



First Sunday in Lent

10:30 am - February 22, 2026

Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church

PRELUDE

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to Messiah

We are a community of grace where we live out Jesus' commandment to love God with our whole heart and to love our neighbors as ourselves. We also seek to be a welcoming community for all people. This includes people of every race, ability, sexual orientation and gender identity, ethnic background, economic grouping, religious affiliation, and political persuasion. We do this simply because God created all people in God's own image and Christ Jesus came so all people might have abundant life. We may not always be perfect, but this is our intention--all are welcome!

GATHERING HYMN

#325 "I Want Jesus to Walk with Me"



1 I want Je - sus to walk with me;
2 In my tri - als, Lord, walk with me;
3 When I'm in trou - ble, Lord, walk with me;



I want Je - sus to walk with me;
in my tri - als, Lord, walk with me;
when I'm in trou - ble, Lord, walk with me;



all a - long my pil - grim jour - ney,
when my heart is al - most break - ing,
when my head is bowed in sor - row,



Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me.
Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me.
Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me.

CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE

You may have heard, "All is fair in love and war,"
or "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth."

The presiding minister will read the sections in plain text. **You are invited to read the bold portions.**

But God says, “Forgive seventy times seven.”

God says, “I am slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.”

God says, “Turn the other cheek.”

God’s mercy catches us by surprise.

So with wonder and gratitude, let us go to God in prayer.

Let us be surprised by God’s grace all over again.

Friends, let us pray:

Loving God,

somewhere along the way we picked up the message that in order to be faithful, we have to be serious.

We have to pray on our knees without ceasing.

We have to be somber in worship and quiet in our studies.

We have to check our wiggles and our questions at the door.

But then you say the kingdom of God is like a mustard seed—unruly and untamed.

You turn water into wine—surprising and extravagant.

And all of a sudden, we wonder:

Can we be like that mustard seed?

Can we be faithful and unruly?

Can we be playful and curious?

Can we be messy and still be yours?

We know the answer already.

The Spirit whispers: of course, of course, of course.

Forgive our doubt.

Pull us closer into your embrace.

With faith like a mustard seed, we pray.

Amen.

God’s grace is wild and unruly.

God’s mercy is abundant and surprising.

God’s love is expansive and unending.

So if you ask, “Holy One, am I forgiven?”

the answer is and always will be:

of course, of course, of course.

This is the good news of the gospel.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

KYRIE

Leader: In peace, let us pray
to the Lord.



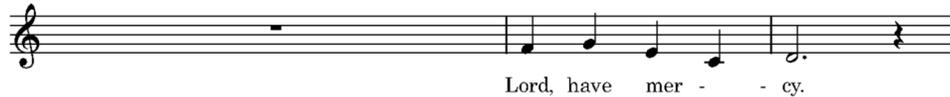
For the peace from above and for our
salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



For the peace of the world, and for the well
being of the church of God, and for the
unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



For this holy house, for all who
offer here their worship and praise,
let us pray to the Lord,



Help, Save, comfort and defend
us gracious Lord.



PRAYER OF THE DAY

God's grace is wild and unruly. God's mercy is abundant and surprising. God's love is expansive and unending. So if you ask, "Holy One, am I forgiven?" the answer is and always will be: of course, of course, of course. This is the good news of the gospel. Thanks be to God! **Amen.**

FIRST READING

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.
¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the

Please
be seat-
ed

day that you eat of it you shall die.”

^{3:1} Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?’” ² The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, ³ but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.’” ⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die, ⁵ for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” ⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

Word of God, Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 32

¹ Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven,
and whose sin is put away!

² **Happy are they to whom the LORD imputes no guilt,
and in whose spirit there is no guile!**

³ While I held my tongue, my bones withered away,
because of my groaning all day long.

⁴ **For your hand was heavy upon me day and night;
my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.**

⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not conceal my guilt.

I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD.” Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.

⁶ **Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of trouble;
when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.**

⁷ You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

⁸ **“I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go;
I will guide you with my eye.**

⁹ Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding;
who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will not stay near you.”

¹⁰ **Great are the tribulations of the wicked;
but mercy embraces those who trust in the LORD.**

¹¹ Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the LORD;
shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

Please
stand as
you are
comfortable
in
body or
spirit.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe God’s goodness overflows—
unexpected, uncontained—
and so we live with open hands.

God is good. We will live it.

We believe love of God
and love of neighbor
are one life—
and so we practice mercy.

God is good. We will live it.

We believe what we place in God’s hands,
however small,
becomes enough—
and so we share what we have.

God is good. We will live it.

We believe the vulnerable belong at the center—
and so we protect their dignity.

God is good. We will live it.

We believe justice, mercy, and faithfulness
are the weight of the kingdom—
and so we follow Jesus
into courageous love.

God is good. We will live it.

The good news is still good.

And we will live it.

Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Reconciled by God’s mercy and sustained by God’s presence, let us pray for the world
and its needs.

God of all grace, grant faith to your church. Give to all the baptized the will to resist

temptation and to worship and serve you alone. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of all creation, tend this earth. When human greed and disobedience threaten this planet and the life it contains, lead us by your Spirit into ways of reverence, awe, and gentleness. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of all nations, preserve us from trouble. Surround all living in places of violence with your steadfast love and give resilience to all who work for peace. Grant courage to those who challenge, especially around issues of racism and systemic oppression. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of all healing, mend our wounds. Bring wholeness to all who are sick, give peace to all who groan in grief, and send companions to all who are lonely or isolated, especially... Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of all people, provide for our community. For any among us who hunger for bread, bring nourishment. For any among us who hunger for truth, speak your life-giving word. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of all life, bring us to you. We thank you for your free and abounding grace, and for those who, by that same grace, now rest eternally in you. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation. **Amen.**

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

SPECIAL MUSIC

“In The Garden” *Soloist, Sara Parks with Celebration Band*

OFFERING PRAYER

Gracious God, we bring what we have—ordinary gifts, honest offerings. Receive them, bless them, and make them enough. Let them become good news: bread for the hungry, welcome for the vulnerable, justice shaped by mercy. Take what we place in your hands and use it to form us into a people who live what we believe. For your goodness overflows, and we are grateful to share in it. Amen.

Please be
Seated.

Please
stand as
you are
comfortable
in body
or spirit.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

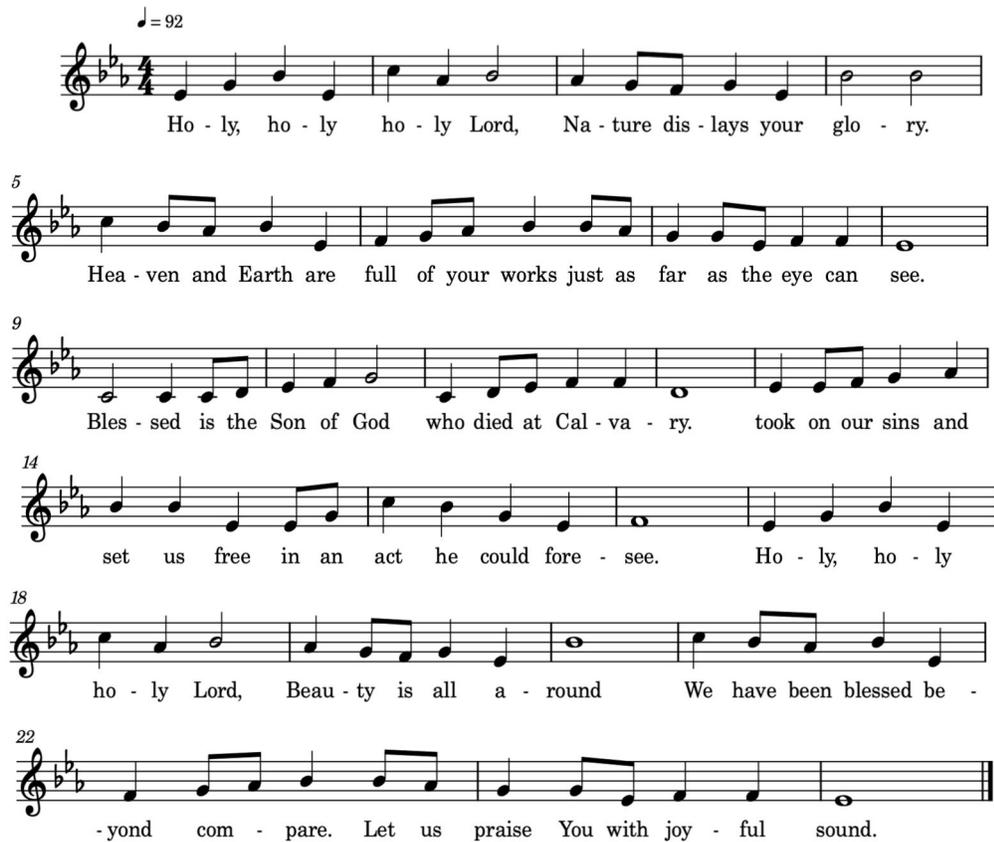
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

... we join the unending hymn:

$\text{♩} = 92$



Ho - ly, ho - ly ho - ly Lord, Na - ture dis - lays your glo - ry.

5
Hea - ven and Earth are full of your works just as far as the eye can see.

9
Bles - sed is the Son of God who died at Cal - va - ry. took on our sins and

14
set us free in an act he could fore - see. Ho - ly, ho - ly

18
ho - ly Lord, Beau - ty is all a - round We have been blessed be -

22
- yond com - pare. Let us praise You with joy - ful sound.

Holy are you,

... We proclaim the mystery of our faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

... now and forever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Please be seated.

COMMUNION HYMNS

“Lamb of God”

$\text{♩} = 72$

Lamb of God, who takes a - way the sins of the world, have
 mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, who takes a - way the sins of world, have
 mer - cy on our souls. Lamb of God, who takes a - way the sins of the
 world, grant us peace. Grant us peace. Grant us peace.

poco rit.

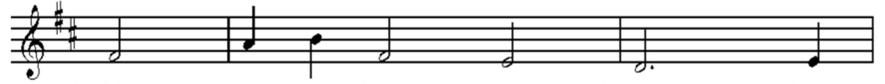
“Seeds of God’s Garden, Tenderly Planted” *-To the tune of ‘Morning Has Broken’*

Seeds of God’s garden, tenderly planted,
 Hope of creation, buried with care,
 Through our beholding slowly unfolding,
 Tended in patience, nurtured in prayer.

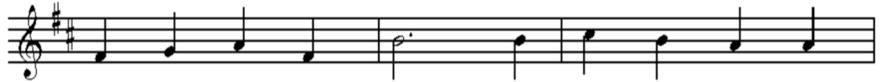
Seeds of God’s garden, tiny and fragile,
 Hope of creation, cool in the earth,
 Easing our sadness, bringers of gladness,
 Bearers of goodness showing our worth.

Seeds of God’s garden, one day to blossom,
 Hope of creation, bearing good fruit,
 Gently repairing all our despairing,
 Faith reaching outward, love at the root.

“My Song Is Love Unknown”



1. My song is love un - known, My
 2. He came from his blest throne, Sal -
 3. Some - times they strew his way And
 4. Why, what has my Lord done? What



Sav - ior's love for me, Love to the love - less
 va - tion to be - stow, But all made strange, and
 his sweet prais - es sing, Re - sound - ing all the
 makes this rage and spite? He made the lame to



shown That they might love - ly be. O
 none The longed - for Christ would know. But
 day Ho - san - nas to their King. Then
 run, He gave the blind their sight. Sweet



who am I That for my sake My
 O my friend, My friend in - deed, Who
 “Cru - ci - fy!” Is all they breathe, And
 in - jur - ies! Yet they at these Them -



Lord shall take Frail flesh, and die?
 at my need His life did spend.
 for his death They thirst and cry.
 selves dis - please, And 'gainst him rise.

BENEDICTION

SENDING HYMN

“I Will Follow”



Where You go, I'll go; Where You stay, I'll stay; When You move, I'll move.

I will fol - low. Oh, oh, oh.

1. All Your ways are good, all Your ways are sure; I will trust in You a - lone.
2. Light in - to the world, Light in - to my life— I will live for You a - lone.

INTERLUDE

BRIDGE

yeah. I will fol - low You, yeah. In You, there's

life ev - er - last - ing. In You, there's free - dom for my soul. In You, there's

joy, un - end - ing joy; And I will fol - low. *D.S. al Coda*

CHORUS

Where You go, I'll go; Where You stay, I'll stay; When You move, I'll move.

I will fol - low You. Whom You love, I'll love; How You serve, I'll serve;

ENDING

If this life I lose, I will fol - low You, yeah. I will fol - low You, yeah.

I will fol - low You, yeah. I will fol - low You, yeah.

High - er than my sight, high a - bove my life; I will trust in You a - lone.
You're the One I seek, know - ing I will find all I need in You a - lone.



Where You go, I'll go; Where You stay, I'll stay;

In You a - lone.



When You move, I'll move. I will fol - low You. Whom You love, I'll love;



How You serve, I'll serve; If this life I lose, I will fol - low You,



Where You go, I'll go; Where You stay, I'll stay; When You move, I'll move.



I will fol - low. Oh, oh, oh.



1. All Your ways are good, all Your ways are sure; I will trust in You a - lone.
2. Light in - to the world, Light in - to my life— I will live for You a - lone.



High - er than my sight, high a - bove my life; I will trust in You a - lone.
You're the One I seek, know - ing I will find all I need in You a - lone..



Where You go, I'll go; Where You stay, I'll stay;

In You a - lone.



When You move, I'll move. I will fol - low You. Whom You love, I'll love;



How You serve, I'll serve; If this life I lose, I will fol - low You,

SENDING

Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Welcome to Messiah Lutheran Church



Children belong in worship!

Worship kits and a nursery space is available. God rejoices in the joyful noise of children and so do we!



God calls us to welcome everyone!

Messiah seeks to be a welcoming community and to share the love of God with our neighbors. If you are new, please introduce yourself to our pastors.



Worship should be accessible!

Hearing devices (and T-Coil) and large print bulletins are available. We invite you to sit or stand as you are comfortable. All gender and family restroom facilities are available on the first level, please see signs in the Narthex.



All are welcome at Jesus' table!

During communion grape juice and gluten-free options are available. Those not wishing to commune may come forward for a blessing. Those not able to come forward may receive communion in their pew, please notify the usher.



God calls us to pray!

Private prayer requests may be made by writing them on the back of the Welcome Card. If you would like to be added to the prayer list or receive a pastoral care visit, please contact the church office.

Preacher:	Pr. Andrew Plocher
Assisting Minister:	Mike Hill
Reader:	Marina Shinkarenko
Ushers:	Amy Diedrich, Paula Diedrich
Communion Assistants:	Marina Shinkarenko, Mike and Joan Hill,
Greeters:	Nancy Raisanen, Marina Shinkarenko
Songleader:	Sara Parks
Pianist:	Jacob Schmeltzer
Band Members:	Tom Bronken, Darren Smith, Ross Larson
Bell Choir Director:	Judy Quirk
Audio Technician:	Dan Zini
Livestream Technician:	Traci Zini
Projection Technician:	Abby LaForest
Nursery:	Sarah Bleckiner
Flower Delivery:	Jan Julian

Acknowledgements:

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If you wish to designate your donation to a specific fund, please be sure to do so. Any undesignated donations automatically go to our general fund which supports the entirety of our ministry.

Thank you for your generosity!

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