

Ash Wednesday



February 18, 2026

WELCOME!

If you are a visitor, please sign the guest book in the narthex. If you are seeking a church home, we joyfully invite you to join with us; please speak to me, Pastor Jami Possinger.

Holy Communion is open to all baptized believers who trust that the Lord is present for them in His Supper.

Please silence all cell phones and other electronic devices to fully enter into this time of worship.

Faith Lutheran Church

550 Rt. 940 | PO Box 228

Blakeslee, PA 18610

Office 570-646-0309

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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Faith-Lutheran-Church-Blakeslee-PA-1721550018126312>

Minister:..... Rev. Jami Possinger

Lector:.....

Greeters/Ushers:

Communion Asst./Clean up:..... Jan and Paul Frantz

Music:..... Molly Finkbiner

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Faith Fellowship Team: Our mission is encouraging interaction, building relationships, and creating a sense of belonging within the congregation and with the local community. If you're interested in becoming part of the Faith Fellowship Team, please contact Sara Cornell at 570-472-5560 or at saracornell10@gmail.com.

Faith Cookbook: Recipes can be for appetizers, soups and salads, main courses, side dishes, casseroles and desserts. Please submit your recipe to Sara Cornell or Barbara Laughlin. Include your name with your recipe.

Altar Service Signup: Volunteers are needed to set-up, bake bread, and clean up after communion. Please email Jan Frantz at Boris_fan@yahoo.com to help.

Bulletin Sponsors and Flower Donations: Sign-up sheets for 2026 are on the table in the foyer entrance of the church. In-house bulletin for \$10 and \$10 towards silk flowers, or you may bring your own fresh flowers. **Please complete the requisition form with your dedication note.**

MEETINGS/EVENTS

AA Meetings: Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday at 12 p.m.

American Red Cross Blood Drive: March 11, 2026, 1 p.m.-6 p.m. Please call 800-733-2767 to pre-register.

Bible Study: Sundays, 7:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Studying Joshua.

Bible Study: Wednesdays, 11 a.m. to Noon with Pastor Jami.

Lenten Study with Soup Supper: Our six-week sessions begin Wednesday, February 25, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. A sign-up sheet is in the back of the church along with one to volunteer to bring soup and bread to share. Hope you can join us.

Choir Rehearsals: Sundays, 8:30 a.m. in the sanctuary.

Faith Library: Please see one of the "Little Librarians" or Sara Cornell with any donations or questions.

Faith Book Club: We are reading "The Address," by Fiona Davis. Discussion will take place at Murphy's Loft on March 29, 2026, following the Palm Sunday service.

Faithful Community Quilters: Second Monday of the month, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Free Community Lunch: First Tuesday of each month. (Mar. 3) 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. Five Loaf House, 133 Firehouse Road, Pocono Pines.

Pastor Jami Possinger has weekly office hours. Confidential email: pastor@faithlutheranblakeslee.org or private cell phone: 610-216-9951

On Ash Wednesday we begin our forty-day journey toward Easter with a day of fasting and repentance. Marking our foreheads with dust, we acknowledge that we die and return to the earth. At the same time, the dust traces the life-giving cross indelibly marked on our foreheads at baptism. While we journey through Lent to return to God, we have already been reconciled to God through Christ. We humbly pray for God to make our hearts clean while we rejoice that “now is the day of salvation.” Returning to our baptismal call, we more intentionally bear the fruits of mercy and justice in the world.

Please rise as you are able.

PRELUDE “Prelude modale,” “Slane”

INVITATION TO LENT

Please rise as you are able.



CONFESSION OF SIN

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. Most holy and merciful God,
We confess to you and to one another, and before the whole company of heaven, that we have sinned by our fault, by our own fault, by our own most grievous fault, 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, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

We have shut our ears to your call to serve as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our past unfaithfulness, the pride, envy, hypocrisy, and apathy that have infected our lives, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to share the faith that is in us, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our neglect of human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our false judgments, our uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us. **Hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.**

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.



Jesus said, come to me all of you who are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Friends, you may lay your burdens down here – and in their place you are offered the grace of Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN

The Glory of These Forty Days

1 The glo - ry of these for - ty days we cel - e -
2 A - lone and fast - ing Mo - ses saw the lov - ing
3 So Dan - iel trained his mys - tic sight, de - liv - ered
4 Then grant, O God, that we may, too, re - turn in

brate with songs of praise; for Christ, through whom all
God who gave the law; and to E - li - jah,
from the li - ons' might; and John, the Bride - groom's
fast and prayer to you. Our spir - its strength - en

things were made, him - self has fast - ed and has prayed.
fast - ing, came the steeds and char - i - ots of flame.
friend, be - came the her - ald of Mes - si - ah's name.
with your grace, and give us joy to see your face.

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, in peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Assembly
Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have
For the reign of God, and for
mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

peace through-out the world, for the u-ni-ty of all, let us pray to the
Lord. For your
Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

peo-ple here who have come to give you praise, for the strength to live your
word, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mer-cy. Christ, have mer-cy. Lord, have
Help, save, and de-fend us, O God.
mer - cy. A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty and ever-living God, you hate nothing you have made, and you forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and honest hearts, so that, truly repenting of our sins, we may receive from you, the God of all mercy, full pardon and forgiveness through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

FIRST READING: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

Because of the coming Day of the LORD, the prophet Joel calls the people to a community lament. The repentant community reminds God of his gracious character and asks God to spare the people, lest the nations doubt God's power to save.

¹ Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming, it is near— ² a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness spread upon the mountains, a great and powerful army comes; their like has never been from of old, nor will be again after them in ages to come.

¹² Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; ¹³ rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from punishment. ¹⁴ Who knows whether he will not turn and relent and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the LORD your God?

¹⁵ Blow the trumpet in Zion; consecrate a fast; call a solemn assembly; ¹⁶ gather the people. Consecrate the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room and the bride her canopy.

¹⁷ Between the vestibule and the altar, let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep. Let them say, "Spare your people, O LORD, and do not make your heritage a mockery, a byword among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'"

Word of God, Word of Life, **Thanks be to God.**



PSALM

51A

Psalms 51:1-8

God, Be Merciful to Me

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—
of whom I am the worst. —1 Timothy 1:15

1. ¹ God, be mer - ci - ful to me; On Your love
 2. ³ For my sins be - fore me rise, Al - ways pres -
 3. ⁵ Tru - ly, I was born in sin, Sin - ful when
 4. ⁷ O with hys - sop sprin - kle me, And from sin

I rest my plea. By Your vast a - bound - ing grace,
 ent to my eyes. ⁴ I have sinned 'gainst You a - lone,
 con - ceived with - in. ⁶ Sure - ly You de - sire to find
 I clean will be; Wash me from its stain, and so,

My trans - gres - sions all e - rase. From the stain of
 In Your sight I've e - vil done; So Your words are
 Faith - ful - ness in heart and mind; You will, deep with -
 I'll be whit - er than the snow. ⁸ Make me hear joy's

ev - ery sin, ² Wash, and make me clean with - in.
 prov - en true, Righ - teous are Your judg - ments, too.
 in my heart, Wis - dom un - to me im - part.
 cheer - ing voice, Let the bones You crushed re - joice.

SECOND READING: 1 2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10

The ministry of the gospel endures many challenges and hardships. Through this ministry, God's reconciling activity in the death of Christ reaches into the depths of our lives to bring us into a right relationship with God. In this way, God accepts us into the reality of divine salvation.

^{20b} We entreat you on behalf of Christ: be reconciled to God. ²¹ For our sake God made the one who knew no sin to be sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

^{6:1} As we work together with him, we entreat you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. ² For he says, "At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you."

Look, now is the acceptable time; look, now is the day of salvation! ³ We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, ⁴ but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: in great endurance, afflictions, hardships, calamities, ⁵ beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; ⁶ in purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, ⁷ truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; ⁸ in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors and yet are true, ⁹ as unknown and yet are well known, as dying and look—we are alive, as punished and yet not killed, ¹⁰ as sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich, as having nothing and yet possessing everything.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



We are turn - ing, Lord, to hear you; you are mer - ci - ful and kind -



slow to an - ger, rich in bless - ing, and with love to us in - clined.

GOSPEL

The Holy Gospel according to **Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21**

Glory to you, O Lord.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus commends almsgiving, prayer, and fasting, but emphasizes that spiritual devotion must not be done for show.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹ "Beware of practicing your righteousness before others in order to be seen by them, for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. ² "So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and



in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward.³ But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,⁴ so that your alms may be done in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.⁵ “And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward.⁶ But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.¹⁶ “And whenever you fast, do not look somber, like the hypocrites, for they mark their faces to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward.¹⁷ But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face,¹⁸ so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.¹⁹ “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal,²⁰ but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal.²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Please be seated.

CHILDREN’S TIME

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

Change My Heart, O God

Refrain



Change my heart, O God; make it ev - er true.

End



Change my heart, O God; may I be like you.



You are the pot - ter; I am the clay.



Mold me and make me; this is what I pray.

Refrain

APOSTLES CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.*
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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

A brief silence.

Guide your church, O God. Accompany all Christians in this season of repentance, and renew our faith in the riches of grace you give to us in baptism. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Heal this earth, O God. Satisfy the needs of every parched place, every diverse ecosystem, every suffering creature. Though all return to dust, grant beauty and purpose to each living thing. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Restore the nations, O God. Let your healing spring up quickly across the world. Give all in authority the will to loose the bonds of injustice and let any who are oppressed go free. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Deliver your people, O God. Comfort any whose hearts are rent by grief, uphold any who are sick, bring food to those who are hungry, and give housing to all without shelter. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

PRAYER LIST

Tom M.; Valerie M.; Pastor Michael Ryan; Jill A.; Nancy M.; Phyllis & Jim N.; Shirley S.; Jim H.; Jenn & Rachel; Bob & Gail C.; Martha E.; Mya; Mary D.; Nicky S.; Leon P.; Homer A.; Judi C.; James K. & Family; Kathleen A.; Tom S.; Larissa; Barbara & David L; Joyce K.; Tammy H.; Mike & Peg; Eric L; Dick M.; Don C.; David S.; Phil A; Eric, Pat, & Brian R.; Michael K.; Sue E.; Tracy N.; Megan.

Bless this assembly, O God. Reconcile us to one another and to you. Strengthen our resolve to fast from evil, open our hands in sharing, and quicken our prayer. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Hold us forever, O God. We thank you for all who now know their treasure in heaven, and for all who on earth proclaimed your abounding, steadfast love. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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

THE PEACE

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

OFFERTORY MUSIC: "As the Deer," Martin Nystrom, *played by Molly Finkbiner*

OFFERING SONG: "Create in Me a Clean Heart"

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It consists of five systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are: "Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, that I might serve you; cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, that I might be re - newed. So fill me and heal me, and bring me back to you. Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, that I might serve you." The score includes various chords such as F, C/E, C/D Dm, Dm/C, Bb, Gm, C7sus, C7, F, C/E, C/D Dm, Dm/C, Gm, F/A F/Bb C, F, Am7, Dm7, Am7, Dm7, Gm7, Gm/D, C7sus, C7, F, C/E, C/D Dm, Dm/C, Gm, F/A F/Bb C, and F.

OFFERING PRAYER

O God, maker of heaven and earth, your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

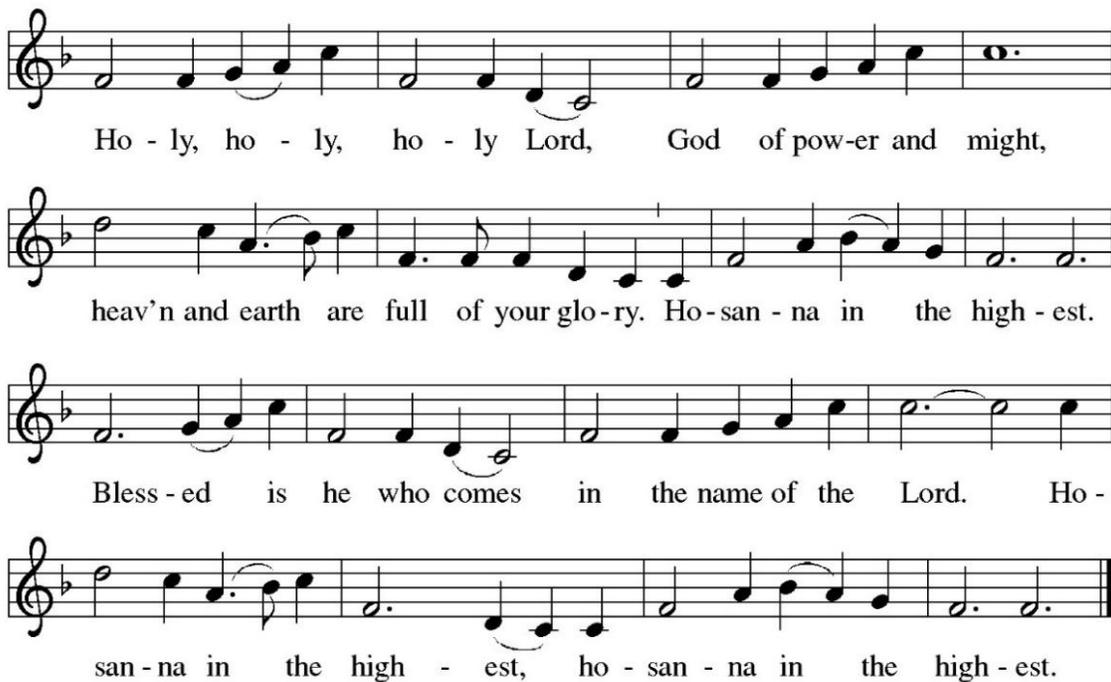
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that, renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

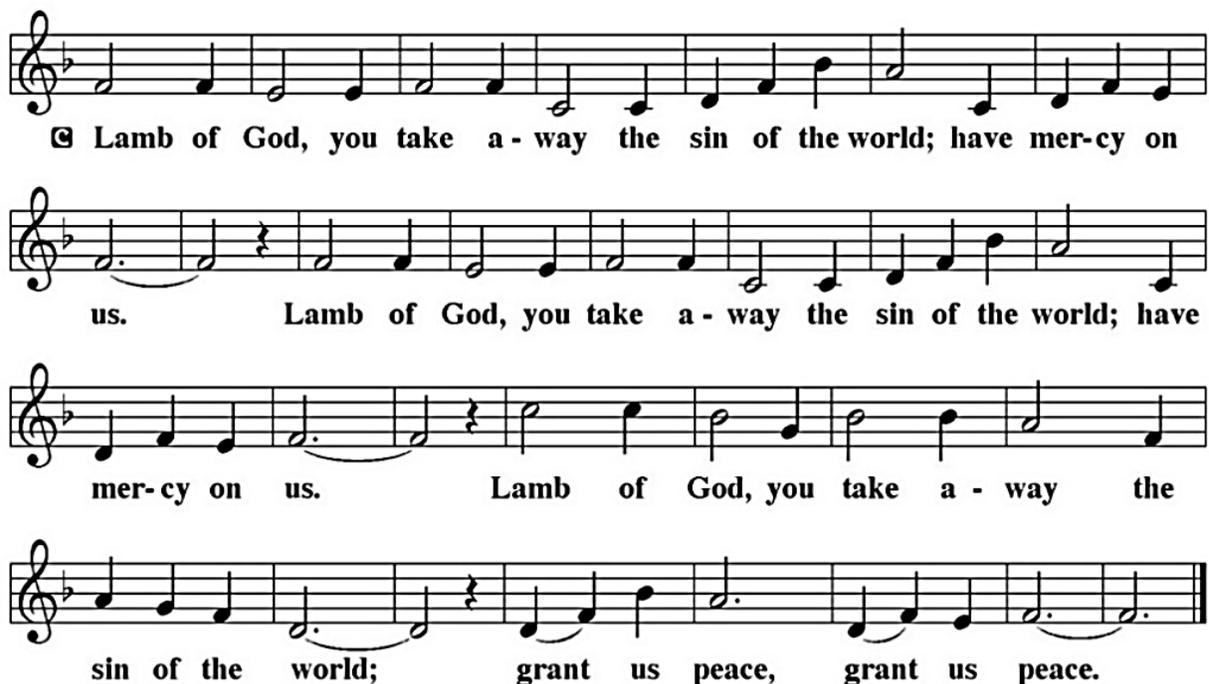


Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho-san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Blessed are you, O God of the universe. Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age. Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth. Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood. Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea. Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness to the land of milk and honey. Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus,

LAMB OF GOD



☪ Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING



Be Thou My Vision

1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;
 2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;
 3 Rich - es I heed not, nor vain, emp - ty praise,
 4 Light of my soul, af - ter vic - to - ry won,

naught be all else to me, save that thou art:
 I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord.
 thou mine in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways:
 may I reach heav - en's joys, O heav - en's Sun!

thou my best thought by day and by night,
 Thou my soul's shel - ter, thou my high tow'r,
 thou, and thou on - ly, first in my heart,
 Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,

wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.
 raise thou me heav'n - ward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.
 great God of heav - en, my trea - sure thou art.
 still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Believe the good news. **Thanks be to God.**

February 18th, 2026 – Ash Wednesday

Prelude:

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Gathering Hymn:

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Psalm:

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Hymn of the Day:

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Offertory Song:

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Offering Music:

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Sending Hymn:

Be Thou My Vision, Text: Irish 8th-10th cent.; tr. Mary E. Byrne, 1880-1931; vers. Eleanor H. Hull, 1860-1935, alt., Music: Irish tune. © Public Domain.

Postlude:

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Service Music:

Now the Feast and Celebration: Kyrie, Marty Haugen. © 1990, GIA Publications, Inc. #01107. Reprinted with permission under ONE LICENSE # A-726919. All rights reserved.

Evangelical Lutheran Worship Setting 10: We Are Turning, Lord, to Hear You, Holy, Holy, Holy, Amen. © 2011 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Augsburg Fortress.

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