept silent and answered nothing.

And the high priest asked Him, saying to Him, "I adjure You by the living God that You tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God, the Son of the Blessed?"

And Jesus said, "I am. It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven."

Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, "He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Behold, now you have heard His blasphemy. What do you think?"

And they all condemned Him to be worthy of death. They answered and said, "He is deserving of death!"

Then some began to spit in His face. And the men who held Jesus mocked Him. They blindfolded Him and struck Him in the face and asked Him, "Prophecy to us, Christ; who is the one that struck You?" And many other things they blasphemously spoke against Him. And the officers struck Him with the palms of their hands.

Now Peter was sitting outside, below in the courtyard. And a certain servant-girl, one of the servant-girls of the high priest, the one who kept the door, saw Peter warming himself as he sat by the fire. She came to him and said, "You are not also one of this Man's disciples, are you?"

He said, "I am not."

She said, "You also were with Jesus of Galilee." She looked intently at him and said, "This man was also with Him."

But Peter denied it before them all, saying, "Woman, I do not know Him; I neither know nor understand what you are saying."

And he went out on the porch. And a rooster crowed.

And after a little while, when he had gone out to the gateway, another servant-girl saw him and began to say to those who stood by, "This fellow also was with Jesus of Nazareth. This is one of them."

Now Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. Therefore they said to him, "You are not also one of His disciples, are you?" One saw him and said, "You also are of them."

And again he denied it with an oath. He said, "Man, I am not. I do not know the Man."

Then after about an hour had passed, another confidently affirmed, saying, "Surely this fellow also was with Him; for he is a Galilean." Those who stood by said to Peter: "Surely you are one of them; for you are a Galilean, and your speech shows it." One of the servants of the high priest, a relative of him whose ear Peter cut off, said, "Did I not see you in the garden with him?"

Peter therefore denied it again. He said, "Man, I do not know what you are saying." He began to curse and swear, "I do not know the Man. I do not know this Man of whom you speak."

And immediately, while he was still speaking, a rooster crowed a second time. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter called to mind the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, "Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times."

And when Peter thought about it, he went out and wept bitterly.

Immediately in the morning, as soon as it was day, the elders of the people, both chief priests and scribes, came together. They took counsel against Jesus to put Him to death. They held a consultation with the elders and the scribes and the whole council.

They led Jesus into their council, saying, "If You are the Christ, tell us."

But He said to them, "If I tell you, you will by no means believe; and if I also ask you, you will by no means answer Me or let Me go. Hereafter the Son of Man will sit on the right hand of the power of God."

Then they all said, "Are You then the Son of God?"

And He said to them, "You rightly say that I am."

And they said, "What further testimony do we need? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth."

**P** Here ends our Passion History reading.

**G 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: 2<sup>nd</sup> Article of the Apostle's Creed** (Luther's Catechism, Sydow p. 87)

**G "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: 449 Oh Sacred Head, Now Wounded**

*LSB 449*

**Sermon Text: Luke 22:54-62 (EHV)**

<sup>54</sup> Then they seized Him and led Him away, bringing Him into the high priest's house, and Peter was following at a distance. <sup>55</sup> And when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat down among them. <sup>56</sup> Then a servant girl, seeing him as he sat in the light and looking closely at him, said, "This man also was with Him." <sup>57</sup> But he denied it, saying, "Woman, I do not know Him." <sup>58</sup> And a little later someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not." <sup>59</sup> And after an interval of about an hour still another insisted, saying, "Certainly this man also was with Him, for he too is a Galilean." <sup>60</sup> But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about." And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. <sup>61</sup> And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how He had said to him, "Before the rooster crows today, you will deny Me three times." <sup>62</sup> And he went out and wept bitterly.

**Sermon Theme: "Return to the LORD" – Return from Denial**

**Notes:**



## Offertory

LSB 956



Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new  
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: 451 *Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted*

LSB 451

**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.

In all time of our tribulation; in all time of our prosperity; in the hour of death; and in the Day of Judgment:

- C** **We implore you to hear us and help us, good Lord.**

- P** To rule and govern Your holy Christian Church; to preserve all pastors and teachers of Your Church in the true knowledge and understanding of Your Holy Word and to sustain them in godly living;

To put an end to all divisions and causes of offense; to bring into the way of truth all who have erred and are deceived;

To defeat Satan and his evil schemes; to send faithful laborers into Your harvest; and to accompany Your Word with Your grace and Spirit:

**C We implore you to hear us and help us, good Lord.**

**P** To raise those who fall and to strengthen those who stand; and to comfort and help the weak-hearted and the distressed; to move in the hearts of those who have wandered from You and have stayed away from Your house of worship to “return to you” and be reminded once again that You are merciful and gracious, forgiving, and abounding in steadfast love:

**C We implore you to hear us and help us, good Lord.**

**P** To give to all people peace; to preserve our land from discord and strife; to give our country Your protection in every time of need; To direct and defend our president and all who are in authority in every level of our government; to bless and protect those who guard and defend us; To watch over and help all who are in danger, in need, and in tribulation; to protect and guide all who travel; To grant all women with child, and all mothers with infants and young children, increasing happiness in their blessings; to defend all orphans and widows and provide for them; To strengthen and keep all those who are sick and suffering; to free those in bondage; and to have mercy on us all:

**C We implore you to hear us and help us, good Lord.**

**P** To forgive our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers and to turn their hearts to You; to give and preserve for our use the good fruits of the earth; and graciously to hear our prayers:

**C We implore you to hear us and help us, good Lord.**

**P** We now pray together Luther’s Evening Prayer:

**C I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.**

**P** We now bring to You, O Lord, 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.**

**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: 611 Chief of Sinners Though I Be** *(please stand for last verse)*

LSB 611

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## Announcements



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

Church Cleaning: Team #8 (2/21-2/27); Team #9 (2/28-3/6)

Sunday: **Choir – 8am**  
3/1/26 **Worship w/ Communion – 9am**  
**Sunday School & Bible Class – 10:15am**

## **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:**

**March 4<sup>th</sup> – “Return from Betrayal” – Pastor Mike Gurath**

(Peace Thru Christ, Middleton, WI)

✝ **March 11<sup>th</sup> – “Return to Prayer” – Pastor Terrel Kesterson** (Ascension, Batavia, IL)

✝ **March 18<sup>th</sup> – “Return from False Witness” – Pastor Andy Schaller**

(Luther Memorial, Fond du Lac, WI)

✝ **March 25<sup>th</sup> – “Return to the Kingdom of God” – Pastor Luke Bernthal**