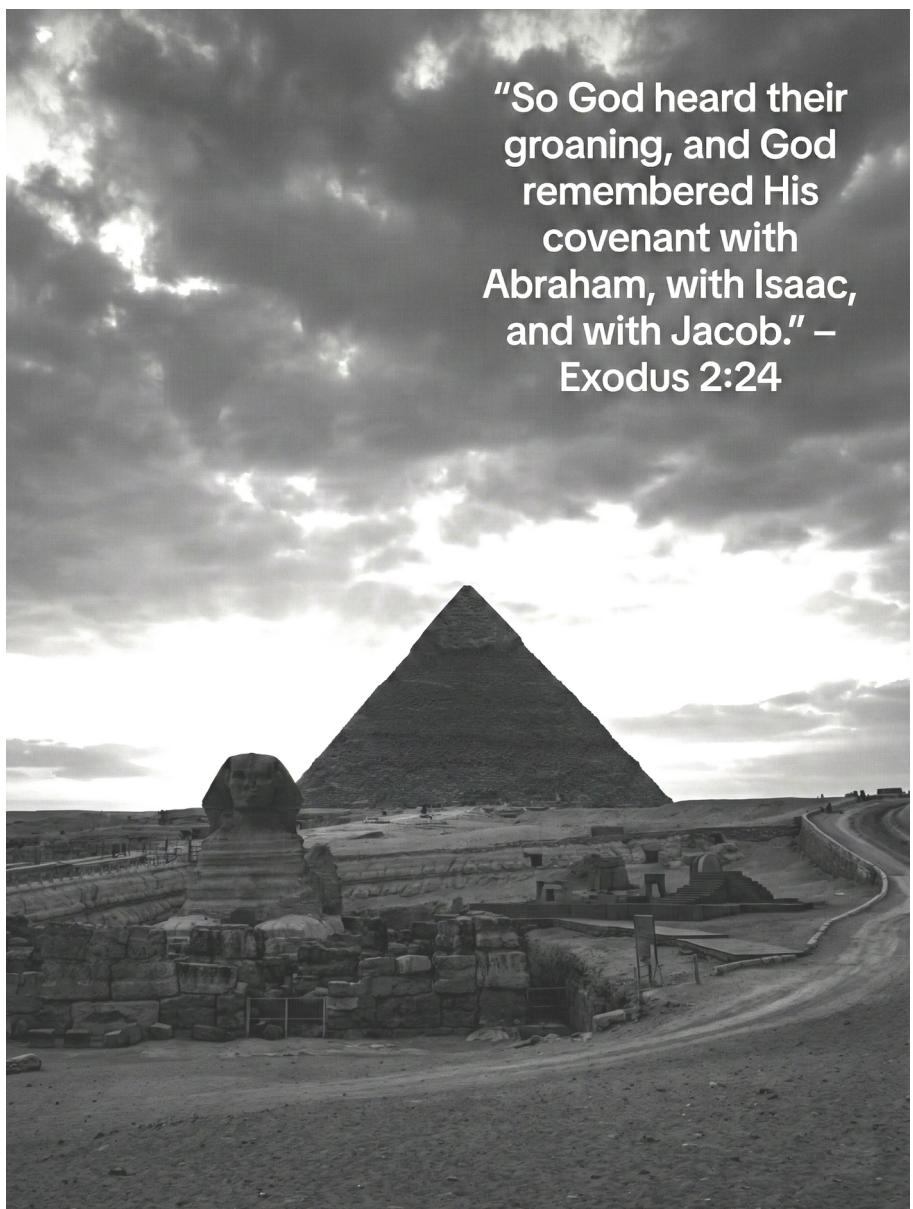


**"So God heard their
groaning, and God
remembered His
covenant with
Abraham, with Isaac,
and with Jacob." –
Exodus 2:24**



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As We Gather

The solemn season of Lent begins with a stark realization of our true spiritual condition: we are enslaved. Like the children of Israel sighing beneath the burdens of Egypt, we too groan under the heavy weight of our sin and the frailty of our mortality. In the midst of this distress, a desperate cry goes up from our hearts—but is anyone listening? Does the clamor of our suffering reach the throne of the Almighty? Today, the book of Exodus invites us to witness the profound compassion of our God. He is not deaf to our weeping nor blind to our plight. As we begin our journey to the cross, let us prepare our hearts to worship the Lord who does not merely observe our bondage from afar, but hears, remembers, and answers with a mighty deliverance.

† Preparation for Worship †

Hymn

166 – Savior, When in Dust to Thee

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

Opening Sentences

Psalm 130:1-2a; 50:15; 34:17; 102:19-20

P Out of the depths I have cried to You, O LORD;
C **Lord, hear my voice!**
P Call upon Me in the day of trouble;
C **I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.**
P The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears,
C **And delivers them out of all their troubles.**
P For He has looked down from the height of His sanctuary;
C **To hear the groaning of the prisoner, to release those appointed to death.**

Confession and Absolution

P Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, today we stand at the threshold of Lent, remembering that we are dust and to dust we shall return. Yet we are also a people bound by the weight of our own sin. Like Israel in Egypt, our spirit groans under bondage, unable to free ourselves. But we have a God who sees, knows, and remembers His covenant. Let us take refuge in His mercy, confessing our sins and imploring Him to hear our cry.

C O God, our Deliverer, we confess we are bound by sin and cannot free ourselves. Like Your people of old, we groan under our transgressions yet fail to cry out in faith. We have trusted our own strength and sought rest in the world rather than in the gentle yoke of Your Son. Have mercy, O Lord. Look upon our affliction, remember Your covenant, and for the sake of Jesus Christ, grant us pardon and peace.

P Almighty God has heard your groaning and has looked upon you with favor. He remembers His covenant sealed in the blood of Jesus. In Christ, God has come down to deliver you. As a called servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Come to Him, for His yoke is easy and His burden is light.

C Amen.

† The Service of the Word †

Salutation

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

P Let us pray...

... who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Epistle Reading

Hebrews 2:14-18

¹⁴ Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. ¹⁶ For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. ¹⁷ Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

Psalm of the Day

Psalm 51:1-12

P Have mercy upon me, O God, According to Your lovingkindness;

C **According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, Blot out my transgressions.**

P Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,

C **And cleanse me from my sin.**

P For I acknowledge my transgressions,

C **And my sin is always before me.**

P Against You, You only, have I sinned, And done this evil in Your sight

C **That You may be found just when You speak, And blameless when You judge.**

P Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,

C **And in sin my mother conceived me.**

P Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts,

C **And in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom.**

P Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;

C **Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.**

P Make me hear joy and gladness,

C **That the bones You have broken may rejoice.**

P Hide Your face from my sins,

C **And blot out all my iniquities.**

P Create in me a clean heart, O God,

C **And renew a steadfast spirit within me.**

P Do not cast me away from Your presence,

C **And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.**

P Restore to me the joy of Your salvation,

C **And uphold me by Your generous Spirit.**

Passion History Reading

I. Jesus' Betrayal and Arrest

When Jesus had spoken these words, and when they had sung a hymn, He went to the Mount of Olives as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him. They went over the brook Kidron, and they came to a garden named Gethsemane. Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' But after I have been raised I will go before you to Galilee."

But Peter answered and said to Him, "Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble." Jesus said to him, "Assuredly I say to you that today, even this night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." But Peter spoke more vehemently:

“Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!” And so said all the disciples.

When He came to the place, Jesus said to His disciples: “Sit here while I go and pray over there. Pray that you may not enter into temptation.” And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, James and John, and He was withdrawn from the others about a stone’s throw. And He began to be sorrowful, troubled, and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.”

And He went a little farther, and He knelt down. He fell to the ground on His face, and prayed. He said: “Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Let this cup pass from Me; if it is Your will. Not My will, but Yours be done.” Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. And being in agony He prayed more fervently; and His sweat became like great drops of blood, falling down to the ground.

When He rose up from prayer, He came to His disciples and found them sleeping from sorrow. He said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch with Me one hour?” He said to them, “Rise, watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing and ready, but the flesh is weak.”

He went away again a second time and prayed, saying the same words, “O My Father, if this cup cannot pass from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done.”

And He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him. So He left them and went away again and prayed the third time, saying the same words once more. Then He came to His disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough. Behold, the hour has come; the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up, let us be going. He who betrays Me is at hand.” Now Judas, one of the twelve, who betrayed Jesus, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples. He received a detachment of troops and officers from the chief priests and the scribes and elders of the people, and came there with lanterns and torches, and weapons; swords and clubs. And while Jesus was still speaking, this great multitude came, and the one called Judas went before them. Now Judas had given them a sign, saying, “Whomever I kiss, He is the one; take Him, and lead Him away safely.”

Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, “Whom are you seeking?” They answered Him, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus said to them, “I am He.” Then, when He said to them, “I am He”, they went backward and fell to the ground. Then He asked them again, “Whom are you seeking?” And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus answered, “I told you that I am He; therefore if you seek Me, let these

go their way”, that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, “Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none.”

Judas drew near to Jesus to kiss Him. He went up to Him, and said to Him, “Hail, Master!” and kissed Him. And Jesus said to him, “Friend, why have you come? Are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?”

When those who were around Jesus saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, “Lord, shall we strike with the sword?” Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him. And suddenly Simon Peter drew out his sword, and struck the high priest’s servant and cut off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus.

But Jesus answered and said, “Permit even this!” And He touched his ear and healed him. Then He said to Peter, “Put your sword into the sheath; for all who take the sword will die by the sword. Do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? But how then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus? Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?”

In that hour Jesus said to the chief priests and captains of the temple and elders who came to Him, “Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? I sat daily with you in the temple, teaching, and you did not lay hands on Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness.” All this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then the disciples forsook Him and fled.

Now a certain young man followed Him, having a linen cloth thrown around his naked body; and the young men laid hold of him. And he left the linen cloth and fled from them naked.

Confession of Faith

Luther’s Explanation of the Second Article

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord.

He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sin, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and His innocent suffering and death.

He did this that I should be His very own, live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in eternal righteousness, innocence, and joy; just as He is risen from death, lives and reigns in eternity.

This is most certainly true.

Hymn

327 – Out of the Deep I Call

Sermon Text

Exodus 2:23-25

²³ Now it happened in the process of time that the king of Egypt died. Then the children of Israel groaned because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry came up to God because of the bondage. ²⁴ So God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. ²⁵ And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God acknowledged them.



The Good News of a God Who Hears and Answers Cries

Offertory

179 – On My Heart Imprint Thine Image

On my heart im - print Thine im - age, Bless-ed Je - sus,
King of Grace, That life's rich - es, cares, and plea-sures
Have no pow'r Thee to ef - face. This the su - per -
scrip-tion be: Je - sus, cru - ci - fied for me, Is my Life, my
hope's Foun - da - tion, And my Glo - ry and Sal - va - tion.

General Prayer



The Lord's Prayer

C 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.

Benediction

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

C Amen.

Hymn

151 (1-2, 6-7) – Christ, the Life of All the Living

† Announcements †

Upcoming Schedule – winterhavenlutheran.com/church-calendar

February 18	2:00 pm	Ash Wednesday Worship Service
February 22	8:00 am	Worship Service (Orlando)
	10:15 am	Worship Service (Winter Haven)
February 25	2:00 pm	Midweek Lenten Worship
February 27	10:30 am	Learning with Littles
March 1	9:15 am	Bible Class
	10:15 am	Worship Service w/ Holy Communion
	11:30 am	Board of Trustees/Church Council

Upcoming Meetings: Here is a schedule of our upcoming meetings:

- **March 1** – Trustees/Church Council
- **April 5** – Quarterly Voters' Meeting
- **May 3** – Education/Elders

In Our Prayers: Please keep our shut-in members in your prayers: Don Beymer, Bob & Joan Doriot, Johanna Jaehnigen, David & Elsie Kleinschmidt, Shirley Rosenberry, and Mike Sheffield.

Looking Forward to Sunday: In the world of epidemiology, "Patient Zero" is the index case—the first carrier of a plague. Spiritually, that patient was Adam. This Sunday, we will turn to Romans 5:12–19 to confront the deadly infection of original sin. Paul writes that "through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin." The prognosis seems fatal, for death spread to all. Yet, we will not despair! We will uncover the "Divine Antidote." Just as judgment came through one, the "free gift" of grace flows through the Second Adam, Jesus Christ. Come and rejoice in the promise that "by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous."

Midweek Lenten Series: Set Free: The Gospel in Exodus: Our midweek Lenten services began today. This year, our meditation follows the theme "Set Free: The Gospel in Exodus." We are exploring how the Old Testament account of Israel's rescue from Egypt foreshadows our own rescue from sin and death. Just as God heard the cries of His people in bondage, He hears us and answers us in Christ Jesus.

Please join us for the remainder of these opportunities to grow in grace and the knowledge of our Savior's passion. All services are at 2:00 PM.

Service Schedule:

- **Feb 25:** The Good News of a God Who Reveals Himself to Us (Exodus 3:1-15)
- **Mar 4:** The Good News of a God Who Sends a Deliverer (Exodus 4:1-20)
- **Mar 11:** The Good News of a God Who Passes over Us in Mercy (Exodus 12:1-14)
- **Mar 18:** The Good News of a God Who Makes a Way for Us (Exodus 14:5-31)
- **Mar 25:** The Good News of a God Who Sustains on Our Journey (Exodus 16:1-18, 35)

Divine Call Received: Our lower grade teacher, Ms. Katie Naumann, has received a divine Call to serve as teacher and principal at Redeemer Lutheran School in Cheyenne, Wyoming. As she evaluates this new Call alongside her current Call here with us, please keep Katie in your daily prayers. We ask the Holy Spirit to grant her wisdom, peace, and clarity during this time of deliberation. You are also warmly encouraged to reach out to her to offer your support, share your thoughts, and express your appreciation for her faithful ministry among our children.

