



# Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

## March 2025 Newsletter

*"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me." [Saint John 10:27]*



My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. John 10:27-28

Dear Sheep of the Divine Shepherd:



As the church year unfolds, **Ash Wednesday**, which is on March 5<sup>th</sup>, marks the solemn beginning of **Lent**, a season of repentance, reflection, and renewal. For Lutherans, this day is a powerful reminder of our mortality, our need for a Savior, and the grace that is ours through Christ. But what does Ash Wednesday mean for us as Lutherans, and how does it fit into our understanding of faith?

**The Meaning of Ash Wednesday** Ash Wednesday derives its name from the practice of placing ashes on the foreheads of believers in the shape of a cross while hearing the words: *"Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return"* (Genesis 3:19).

These words echo the curse spoken after humanity's fall into sin, reminding us that death is the consequence of sin and that, apart from Christ, we have no hope. The ashes symbolize both our mortality and our repentance, pointing us toward the One who conquered sin and death—Jesus Christ.

**Repentance: A Central Theme** Lutherans understand repentance as turning away from sin and turning toward Christ. In his 95 Theses, Martin Luther emphasized that the entire Christian life should be one of repentance—not merely an external action but a daily renewal of the heart. Ash Wednesday serves as a visible and communal expression of this ongoing reality. Repentance, however, is not about despair or trying to earn God's favor. Instead, it is about acknowledging our complete dependence on God's mercy. As we confess our sins, we cling to the promise of 1 John 1:9: *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*

**Law and Gospel in Ash Wednesday** Ash Wednesday profoundly reflects the Law and Gospel dynamic that is central to Lutheran theology.

- **The Law:** The ashes and the words of Genesis 3:19 confront us with the reality of our sin and mortality. We are dust. We have fallen short. Left to ourselves, we stand condemned.
- **The Gospel:** The shape of the ashes—a cross—points us directly to Christ. We are not left in despair, for Jesus has taken our sin upon Himself. Through His death and resurrection, He has secured our forgiveness and eternal life.

Thus, Ash Wednesday does not leave us in sorrow but leads us toward the joy of Easter. Our repentance is met with God's boundless grace in Christ.

**Lutheran Practices on Ash Wednesday** While the imposition of ashes is a meaningful tradition, Lutherans do not see it as a sacrament or a requirement. Rather, it serves as a tangible sign of our repentance.

Key elements of an **Ash Wednesday service** typically include:

- **Confession and Absolution** – Acknowledging our sin and receiving God's forgiveness.
- **The Imposition of Ashes** – A sign of repentance and humility.
- **Psalm 51** – David's plea for mercy and a clean heart.

- **The Lord's Supper** – That although we stand condemned as sinners, Jesus through his grace and mercy, reminds us that he is Savior and we are his children bought by his body and blood that now is given as a sign of his love for us through the forgiveness of sins.

**Lent: A Journey Toward Easter** Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, a 40-day journey leading to Good Friday and Easter. It is a time of spiritual discipline, prayer, fasting, and reflection. However, Lutherans approach Lent not as a way to earn favor with God but as an opportunity to grow in faith, recognizing that our salvation is already fully accomplished in Christ.

**Hope in the Cross** Ash Wednesday is a day of both solemnity and hope. It reminds us of our need for a Savior and the assurance that we have one in Jesus Christ. As we receive the ashes and hear the words of Genesis 3:19, we do so with faith—knowing that our sin is forgiven, death is defeated, and we belong to Christ. May this season of Lent which begins on **March 5<sup>th</sup>**, lead us not into despair, but into deeper trust in the Gospel, as we journey toward the victory of Easter morning.

*"Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love" (Joel 2:13).*

Listen to Jesus,  
Pastor Zimmer

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## Christian Stewardship

### *God's Instruments, God's Stewards*

*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (Eph. 2:10)*



Some pastors refer to these words as “the most forgotten words in the Scriptures.” They are forgotten because they follow the familiar and critical words before it. The preceding two verses that overshadow Ephesians 2:10 are words of justification: “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Eph. 2:8–9). These are words preached regularly. They are assigned as confirmation verses. They carry with them the very heart of what it means to be a redeemed child of God!

Precisely because the previous verses are so central to salvation, they often overpower our practice of stewardship! We have been saved by grace. This is certain and sure because of Jesus. Works play no role in our salvation. No credit taking for us! Grace is freely given. Faith is miraculously created by the Spirit and joyously received. This truth is so wonderful and so encompassing that we often miss out on WHY we are redeemed.

The grace of God revealed in Jesus calls us to faith. But St. Paul doesn't stop with grace and faith. He continues to the logical conclusion. Just like the creation declares the handiwork of God, the redemption of sinners like you and me declares His greatest handiwork! Redeemed stewards are created to reflect the grace and mercy God showers on us to others.

As Lutherans, we understand that good works flow from faith in Jesus Christ. They are the fruit of the tree of salvation into which we have been grafted by grace. Sanctification and stewardship are both on-going and

active confessions of what the Lord has done in us. These works are not always spectacular. Many times, they are simply parents showing Jesus to their children. They are compassionate actions that live out the truth of the Gospel to co-workers and even complete strangers. While they can be grand endeavors, more likely they are simple, beautiful works which highlight what Jesus has done in us.

These works aren't random either. They have been planned by God. God planned to use you as a faithful steward as you walk the road that leads you through your daily life. There are no chance encounters or coincidences. They have been planned by the Lord of the universe for the benefit of His creation. Good works are what point to God's greatest work: Jesus!

He calls you and me to walk in this faith, which flows from this grace, which has been poured out on us in Jesus. But even this is not to our credit. We are simply called to be faithful stewards of God's grace so that we may share it with those who need it as much as we do. God's Spirit carries us along in this. We are just the steward — the instrument in His hand to accomplish His plan and glorify Him!



### **Week of March 2-8**

Sun, Mar 2, 8:30 am Divine Service  
Sun, Mar 2, 9:40 am Fellowship  
Sun, Mar 2, 10:00 am Bible Study  
Wed, Mar 5, 6:30 pm Ash Wednesday Service  
Wed, Mar 5, 7:30 pm Choir Practice  
Sat, Mar 8 Set your clocks ahead one hour

### **Week of March 9-15**

Sun, Mar 9, 8:30 am Divine Service  
Sun, Mar 9, 9:40 am Fellowship  
Sun, Mar 9, 10:00 am Bible Study  
Mon, Mar 10, 6:00 pm Elders Meeting  
Wed, Mar 12, 5:30 pm Soup/Sandwiches  
Wed, Mar 12, 6:30 pm Lenten Midweek Service  
Wed, Mar 12, 7:30 pm Choir Practice  
Sat, Mar 15, 10:00 am Ladies Aid Meeting

### **Week of March 16-22**

Sun, Mar 16, 8:30 am Divine Service  
Sun, Mar 16, 9:40 am Fellowship  
Sun, Mar 16, 10:00 am Bible Study  
Mon, Mar 17, 6:00 pm Council Meeting  
Wed, Mar 19, 5:30 pm Soup/Sandwiches  
Wed, Mar 19, 6:30 pm Lenten midweek Service  
Wed, Mar 19, 7:30 pm Choir Practice

### **Week of March 23-29**

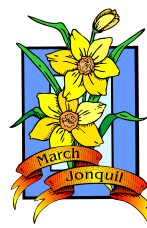
Sun, Mar 23, 8:30 am Divine Service  
Sun, Mar 23, 9:40 am Fellowship  
Sun, Mar 23, 10:00 am Bible Study  
Wed, Mar 26, 5:30 pm Soup/Sandwiches  
Wed, Mar 26 6:30 pm Lenten Midweek Service  
Wed, Mar 26, 7:30 pm Choir Practice

### **Week of March 30-31**

Sun, Mar 30, 8:30 am Divine Service  
Sun, Mar 30, 9:40 am Fellowship  
Sun, Mar 30, 10:00 am Bible Study

### **March Birthdays**

03 Terry Donaldson  
07 Hailey Quinn  
10 Leila Martinez  
10 Julie Zimmer  
20 Jenny Martinez  
20 Denise Collins  
20 Jenna Zimmer  
29 Phyllis Novy (H)  
29 Jonathan Rose



### **March Baptismal Anniversaries**

20 Jenna Zimmer  
27 Hector Martinez  
28 Joey Asche  
31 Karen Moritz



## Daylight Savings

Remember to “spring forward” by setting your clocks one hour forward on **Saturday night, March 08.**



## Altar Guild

Please see Ruth Ogden if you are interested in joining altar guild and can donate an hour or two on the third weekend of each month.

## Ash Wednesday



This year Ash Wednesday falls on **Wednesday, March 5.** Join us as we begin our 40-day journey to the cross with a solemn Divine Service at **6:30 p.m.** This service begins with corporate confession and absolution and the imposition of ashes (for those who wish to receive them) and ends with the Lord's Supper.

## Lenten Services



Join us for our midweek Evening Prayer services during Lent. These services are held each Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. Come and join us.

## Soup/Sandwiches

Ron & Cris will be serving soup/sandwiches before Lenten Midweek services at 5:30 pm on **March 12, 19 & 26.** Please sign up on the sheet in Luter Hall if you are attending.

## Altar Flowers



The 2025 flower charts are posted. This is a wonderful way to help beautify God's house, celebrate a birthday or anniversary, or remember a departed loved one.

If you would like to contribute flowers to help beautify the sanctuary on Lord's Day, please add your name to any open Sunday on the flower charts.

Ruth Ogden will do two altar bouquets for \$30. If you sign up, **Karen** will contact you to get your flower request, and a brief note to place in the worship bulletin. When the worship service is over, you are welcome to take your bouquets home.

**Look for forms in the late March service bulletin to purchase Easter flowers to beautify the sanctuary.**

## Sunday Treats



Do you enjoy treats and fellowship after Sunday services? If so, please consider signing up on any given Sunday(s). Why not sign up with a friend? To enable our diabetic members to enjoy these treats, please consider supplementing some of the “sugary goodies” with crackers and cheese and/or fruit. The signup sheet is posted in Luther Hall Monetary donations are accepted to defray the cost of drinks and paper products, which are supplied by Ladies Aid.

## Follow Us on Social Media

Follow us on social media to keep up to date with church happenings and events, find a variety of new and old congregational photos, and read inspirational posts and quotes from Holy Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, and various Christians throughout the centuries.

Facebook: [fb.me/DSLcbolingbrook](https://fb.me/DSLcbolingbrook)

Twitter: @dslc60440

## RaiseRight (Manna)

Shop with RaiseRight cards are available throughout the year for everyday expenses and gifts for any special occasion. Next order date is **March 16.** Pre-purchased cards are available after Sunday services and forms are on the bookcase in Luther Hall. These cards make many of the Ladies Aid projects possible, and best of all they do not cost members anything beyond the face-value amount. Script pays us to use their service. What is more, many of these cards can be reloaded so you do not have to continually buy new cards.

*Your Organization:*

Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church – Manna

*Your Coordinator:* **Lisa Cruz**

630-636-6359 • [dslcmanna@yahoo.com](mailto:dslcmanna@yahoo.com)

[shopwithscrip.com](http://shopwithscrip.com)

*Your Enrollment Code:* B2LD2C7A55973

## Ladies Aid

The meetings are on the third Saturday of each month, and we certainly would like to have you join us at **10:00 am** on **March 15**. Projects for 2025 will be discussed (including if there will be a garage sale this year).



Directing Choice Dollars is a great way for eligible Thrivent members to show support for what matters most to them. If you have not given your 2024 Choice Dollars to Divine Shepherd, please do so **before March 31 or they are lost**. Thrivent members and Choice Dollars are an important source of support for the work the organization does. Why not do everything you can to make sure that you are getting the most out of your participation. Choice dollars are used to support various church/member needs. Thanks.

## Prayer Chain

Several members are part of a church prayer chain. If you (men or women) would like to join them in praying for our congregation's special needs, please contact Julie Zimmer at 712-584-5301



## Important Phone Numbers

**Church office:** 630-759-5300  
**Pastor Zimmer:** 583-880-9532  
**Head Elder:** 630-360-5573 (Scott Collins)  
**Prayer Chain:** 712-584-5301 (Julie Zimmer)  
**Newsletter info:** 630-759-3188 (Karen Moritz)  
*(items are due March 24)*

## Portals of Prayer

Pick up your April-June Portals of Prayer in Luther Hall. Cost is \$15 @ year. Make checks payable to Divine Shepherd and placed in the offering plate (cash is also accepted). Blessings on your continued study of God's Word.

## Help Wanted

Do you have an hour once a month to help clean the church? If so, please contact Kelly. Thank You.



## Lenten Prayer

Lord Jesus, it was out of love for us that You endured your suffering and death. Thank You for that love. We confess that we daily sin against You and need Your forgiveness. Send Your Holy Spirit to help us recognize our sins and turn from them in repentance so that our lives can better please You. Have mercy on us. In Your precious name, we pray. Amen (Portals of Prayer)

Lord Jesus Christ, during this time of Lenten preparation and reflection, keep our thoughts on You and Your sacrifice. As we confess our sins, let us remember our part in Your suffering and death. As we are granted forgiveness, may we be continually assured that our sins are covered by Your robe of righteousness. Prepare us for service and worship as we await the coming joy of Easter.

Lord Jesus Christ, bless Your Church with Your presence. Fill our hearts with Your Spirit and bring a new sense of zeal to the work You have set before us. Help us always to be mindful of Your love and grace. Keep us in Your Word. Let us live a life that shows how we are able to share Your love with others, because you loved us first.

Good Shepherd, thank you for providing us with a faithful servant who will be diligent to preach the fullness of Your Word, administer Your Sacraments, and serve Your people in his daily life. Receive our thanks for those who serve in the Office of the Holy Ministry, protect them from pride and selfish ambition, grant them joy in serving, and provide care for their families.

We pray this in Your name. Amen

*(Portals of Prayer)*