

WELCOME



AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Ash Wednesday

ELW Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, February 18, 2026

OUR MISSION

Jesus Christ calls American Lutheran Church to nourish the world by faithfully sharing His gifts.

Praise God that we can worship together! We pray you will be enlightened by the Holy Spirit and strengthened in the faith that trusts in our Lord Jesus Christ and praises him for the gift of our salvation. Peace be with you.

CONTACT US

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WELCOME VISITORS!

We are so happy you've joined us today. If you have any questions about our service or facilities, please reach out to an usher. If you are a guest please fill out the yellow slip and place it in the offering plate.

All who are baptized are welcome to receive communion. If you would prefer to receive a blessing only, come with your hands folded.

If you are looking for a church home, know you are always welcome here.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRELUDE KAREN WELTZIN

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING SONG *Savior, When in Dust to You* (ELW #601)

GREETING

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.

The assembly is 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.

The reading may be announced:

A reading from Joel.

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?'"

The reading may be concluded:

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 51:1-17

¹ Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; in your great compassion blot out my offenses.

² Wash me through and through from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sin.

³ For I know my offenses, and my sin is ever before me.

⁴ Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are justified when you speak and right in your judgment.

⁵ Indeed, I was born steeped in wickedness, a sinner from my mother's womb.

⁶ Indeed, you delight in truth deep within me, and would have me know wisdom deep within.

⁷ Remove my sins with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be purer than snow.

⁸ Let me hear joy and gladness; that the body you have broken may rejoice.

⁹ Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my wickedness.

¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

¹¹ Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.

¹³ Let me teach your ways to offenders, and sinners shall be restored to you.

¹⁴ Rescue me from bloodshed, O God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness.

¹⁵ O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

¹⁶ **For you take no delight in sacrifice, or I would give it. You are not pleased with burnt offering.**

¹⁷ The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; a troubled and broken heart, O God, you will not despise.

SECOND READING: 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.

The reading may be announced:

A reading from 2 Corinthians.

^{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.

The reading may be concluded:

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW p. 142)

The assembly stands to welcome the gospel.

Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and abounding in steadfast love.

GOSPEL: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

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

The gospel is announced.

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[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 concludes:

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

The assembly is seated.

HYMN OF THE DAY Drawn to the Light (ELW 593)

INVITATION TO LENT (ELW p. 252)

The assembly is seated.

CONFESSION OF SIN (ELW p. 252)

The presiding minister leads the following or another confession.

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 (ELW p. 254)

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 and kneel or stand to receive the ashes.

Ministers mark the forehead of each person with a cross of ashes, saying:
Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.
After those who desire ashes have received them, all may kneel or sit, and the minister continues.
Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,
that we may show forth your glory in the world.
By the cross and passion of your Son, our Savior,
bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.
The presiding minister addresses the assembly.
Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. **Amen.**

PRAYER SONG O Lord, Hear My Prayer (ELW 751)

O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer: when I call, answer me.
O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer: come and listen to me.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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

THE OFFERING IS RECEIVED (ELW #186) Create in Me

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

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 our thanks and praise.**

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW PAGE 144)

LORD'S PRAYER (ELW PAGE 145)

COMMUNION

PRAYER (ELW p. 254)

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept.

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.

SENDING SONG ELW 608 Softly and Tenderly, Jesus is Calling

BLESSING

DISMISSAL (ELW p. 255)

Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor all people; love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE KAREN WELTZIN

ASSISTING ASH WEDNESDAY:

Pastor: Pat Mohr-Kelly

Music: Karen Weltzin

Usher: Randy Frush

Deacon: 2pm Connie Hamilton 7pm Maureen Even