

**Wednesday Lenten Series**  
**March 25, 2026**  
**10:00 am and 6:30 pm**



Zion Lutheran Church  
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Sioux Falls, SD 57105  
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[www.zlcsf.org](http://www.zlcsf.org)

## **ORDER OF WORSHIP**

### **WELCOME and REGISTER ATTENDANCE**

#### **OPENING WORDS**

Pastor: Even after returning from exile, Israel's deepest captivity remains: the hardened, unresponsive heart that cannot keep God's covenant. The problem is no longer Babylon—it is within. Sin is not just what we do; it is what we are. Into this hopelessness, God announces the New Covenant—a promise to give His people a new heart, a new spirit, and forgiveness that will not be revoked. This promise leads directly into Holy Week, where Christ establishes the new covenant in His blood.

#### **OPENING HYMN**: LSB 423 Jesus, Refuge of the Weary

- 1 Jesus, refuge of the weary,  
Blest Redeemer, whom we love,  
Fountain in life's desert dreary,  
Savior from the world above:  
Often have Your eyes, offended,  
Gazed upon the sinner's fall;  
Yet upon the cross extended,  
You have borne the pain of all.
  
- 2 Do we pass that cross unheeding,  
Breathing no repentant vow,  
Though we see You wounded, bleeding,  
See Your thorn-encircled brow?  
Yet Your sinless death has brought us  
Life eternal, peace, and rest;  
Only what Your grace has taught us  
Calms the sinner's deep distress.

3 Jesus, may our hearts be burning  
With more fervent love for You;  
May our eyes be ever turning  
To behold Your cross anew  
Till in glory, parted never  
From the blessèd Savior's side,  
Graven in our hearts forever,  
Dwell the cross, the Crucified.

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## **INVOCATION**

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

## **OPENING SENTENCES**

Pastor: For our sake God made Jesus to be sin who knew no sin,

**People: so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.**

Pastor: But He was wounded for our transgressions.

**People: He was crushed for our iniquities.**

Pastor: upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace,

**People: and with His stripes we are healed.**

## **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Pastor: Lord Jesus, search our hearts and minds that we may receive Your Word, share in Your Spirit, and be renewed in our relationships with You and with one another. With humble hearts, let us pray together:

**People: Lord Jesus, the Father's only Son, the King of kings and Lord of lords, hear us as we pray.**

Pastor: Even though You claimed us as Your own in the waters of Baptism, we often do not walk in the newness of life.

**People: Our rebellion against You in thought, word, and action is why You died for us—**

Pastor: to forgive our sins, to redeem our lives, and to cancel the debt we owe to God.

**People: With hearts that are humble and lives ever grateful, help us to receive Your grace, bow before You in worship, and confess that You alone are Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

Pastor: Almighty God our heavenly Father shows His mercy to us in the sending of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who blesses us with new birth in the water and the Spirit and assures us that our lives belong to Him. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen**

**PSALM:** Psalm 51:1-12

Pastor: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;

**People: According to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.**

Pastor: Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,

**People: And cleanse me from my sin!**

Pastor: For I know my transgressions,

**People: And my sin is ever before me.**

Pastor: Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight,

**People: So that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.**

Pastor: Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,

**People: And in sin did my mother conceive me.**

Pastor: Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being,

**People: And you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.**

Pastor: Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;

**People: Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.**

Pastor: Let me hear joy and gladness;

**People: Let the bones that you have broken rejoice.**

Pastor: Hide your face from my sins,

**People: And blot out all my iniquities.**

Pastor: Create in me a clean heart, O God,

**People: And renew a right spirit within me.**

Pastor: Cast me not away from your presence,

**People: And take not your Holy Spirit from me.**

Pastor: Restore to me the joy of your salvation,

**People: And uphold me with a willing spirit.**

**All: 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.**

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Pastor: Let us pray together.

**All: Almighty and everlasting God, who wrote Your Law upon the hearts of Your people and promised a New Covenant in Your Son, grant us Your Holy Spirit. Create in us clean hearts,**

**that we may no longer walk in the stubbornness of our own wills, but may know You truly and serve You in the freedom of the Gospel; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

**OLD TESTAMENT READING:** Jeremiah 31:31–34

“The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them” declares the LORD. “This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, ‘Know the LORD,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the LORD. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

**Pastor: O Lord, have mercy on us.**

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**EPISTLE READING:** Hebrews 8:6–12

But in fact, the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, since the new covenant is established on better promises.

For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another. But God found fault with the people and said: “The days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord. This is the covenant I will establish with the people of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their

hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

Pastor: O Lord, have mercy on us.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

Pastor: Please rise out of respect for the words and ministry of Jesus Christ.

**HOLY GOSPEL:** John 8:31–36

Pastor: This is the Gospel according to St. John, the eighth chapter.

**People: Glory to You, O Lord.**

To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” They answered him, “We are Abraham’s descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?” Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So, if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

Pastor: This is the Holy Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to You, O Christ.**

**CHILDREN’S MESSAGE** (6:30 pm only)

**SERMON HYMN:** LSB 686 Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

- 1 Come, Thou Fount of ev’ry blessing,  
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;  
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,  
Call for songs of loudest praise.  
While the hope of endless glory

Fills my heart with joy and love,  
Teach me ever to adore Thee;  
May I still Thy goodness prove.

2 Here I raise my Ebenezer,  
Hither by Thy help I've come;  
And I hope, by Thy good pleasure,  
Safely to arrive at home.  
Jesus sought me when a stranger,  
Wand'ring from the fold of God;  
He, to rescue me from danger,  
Interposed His precious blood.

3 Oh, to grace how great a debtor  
Daily I'm constrained to be;  
Let that grace now like a fetter  
Bind my wand'ring heart to Thee:  
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it;  
Prone to leave the God I love.  
Here's my heart, O take and seal it,  
Seal it for Thy courts above.

4 Oh, that day when freed from sinning,  
I shall see Thy lovely face;  
Clothed then in the blood-washed linen,  
How I'll sing Thy wondrous grace!  
Come, my Lord, no longer tarry;  
Take my ransom'd soul away;  
Send Thine angels soon to carry  
Me to realms of endless day.

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## **THE SERMON**

**OFFERING | TREASURE BOX** (6:30 pm only)

**SPECIAL MUSIC:** Zion Choir "Come, Come Unto Me" (6:30 only)

**OFFERING HYMN:** LSB 611 Chief of Sinners Though I Be

- 1 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.
  
- 2 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.
  
- 3 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.
  
- 4 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.
  
- 5 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.

## **LENTEN PRAYER**

Pastor: Gracious God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we thank You for blessing us with the opportunity to meditate again on the cross of Christ and receive Your promised treasures.

**People: Grant that the message of the Lamb of God slain for our salvation bring us the riches of Your pardon and peace.**

Pastor: Lead us to see that our sins caused Jesus' great agony in the garden, that our sins nailed Him to the cross of Calvary,

**People: that He was forsaken by His Father so that we might never be forsaken, and that He died so that we may live.**

Pastor: Lord Jesus, grant that especially during this sacred season the treasured story of Your wondrous love for us would draw us closer to You.

**People: Enable us to see the blessings You have poured out into our lives through the washing of water with the Word.**

Pastor: Holy Spirit, lift up troubled souls everywhere. Grant wholeness to those hurting in heart, body, and mind. Work Your healing power in the lives of those in need, [especially . . .], and in the lives of all we name before You in our hearts.

**People: All glory, honor, and praise be to You, with the Father and the Son, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**All: 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.

**LUTHER'S MORNING PRAYER** (10 am only)

**All: I thank you, my Heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. 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.**

**LUTHER'S EVENING PRAYER** (6:30 pm only)

**All: 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.**

**BENEDICTION**

**Pastor:** The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.

**People: Amen.**

**CLOSING HYMN:** LSB 702 My Faith Looks Up to Thee

1 My faith looks up to Thee,  
Thou Lamb of Calvary,  
Savior divine.  
Now hear me while I pray;  
Take all my guilt away;  
O let me from this day  
Be wholly Thine!

- 2    May Thy rich grace impart  
      Strength to my fainting heart;  
      My zeal inspire!  
      As Thou hast died for me,  
      Oh, may my love to Thee  
      Pure, warm, and changeless be,  
      A living fire!
- 3    While life's dark maze I tread  
      And griefs around me spread,  
      Be Thou my guide;  
      Bid darkness turn to day,  
      Wipe sorrow's tears away,  
      Nor let me ever stray  
      From Thee aside.
- 4    When ends life's transient dream,  
      When death's cold, sullen stream  
      Shall o'er me roll,  
      Blest Savior, then, in love,  
      Fear and distrust remove;  
      O bear me safe above,  
      A ransomed soul!