

St. John Lutheran Church

# Ash WEDNESDAY



*Dust you are, And to dust you shall return.*

**FEBRUARY 18<sup>th</sup> • 7:00 PM**

# ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Rev. Tammy P. Harmer

Deacon Betsey Eley & Deacon Ken Weaver

ASH WEDNESDAY • FEBRUARY 18, 2026

## Prelude

## Welcome

## Invitation to Lent

Friends in Christ, today with the whole church we enter the time of remembering Jesus' passover from death to life, and our life in Christ is renewed.

We begin this holy season by acknowledging our need for repentance and for God's mercy. We are created to experience joy in communion with God, to love one another, and to live in harmony with creation. But our sinful rebellion separates us from God, our neighbors, and creation, so that we do not enjoy the life our creator intended.

As disciples of Jesus, we are called to a discipline that contends against evil and resists whatever leads us away from love of God and neighbor. I invite you, therefore, to the discipline of Lent—self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love—strengthened by the gifts of word and sacrament. Let us continue our journey through these forty days to the great Three Days of Jesus' death and resurrection.

## Confession and Forgiveness

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

In the name of God, who makes a way in the wilderness, walks with us, and guides us in our pilgrimage.

**Amen.**

Holy One,

**We confess that we have wandered far from you: We have not trusted your promises,  
We have ignored your prophets in our own day, We have squandered our inheritance of grace,  
We have failed to recognize you in our midst. Have mercy on us! Forgive us and turn us again to you.  
Teach us to follow in your ways, Assure us again of your love, And help us to love our neighbor.  
Amen.**

Beloved in Christ,

The Word draws near to you. And all who call out to God shall be saved.

In Jesus, God comes to you again and again and gathers you under wings of love.

In ✝ Jesus' name, your sins are forgiven God journeys with you and teaches you how to live in love.

**Amen.**

## Imposition of Ashes

Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth. May these ashes be a sign of our mortality and penitence, reminding us that only by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ are we given eternal life; through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

*People may come forward to receive the ashes.*

P/D Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

P/D Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,  
C **that we may show forth your glory in the world.**

P/D By the cross and passion of your Son, our Savior,  
C **bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.**

## Prayer of the Day

Let us pray:

*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.*

## Word

### First Reading: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

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— <sup>2</sup> 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 . . .

<sup>12</sup> Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;

<sup>13</sup> rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing.

<sup>14</sup> 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?

<sup>15</sup> Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly;

<sup>16</sup> gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her canopy.

<sup>17</sup> 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 51:1-17

**Response: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love.**

<sup>1</sup> Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

<sup>2</sup> **Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.**

<sup>3</sup> For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

<sup>4</sup> **Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.**

<sup>5</sup> Indeed, I was born guilty, a when my mother conceived me.

<sup>6</sup> **You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart. R**

<sup>7</sup> Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

<sup>8</sup> **Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice. R**

<sup>9</sup> Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

<sup>10</sup> **Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.**

<sup>11</sup> Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.

<sup>12</sup> **Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit. R**

<sup>13</sup> Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

<sup>14</sup> **Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, O God of my salvation, my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.**

<sup>15</sup> O LORD, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

<sup>16</sup> **For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.**

<sup>17</sup> The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. **R**

## **Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:1-10**

<sup>20b</sup> We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup> For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

<sup>6:1</sup> As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. <sup>2</sup> For he says, "At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you." See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! <sup>3</sup> We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, <sup>4</sup> but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, <sup>5</sup> beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; <sup>6</sup> by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, <sup>7</sup> truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; <sup>8</sup> in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; <sup>9</sup> as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; <sup>10</sup> 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.**

## **Gospel Acclamation (Lenten)**

**We are turning, Lord, to hear you; you are merciful and kind —  
slow to anger, rich in blessing, and with love to us inclined.**

## **Gospel: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21**

The holy gospel according to Matthew

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

"Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

<sup>2</sup> "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.

<sup>3</sup> But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, <sup>4</sup> so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

<sup>5</sup> "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.

<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>16</sup>“And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. <sup>17</sup> But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup> 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.

<sup>19</sup>“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; <sup>20</sup> but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust[c] consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **Sermon**

**Hymn of the Day:** When I Survey The Wonderous Cross (#803)

## **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 (places may be named). 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 hunger, and give housing to all without shelter.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great**

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**

We pray for peace throughout the world: in our nation, Ukraine, Israel, Gaza, Sudan, and all war-torn areas. We pray for our military and their families.

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 (Martin Luther and) 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.**

## **Offering**

## Prayer

Let us pray.

Merciful God, accompany our journey through these forty days. Renew us in the gift of baptism, that we may provide for those who are poor, pray for those in need, fast from self-indulgence, and above all that we may find our treasure in the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever.*

*Amen.*

**Sending Hymn:** Just As I Am (#592)

## Blessing

## Dismissal

## Postlude

### PRAYER LIST

*Please keep the following in your prayers for healing:*

Jen Bailey	Indie Fisher	Eunice Knopp	Samantha Reed	George Van Wagner
Krystal Booras	Rhea Fryor	Donna Leek	Kimberly Rickert	Beverly Warming
Michael Botti	Bob Garner	Tim McCarthy	Ashley Rosser	Mary White
Brian Byrnes	Angela Guedes	Joanne McVelli	Dorcas Schellhas	Helen Yezusko
Randy Cantoral	Stan Harmer	Larry Mirabile	Finn Schureman	Bob Zielsdorf
Janet Cappuccio	Michelle Walk Hewitt	Melanie Miles	Gladys Sheppard	
Sandra DeRitis	Valerie Hoffmann	Kent Montford	Frank Siderio III	
Helen Dominic	Makenzie Jack	Sue Murphy	Eric Sprengel	
Frank Donovan	Ed Kagen	Bill Murray	Bill Steel	
Marie Lentine Douglas	Tracey Kelly	Renate Murray	Bill Todt	
Tracey Drew	Carl Knopp	Erica Polito	George Vaneman, Sr.	

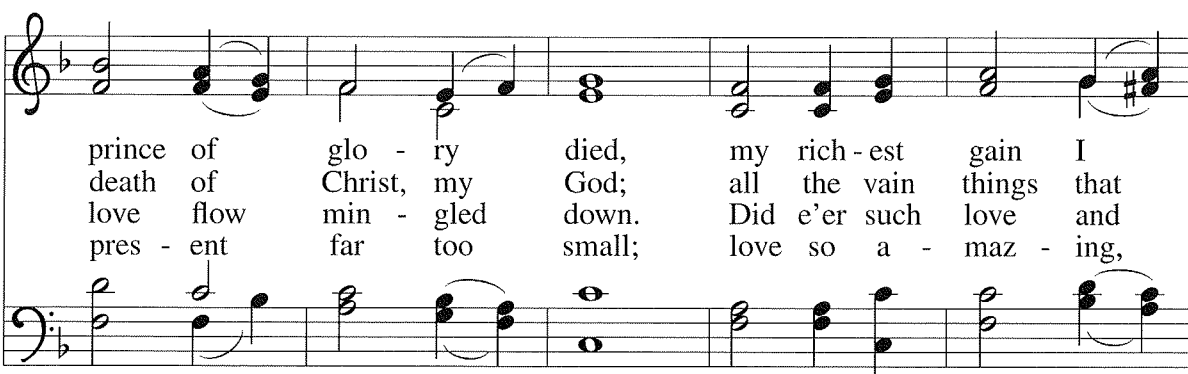
*Please notify the office if you want to add or remove a person from this list.*

# When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

803



1 When I sur - vey the won - drous cross on which the  
2 For - bid it, Lord, that I should boast save in the  
3 See, from his head, his hands, his feet, sor - row and  
4 Were the whole realm of na - ture mine, that were a



prince of glo - ry died, my rich - est gain I  
death of Christ, my God; all the vain things that  
love flow min - gled down. Did e'er such love and  
pres - ent far too small; love so a - maz - ing,



count but loss and pour con - tempt on all my pride.  
charm me most, I sac - ri - fice them to his blood.  
sor - row meet, or thorns com - pose so rich a crown?  
so di - vine, de - mands my soul, my life, my all.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748  
Music: Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

HAMBURG  
LM

Alternate tune: ROCKINGHAM OLD

1 Just as I am, with - out one plea, but that thy blood was  
 2 Just as I am, though tossed a - bout with man - y\_a con - flict,  
 3 Just as I am, thou wilt re - ceive, wilt wel - come, par - don,  
 4 Just as I am; thy love un - known has bro - ken ev - 'ry

shed for me, and that thou bidd'st me come to thee,  
 man - y\_a doubt, fight - ings and fears with - in, with - out,  
 cleanse, re - lieve; be - cause thy prom - ise I be - lieve,  
 bar - rier down; now to be thine, yea, thine a - lone,

O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Text: Charlotte Elliott, 1789-1871  
 Music: William B. Bradbury, 1816-1868

WOODWORTH  
 LM

## ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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### ST. JOHN'S STAFF

Pastor: The Rev. Tammy Harmer  
 Deacons: Betsey Eley/Ken Weaver  
 Administrative Coordinator: Pat Reed  
 Treasurer: Henry Fickenscher  
 Head Usher: Ted Adams

Music Director/Choirmaster: Janice Smith  
 Instrumental Music Director: Ken Weaver  
 Sexton: Betsey Eley  
 Webmaster: Tom Schofield  
 Publications Director: Marie Fickenscher