



# OUR REDEEMER MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD  
TO KNOW CHRIST AND TO MAKE HIM KNOWN

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**FEBRUARY 2026**

## Signs and Symbols of Lenten Salvation

*And the Lord said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live." So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole.*

*And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.*

*-Numbers 21:8-9*

Redeemed and Saved Saints,

You may know well the verse of John 3:16, sometimes described as the "Gospel in a nutshell." Giving context for the popular verse, the previous two verses of John (3:14-15) refer to the above quoted events when Israel was in the wilderness. The people spoke against Moses and against God, so God sent them fiery serpents to call them to repentance and faith, unfortunately, killing at least some of them in the process. In the above verses, God gives and antidote, a way of salvation for those bitten and infected with the venom of the serpent, to look at their sin upon a pole that they might live. Of course, it worked, and all who believed this saving word, looked at the serpent, lived.

The Bible is full of these signs of salvation. The bow (or rainbow) that God placed in the sky after the flood, the sign that a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, all the way to the sign of the cross, serve as signs of our salvation. The Bible forbids us from making idols and carved images to worship, but it, along with the Church, both before and after Christ, is full of signs, pictures, artwork, and depictions that remind us of the salvation of our God.

The current, modern Church is no different. We decorate the church with pictures, artwork, and even stained glass that often tell the story of our salvation. During Advent, we considered several decorations, signs, and symbols of the Church, used by the world, in which the Christmas story and that of our salvation is proclaimed. Just like we have signs and symbols that lead us to the manger in Advent, we have certain signs and symbols during the season of Lent that lead us to the cross.

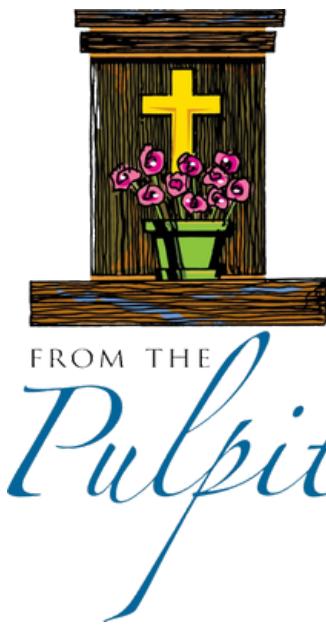
Many of them are not as popular. Some of them are hard to look at, hard to hear or think about, but this Lenten season, we are going to focus on different signs of Lent. These are more than just props, but items that remind us of the story of our salvation, remind us of the Passion of our Lord, remind us of what was necessary for our Lord to suffer in order to save us. That's probably why they are not as popular as the Christmas Tree, the star and Christmas lights, and adorable little angels that are scattered throughout town during December. These are hard, in many cases bloody, symbols that remind us of the suffering of Christ for us.

Ash Wednesday will, of course, focus on the ashes that are placed upon our forehead, recalling that all of this is necessary because of our sin, what we have done and left undone, because we sinners who will die and return to the dust are in need of the cross for our salvation. On His way to the cross, our God was bound with either ropes or shackles (2/25), flogged with a Roman Flagrum (3/4), clothed with a purple robe (3/11), crowned with thorns (3/18), pierced with nails (3/25) and spear (4/2), and crucified to death on a cross (4/3).

These tools (and sermons) will likely, even hopefully, make you a little uncomfortable. Like the movie "The Passion of the Christ," they will not be rated "G" though won't be anything I am not prepared for my own children to hear also. The intent is not to scandalize you, but walk you through what your God willingly, even gladly, endured that He might accomplish your salvation, and I look forward to walking with you to our Lord's cross and empty tomb.

In reverence before our Suffering Servant,

*Pastor Simek*



## February Hymn of the Month | *Thy Strong Word* (LSB 578)

### 2/1 | Fourth Sunday of Epiphany

Title: The Authority of the Word  
Text: Matthew 5:1-12

### 2/22 | First Sunday of Lent

Title: Temptation: Failure and Success  
Text: Matthew 4:1-11

### 2/8 | Fifth Sunday of Epiphany

Title: Salt, Light, and Right  
Text: Matthew 5:13-20

### 2/25 | Second Wednesday of Lent

Title: Bound for You  
Text: John 18:1-14

### 2/15 | The Transfiguration of Our Lord

Title: Then and Now  
Text: Matthew 17:1-9; 2 Peter 1:16-21

### 2/18 | Ash Wednesday

Title: Dust and Ashes  
Text: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21



#### ORGANIST/ACCOMPANIST

2/1	Mary Sandbulte
2/8	Rev. Howard Shane
2/15	Mary Sandbulte
2/18	Rev. Howard Shane
2/22	Rev. Howard Shane
2/25	Rev. Howard Shane Mary Sandbulte



#### ACOLYTES

2/1	Jacob Rieck Joel Simek & Elijah Simek
2/8	James Lafrentz Ellis Dewitz
2/15	Kaden Ver Hoeven <i>Acolyte Needed</i>
2/18	James Lafrentz
2/22	Kaden Ver Hoeven Ellis Dewitz
2/25	Leah Eden



#### ALTAR FLOWERS

2/1	None
2/8	<i>Harlan &amp; Joan Heitman, in celebration of their 70<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary</i>
2/15	None
2/22	None

*If you'd like to provide flowers for the altar, please see the sign up sheet in the narthex.*



*“Main Street Living” is a liturgical worship service broadcasting a different local pastor each Sunday morning. It airs along with the classic Lutheran Hour program, “This is the Life.” Both can be viewed on KDLT (NBC).*

*This program is interpreted and closed captioned for the deaf and hard of hearing. For more information visit: [www.mainstreetliving.com](http://www.mainstreetliving.com)*

<b>Sun</b> <b>2/1</b>	10:00am - “Visitation” - Pastor Andrew Burdick (Dick Sargent) is having problems keeping his congregation together. Bishop Smith (Parley Baer) visits him to identify some troubling leadership spots and to renew faith...  10:30 AM - Rev. Paul Winckler, with the SD LCMS District in Sioux Falls, SD, presents a message titled ”Blessed Are You“. The sermon is based on Matthew 5:1-12.	<b>Sun</b> <b>2/15</b>	10:00am - “Destination Unknown” - Paul Werner (Leonard Nimoy) is a Nuclear Scientist who plans to defect to the Soviet Union. He reconsiders after a conversation on an airplane.  10:30 AM - Rev. Joshua Mork, pastor at Our Savior and St John's Lutheran Churches in Madison and Howard, SD, presents a message titled ”Seeing God“. The sermon is based on Exodus 24:8-18.
<b>Sun</b> <b>2/8</b>	10:00am - “Happy Dirty Hands” - School teacher Kent (Daniel Travanti) and his wife (Anne Whitfield) live in an impoverished area causing trouble in their marriage....  10:30 AM - Rev. Matthew Nix, pastor at Christ Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls, SD, presents a message titled ”Does your righteousness exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees?“. The sermon is based on Matthew 5:20.	<b>Sun</b> <b>2/22</b>	10:00am - “Cell of Hope” - Flag Washington (Lawrence Hilton-Jacobs), who came to Christ while in prison gets a new cellmate Jimmy Stricklin (Richard Dinitri) who is obnoxious.  10:30 AM - Rev. Tanner Sutcliffe, pastor at Risen Savior Lutheran Church in Tea, SD, presents a message titled ”The Word in Wilderness“. The sermon is based on Matthew 4:1-11.





# FEBRUARY IS AMERICAN HEART MONTH

Did you know about 2,200 Americans die each day from heart disease? That's about one in 40 seconds.

Cardiovascular diseases claim more lives than all forms of cancer combined.

Cardiovascular disease is the No. 1 killer of women, taking about 1 in 3 lives. Yet only about 44% of women in the U.S. believe the disease is their greatest health threat.

American Heart Month is an excellent time to teach you that cardiovascular disease can often be prevented by making healthy choices and properly managing your health conditions.

Cardiovascular disease affects the blood vessels and cardiovascular system. Numerous problems can result from this, many of which are related to a process called atherosclerosis, a condition that develops when plaque builds up in the walls of the arteries. This buildup narrows the arteries, making it harder for blood to flow through. If a blood clot forms, it can stop the blood flow. This can cause a heart attack or stroke.

A heart attack is not always as obvious as pain in your chest, shortness of breath, and cold sweats. A heart attack can actually happen without a person knowing it. A heart attack that has either no symptoms, minimal symptoms or unrecognized symptoms is called a "silent" heart attack.

Women and their physicians may also be more likely to chalk up symptoms of a silent heart attack to stress or anxiety and dismiss them.

A silent heart attack is still like any other heart attack—there's a blockage of blood flow to a section of the heart by a build up of plaque. That blockage can cause scarring and damage to the heart muscle. Studies differ, but some suggest that silent heart attacks are more common in women than in men. It's possible for a doctor to discover a heart attack through the use of MRI or an EKG even though the person never know the heart attack occurred.

People who have silent heart attacks are more likely to have non-specific and subtle symptoms, such as: indigestion, flu like symptoms, feeling like you strained a muscle in the chest or upper back, or discomfort in the jaw or upper back or arms.

A silent heart attack can be just as dangerous as its more obvious counterpart. Because the event often leaves scarring and damage to the heart, it put the person at greater risk of other heart problems. Since the person didn't know to seek treatment the overall impact could be greater.

Caring for your heart through a healthy diet and regular physical activity is the secret weapon to preventing heart disease. The real preventative power lies with real changes to your lifestyle—which can reduce the risk for heart disease by as much as 80 percent. Better cardiovascular health helps lower the risk for heart disease, stroke and other major health problems.  
(American Heart Association)

For more information or discussion on healthy lifestyle changes to maintain cardiovascular health, see Karen Morfitt, ORLC Parish Nurse.

## There are two ways to give tithes and offerings electronically!



**Download the Vanco Mobile App**—found on your phone's app store. This is the easiest way to give just once, or set up recurring gifts to Our Redeemer Lutheran Church.



**TXT2Give**—Text (833)610-0639 the amount you want to give and you will be linked to an easy one-time setup so it will be even easier the next time! Or—scan this QR code with your smartphone camera to get started!

# FEBRUARY WORLD WATCH LIST COUNTRIES

## NORTH KOREA

North Korea is arguably the most dangerous place on earth to follow Jesus. If someone is discovered to be a Christian, the consequences are unimaginably stark: either imprisonment in one of its notorious labor camps, with little hope of release, or immediate execution. The same fate is likely to await other family members.

While the church buildings displayed in the capital Pyongyang might suggest a degree of tolerance, this is propaganda. The reality is very different. Christianity has no place in North Korea, a country where homage must be directed one way only: towards the Kim regime. With watchful eyes everywhere – even from neighbors and family – even the slightest hint of worshipping Jesus can have devastating consequences. Remarkably, believers do gather, but in utmost secrecy and at enormous risk.

Recent years have seen conditions worsen further for North Korea's secret believers. This is largely due to the 'anti-reactionary thought law', introduced in 2020, which made it even clearer that being a Christian and owning a Bible is regarded as a serious crime. The law has reinforced just how much of a threat Christianity is seen to be by the country's unbending regime.

- Pray for Kim Jong-un and his family. Ask God to change their hearts – knowing that He did the same for the Apostle Paul.
- Communities of faith in North Korea are often small gatherings of families or close friends. Pray that God would protect these beautiful expressions of His church, and that these believers would sense God's perfect peace.
- Pray for those believers in North Korea affected by a lack of food, that God would help them find the food they need. Pray that they would be given opportunities to wisely share the gospel by caring for others in similar circumstances.

## SOMALIA

Christians in Somalia live in one of the harshest environments in the world, a place where openly following Jesus is impossible. In Somalia as a whole, it is illegal to convert from Islam to Christianity under the 2012 Provisional Constitution. Sharia (Islamic law) is upheld in all regions and this, coupled with social and clan pressure, forces Christians to practice their faith in secret and isolation. Conversion to a different religion is seen as betrayal and a dishonoring of country, clan and family. This can lead to violence, being disowned by family (which in clan-based Somalia leaves individuals highly vulnerable) and even execution, often by family members. Christians have no legal protection. Officials participate in or condone surveillance, harassment and intimidation – creating an environment where Christianity is criminalized.

The militant extremist group Al-Shabaab has grown in dominance in certain areas due to a worsening political and security situation that has created a leadership void. This group wishes to eradicate Christianity and openly executes anyone suspected of being a Christian.

- Somalia is one of the most dangerous places to live as a Christian. Pray that the small number of believers would find shelter and safety in the arms of Jesus.
- Al-Shabaab, the Islamic extremist group, target anyone they suspect of being Christian. Ask God to protect Christians and keep them from death or attack.
- Pray that Somali believers would know they aren't alone, even if they are forced to worship in secret.
- Somalia is traumatized, and Christian Somalis more so. Pray that God's Spirit will minister to them and that He would bring healing to their minds and spirits.

Find more information at: <https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/persecution/countries/>



# IN OUR Prayers

**Members:**

Mitzi Bittner	George Sagissor
Marge Dreesman	John Severson
Mike Gabel	Larry Sroufe
Duane Genzlinger	James Streyle
Duane Hartmann	Rhoda Thomas
Don Hennies	Jeanne Toay
Ella May Kelly	Kendra Voss
Louise Lafrentz	Mary Warns
Carole Lang	Jim Wosje
Mary Muchow	

**Loved Ones:**

Glenda; Mother of Jason Consoer
Nicole; Aunt of Ashley Consoer
Lorraine; Mother of Carol Daniels
Matt; Barb Ewoldt's Son
Mark; Son of Bob Graham
Pat; Friend of Bob Graham
Chuck; Family of Ed & Jean Harmdierks
Mark; Brother-in-Law of Jean Harmdierks
Ruby; Ed Harmdierks' Sister
Dan; Duane & Helen Hartmann's Son-in-Law
Joan; AJ Holtz's Grandmother
Dennis; Son of Phyllis Joyce
Byron; Roberta Mathiason's Son
Kolbe; Friend of Roberta Mathiason
Michael; Son of David Olson
Bernice; Mother of Nathan Sandbulte
Susie; Daughter-in-Law of Helen Schauer
Aislyn; Daughter of David Wacker
Gaylon, Audrey Wintersteen's Son-in-Law
Arnie; Father of Missionary Barb Rebentisch
Jim Wegehaupt; Former Member

**Our Homebound Members**

Betty Berry	Roberta Mathiason
Dan Clauson	Dorothy Oleson
Mary Clauson	Maxine Owens
Marge Dreesman	Larry Sroufe
Dorothy Dueis	Jeanne Toay
Cib Gaffer	Mariea Warns
Duane Genzlinger	Audrey Wintersteen
Ella May Kelly	

**Serving in the Military**

Joshua Bohling	Andrew Quam
William East	Matthew VanTassel
Curtis Furry	Tyler VanTassel
Jordy Martinez	Caleb Wosje
Luis Martinez	

*Please Note:*

*Those on the prayer list will be removed after 3 months unless we are otherwise notified.*

# “How can I get involved?”

## Children:

Sunday School—We have Sunday School for PreK-High School on Sunday mornings at 9:15AM. Our Sunday School teachers are:

Preschool: Mrs. Kristy Eden & Mrs. Kris Leonhardt  
 5 yrs-2nd Grade: Mrs. Deb Huntsinger  
 3rd-5th Grade: Mr. Bryan Eden  
 6th-8th Grade: Mr. Tim Eden  
 9th-12th Grade: Mr. & Mrs. Craig & Stephanie Eden

Kids 4 Christ—Mrs. Janelle Lafrentz, Mrs. Jody Rieck, and Mr. Derek Greenwaldt lead our children

Kindergarten—5th grade at Kids 4 Christ (K4C) every 1st and 3rd Friday. A meal will be served at 5:30 p.m., followed by our K4C program. The program ends at 7:30 p.m.

## Middle School Youth:

Catechesis Classes—We have catechesis classes every Wednesday during the school year from 6PM-7PM for 5th—8th graders except during Advent and Lent. Mr. Bryan Eden teaches the 5th grade class, and Rev. Brett Simek teaches the 6th-8th grade class. There is a church family meal before class at 5PM for anyone who may wish to eat at the church.

## Junior and High School Youth:

Youth Group—Mr. and Mrs. Craig & Stephanie Eden lead our youth group on Wednesday evenings 6PM—7PM for 8th—12th graders, as well as monthly activities throughout the year for 6th—12th graders.

## High School and Adults:

Vocal Choir—Choir rehearsals are each Wednesday evening at 7PM (7:30 during Advent and Lent). If you are interested in joining choir, please speak with or email Rev. Shane—HShane101@gmail.com.

Handbell Choir—We meet each Tuesday at 6:45PM. If you are interested in joining the handbell choir, please contact Matt Nussbaum.

## Adults:

Sunday Morning Bible Study—Sunday morning Bible study is led by Rev. Brett Simek each Sunday at 9:15AM. Join us in the Fellowship Hall downstairs!

Wednesday Adult Bible Study—We have Bible Study each Wednesday at 6PM except during Advent and Lent, led by Rev. David Morfitt.

Healing Hearts—Healing Hearts is a group of men and women who are at any stage of grieving the loss of a loved one. The purpose is to share in loss, get to know others, and find support within our church family. We meet monthly on the first Thursday at 10AM.

S.A.I.L. Classes—Parish Nurse Karen Morfitt leads our SAIL class, an exercise class focused on strength and balance every Monday and Thursday at 1:30PM.

## Senior Members:

Senior Saints Bible Study—We meet the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month at 1PM.

Senior Saints Brunch—We meet at Perkins on 41st Street the second Thursday of every month at 9:30AM.

## Men:

Guys’ Garage—Mr. Tim Goettsch leads the Guys’ Garage group. They meet the first Monday of each month at 6PM. There are different activities each month.

## Women:

LWML—We have two LWML groups at ORLC. Evening LWML meets the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30PM. Ebenezer LWML meets the third Thursday of each month at 1:30PM.

Women’s Bible Study—We meet the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of every month at 6:30PM.

## All members:

Volunteering—We are looking for people of all ages to help serve on Sunday mornings - greeters, ushers, altar guild members, acolytes, and help running presentations. If you are interested, contact the church office!