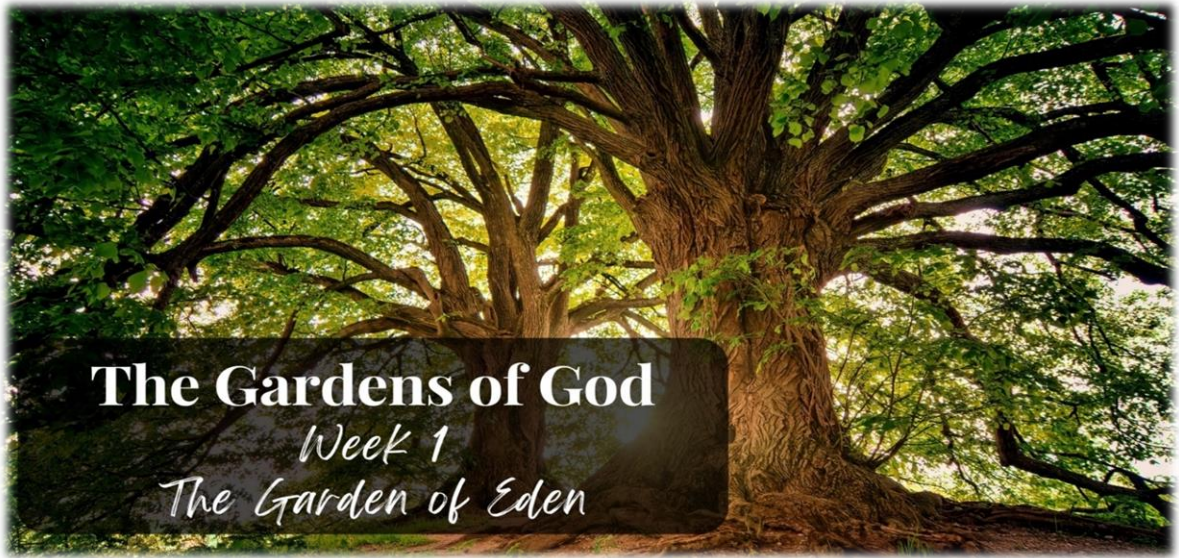


Ash Wednesday

Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church

February 14, 2024

6:30 p.m.



AS WE GATHER

Jesus was always the plan. When God created humanity from the dust, he knew the choice we would make, he knew we would rebel, and he knew that we would fall into sin. Even as God walked in the Garden with Adam and Eve, Jesus wasn't God's plan B, Jesus was always the plan. Jesus was Intricately involved in the process of creation and he was always the plan of Salvation. God knew that Eve would be deceived, God knew that both she and her husband Adam would eat the fruit and choose their will and their ways over His will and His ways. God knew. And yet he also knew that there would be other Gardens. That through these serene places, places that are meant to remind us of His tilling, pruning, and guiding hands, we would see Just how far we have fallen, and just how far he comes to save us. Out of the ground,

out of the dirt, out of the dust of our lives, God is planting us a garden, so that from His Resurrection glory, out of the dirt of death we too will bloom.

PRELUDE "Beneath the Cross of Jesus" -F.C.Maker /Arr. Don Hustad

PASTORAL WELCOME

OPENING LITANY

Pastor: The Season of Lent begins in a Garden. We remember and we lament the day in Eden when humanity chose itself and fell into sin. Yet even in that fall, we see so many other gardens and how we use the gifts of God to move ourselves further into sin. We also see how like the Old Testament Israel; we often question God. Yet in these moments, in these gardens, God meets us. As we see and acknowledge our brokenness, we turn our attention to more Gardens. We turn towards the Garden of Gethsemane, the Garden of the Tomb, and to the Garden of the New Creation. As we walk through these 40 days of lent, we see God's hand tilling the soil and we remember Christ. We remember how through his suffering and death, he was planted into the ground, to be the first one to sprout up in Resurrection life. This Lent we will see the gardens of scripture, the gardens of God. Not just the dirt, not just the things in our lives that are decomposing, but how You O God still till the soil of our world and of our lives as you prepare for every seed that hits the ground.

Moment of Silence for reflection

Pastor: O Heavenly Father, when all was still good in the Garden of Eden, we chose ourselves instead of choosing you. We disobeyed your word; we ate the fruit and we fell.

People: We are dust, and to dust we shall return.

Pastor: Into our lives came sin, came shame, came nakedness and regret. Into our lives came jealousy. Into our lives came strife. Into our lives came murder and hatred.

People: We are dust, and to dust we shall return.

Pastor: Into our lives came depression, isolation, addiction, pain, destruction, devastation and trauma. We went from garden to garden always choosing ourselves. Like Noah, we self-medicate to sooth our pains. Like your Old Testament people in exile we wonder if you will leave us or abandon us forever.

People: We are dust, and to dust we shall return.

Pastor: But ashes are not the end of this story. Ashes are not the end of our story. We may return to the dust, but our lives are like this Lenten journey, they begin in ashes, but they do not end in ashes. Our story ends in the final garden, in the new creation, in Resurrection glory. Where we see how you have been planting us to bloom. As we enter this Lenten season, then, we enter it knowing that as we move from garden to garden, that God each day makes our souls ever new, and one day, God himself will again feed us from the tree of life, even as He makes the cross, the tree found in the Garden of Golgotha, into a sign not of death but one that points to a garden full of life for us all.

People: Amen.

OPENING HYMN

"The Tree of Life" **LSB #561, St. 1-4**

- 1 The tree of life with ev'ry good In Eden's holy orchard stood,
And of its fruit so pure and sweet God let the man and woman eat. Yet in this garden also grew Another tree, of which they knew;
Its lovely limbs with fruit adorned Against whose eating God had warned.**
- 2 The stillness of that sacred grove Was broken, as the serpent
Strove With tempting voice Eve to beguile And Adam too by sin**

defile. O day of sadness when the breath Of fear and darkness,
doubt and death, Its awful poison first displayed Within the
world so newly made.

- 3 What mercy God showed to our race, A plan of rescue by His
grace: In sending One from woman's seed, The One to fill our
greatest need—For on a tree uplifted high His only Son for sin
would die, Would drink the cup of scorn and dread
To crush the ancient serpent's head!
- 4 Now from that tree of Jesus' shame Flows life eternal in His
name; For all who trust and will believe, Salvation's living fruit
receive. And of this fruit so pure and sweet The Lord invites the
world to eat, To find within this cross of wood
The tree of life with ev'ry good.

INVOCATION

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

People: Amen.

CONFESSION

Joel 2:12

Pastor: This Lenten season, we heed our Lord's call to "return to Me
with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with
mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments."
We still recognize and realize all the ways in which we fall
and fail. We seek forgiveness for the brokenness that we
have caused. We seek forgiveness for the brokenness that
lies in our own hearts. We seek forgiveness for the ways
we use God's gifts, his pardon, his grace, his creation to suit
our own needs. We seek forgiveness for not loving God with
our whole heart. We seek forgiveness for not loving our
neighbors as we love ourselves. As we come to God
admitting our failures, we do so with the words of King David
found in Psalm 51.

PSALM

Psalm 51:1–13; antiphon v. 17

Pastor: The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;

People: a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.

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, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

People: Behold, You delight in truth in the inward being, 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.

Pastor: Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners will return to You.

People: 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.

Pastor: The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;

People: a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Genesis 3:1-21

The Fall

3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made.

He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" ² And 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 midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" ⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely 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 themselves loincloths.

⁸ And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" ¹⁰ And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." ¹¹ He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I

commanded you not to eat?" ¹² The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." ¹³ Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

¹⁴ The LORD God said to the serpent,

"Because you have done this,
cursed are you above all livestock
and above all beasts of the field;
on your belly you shall go,
and dust you shall eat
all the days of your life.

¹⁵ I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and her offspring;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel."

¹⁶ To the woman he said,

"I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing;
in pain you shall bring forth children.
Your desire shall be contrary to your husband,
but he shall rule over you."

¹⁷ And to Adam he said,

"Because you have listened to the voice of your wife
and have eaten of the tree
of which I commanded you,
'You shall not eat of it,'

cursed is the ground because of you;
in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life;

¹⁸ thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you;
and you shall eat the plants of the field.

¹⁹ By the sweat of your face
you shall eat bread,
till you return to the ground,

for out of it you were taken;
for you are dust,
and to dust you shall return.”

²⁰ The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. ²¹ And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Pastor: That day in the Garden, as Adam and Eve realized their nakedness, they tried to clothe themselves and cover their shame. They failed. Yet, God provided for them as he clothed them in garments of animal skins. Throughout the story of the Bible, in times of great sorrow, heartache, repentance, and regret, God's people of old literally would wear their grief. With sackcloth and with ashes, their outward form reflected the reality of their inward hearts.

People: **We are dust, and to dust we shall return.**

Pastor: Tonight, we admit the fall still exists in us, in our own hearts, as we wear the sign of our sinful, fallen, broken nature: ashes.

People: **We are dust, and to dust we shall return.**

Members of the congregation are encouraged to come up and receive ashes. As the ashes are traced on each forehead, the pastor will say, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

ABSOLUTION

Pastor: The Good News is that there is more to this story than just our broken, fallen, sinful nature and shame. The ashes trace the shape of the cross, a sign which has become for us like the tree of life. In the cross all our sins are forgiven,

all our brokenness is healed, and in the cross we even have the promise of Eternal Life. At Eden we fell, but in the Gardens of God we see how He makes us whole and how He prepares a new Garden, a Holy City, a new place for us.

People: In the Gardens of God, we are shown our faithlessness, but more importantly we are also shown Christ's faithfulness.

Pastor: Friends In Christ, In the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, the promise made to Eve has also been made true for you. Sin, death, and the devil have been defeated. The serpent has been crushed. You are forgiven. You are made whole. You are promised that even after you become dust, you will rise to go to the Garden, the city, the place prepared for you since the foundation of the world. Therefore, as a called and ordained servant of Christ and by his authority, it is my joy to announce to you the forgiveness of all of your sins, in the name of the Father and the † Son and the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

EPISTLE READING

1 Cor. 15:35-49

The Resurrection Body

³⁵ But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?" ³⁶ You foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. ³⁷ And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. ³⁸ But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. ³⁹ For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. ⁴⁰ There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. ⁴¹ There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory.

⁴² So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. ⁴³ It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. ⁴⁴ It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. ⁴⁵ Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. ⁴⁶ But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. ⁴⁷ The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. ⁴⁸ As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. ⁴⁹ Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SPECIAL MUSIC - “Garden”

CCLI Song #7223602. Words and Music by Kip Fox

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LENTEN REFRAIN: *(Sing)*

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People: **Return to the Lord, your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and abounding in steadfast love.**

GOSPEL READING

John 15:1–11

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the fifteenth chapter.

People: **Glory be to Thee, O Lord.**

I Am the True Vine

15 “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ² Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in me, and

I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. ⁹ As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹ These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to Thee, O Christ.

NICENE CREED

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C 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 one 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.

HYMN OF THE DAY:

"O Lord, Throughout These Forty Days" LSB #418, St. 1-4

- 1 O Lord, throughout these forty days You prayed and kept the fast; Inspire repentance for our sin, And free us from our past.**
- 2 You strove with Satan, and You won; Your faithfulness endured; Lend us Your nerve, Your skill and trust In God's eternal Word.**
- 3 Though parched and hungry, yet You prayed And fixed Your mind above; So teach us to deny ourselves, Since we have known God's love.**
- 4 Be with us through this season, Lord, And all our earthly days, That when the final Easter dawns, We join in heaven's praise.**

SERMON

Eden

OFFERTORY HYMN

"Go To Dark Gethsemane" LSB #436. V. 1

People: Go to dark Gethsemane, You who feel the tempter's power; Your Redeemer's conflict see; Watch with Him one bitter hour; Turn not from His griefs away; Learn of Jesus Christ to pray.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH:

Pastor: God of grace, in the story of creation, you made the earth a garden and entrusted it to us to till and to keep, a place of

peace and beauty where we could walk with you. In the story of redemption, the one who died for us was buried in a garden, and there you raised him up to greet us with new hope and risen life. In the story of the Church, you tend us as a garden, a place of careful pruning and abundant harvest. Meet us, we pray, in all the gardens where we go for nourishment, refreshment and prayer. Lord, in your mercy:

People: Hear our prayer

Pastor: Almighty Father, Since the Garden of Eden, You call to us saying, “Where are you?” Yet, since the Garden, we humans have often been hiding in shame. Help us to stop hiding and bring our sins into the light. Help us to see how we have been deceived by half-truths and false promises. May temptation be bitter in our mouths as you lead us away from forbidden fruits that would only bring us the curse of pain and death. Take away our sin and restore our relationship with you. Lord, In Your Mercy:

People: Hear our prayer

Pastor: As we wear this Ash, remind us, O God, that we are marked by death in order to live— and to live more abundantly. Remind us, faithfully, that you breathed on the dust that became us, and that you will breathe on the dust we become, and that your breath on dust always means life and light and love. Remind us, always, of Your presence with us, day by day breathing—
fulfilling us with life ever new.

People: Hear our prayer

Pastor: Bless the garden of your Church, O God. Guide those who plant and tend it. Protect the young, strengthen the flourishing, and make us faithful stewards in the labor of planting and cultivating, planning and protecting, and

offering to you the return. Make us fruitful in ministry and mission. Lord, in Your mercy:

People: Hear our prayer

Pastor: Bless the gardens of our community, the shelter of families, the fragrance of friendship. In all our care for one another, make us grow in wisdom and love, in gentleness, kindness and truth. Lord, in Your mercy:

People: Hear our prayer

Pastor: Give tender care to all who are struggling through weakness, sickness, grief or change. Show us your grace at work in the times when growth is painful or when death is near. Especially this day we ask you to be with all those on our prayer list, and those we name in our hearts (____).
Lord, in Your mercy:

People: Hear our prayer

Pastor: Lord God, since you have called us and received us as your disciples, give us the grace to abide in him as fruitful branches, and bring us at last with all your saints to resurrection life. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

PREFACE

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Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who accomplished the salvation of mankind by the tree of the cross that, where death arose, there life also might arise again and that the serpent who overcame by the tree of the garden might likewise by the tree of the cross be overcome. 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 *(Sing)*

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**People: Holy, holy, holy Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might:
Heav'n and earth are full of Your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

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Pastor: Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have had mercy on those whom You created and sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross.

Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg You, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone, O Father, be

all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST

Pastor: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

People: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Pastor: O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So, remember us, in your Kingdom as you teach us to pray,

LORD'S PRAYER

People: 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.

PAX DOMINI

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Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: Amen.

AGNUS DEI *(Sing)*

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People: Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, You take away the sin of

the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

DISTRIBUTION

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

1) Anthem "Call to Lent" – Arr. J. Jerome Williams

2) "The Lamb" **LSB #547, St. 1-5**

**1 The Lamb, the Lamb, O Father, where's the sacrifice?
Faith sees, believes God will provide the Lamb of price!
Refrain**

**Refrain: Worthy is the Lamb whose death makes me His own!
The Lamb is reigning on His throne!**

**2 The Lamb, the Lamb, One perfect final offering. The Lamb, the Lamb,
Let earth join heav'n His praise to sing. Refrain**

**3 The Lamb, the Lamb, As wayward sheep their shepherd kill
So still, His will On our behalf the Law to fill. Refrain**

**4 He sighs, He dies, He takes my sin and wretchedness.
He lives, forgives, He gives me His own righteousness. Refrain**

**5 He rose, He rose, My heart with thanks now overflows.
His song prolong Till ev'ry heart to Him belong. Refrain**

3) "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence" **LSB #621, St. 1-4**

**1 Let all mortal flesh keep silence And with fear and trembling stand;
Ponder nothing earthly-minded, For with blessing in His hand
Christ our God to earth descending Comes our homage to demand.**

2 King of kings yet born of Mary, As of old on earth He stood,

**Lord of lords in human vesture, In the body and the blood,
He will give to all the faithful His own self for heav'nly food.**

**3 Rank on rank the host of heaven Spreads its vanguard on the
Way As the Light of Light, descending From the realms of
endless day, Comes the pow'rs of hell to vanquish
As the darkness clears away.**

**4 At His feet the six-winged seraph, Cherubim with sleepless
eye, Veil their faces to the presence As with ceaseless voice
they cry: "Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia, Lord Most High!"**

Stand

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

Pastor: Let us pray.
We give thanks to You, almighty God, that Your Son,
breathed again in that Garden tomb and has opened
heaven to all believers. We implore You to strengthen us in
this faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another;
believing that even after we die, and are planted in the
earth, Because of Christ we too will rise to continue this
heavenly feast through all eternity. Through Jesus Christ,
Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the
Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: **Amen.**

BENEDICTION

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face
shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon
you with favor and † give you peace.

People: **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

"Now Rest beneath Night's Shadow" **LSB #880, St. 1 & 4**

- 1** Now rest beneath night's shadow The woodland, field, and meadow;
The world in slumber lies. But you, my heart, awaking
And prayer and music making,
Let praise to your Creator rise.
- 4** Lord Jesus, since You love me, Now spread Your wings
above Me And shield me from alarm. Though Satan would devour me,
Let angel guards sing o'er me: This child of God shall meet no harm.

POSTLUDE "What a Friend We Have in Jesus"- Chas. Converse

SERVING US AT WORSHIP

Officiant Preacher: Pastor Tim Anderson

Organist /Dir. of Music: Ellen Brown

Song Leader: Charles Haynes

Special Music: The Beautiful Savior Singers