ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
127 YORK STREET
HANOVER, PA

ASH WEDNESDAY

February 18, 2026

Rev. Jason Northridge, Pastor
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Rev. Jack R. Hoffman, Pastor Emeritus
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Lori Rebling, Director of Hand Bells
Gretchen Walter, Director of Children's Music
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WELCOME TO ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH!

If you are seeking a faith community, exploring faith, desire to be a part of our ministries, or have questions; please feel free to speak with the pastor.

Our Purpose:
We are called through Christ to praise God and love generously.

Guiding Principles:
As instruments of God's love, when you see us at our best you will see us:
–***Generously*** stewarding God's gifts of resources, time, and talents
–***Serving*** as God's hands & feet in ministries & missions of outreach to all
–***Providing*** for the care of God's people, both physically and spiritually
–***Growing in Faith*** through worship, study, and discernment
–***Praising*** God through music, word, and service
–***Welcoming*** all people into fellowship with God

Important Worship Notes

All liturgies are printed within this bulletin.

Children's activity bags and children's bulletins are located on the podium in the hallway on the pulpit side of the sanctuary. Children's activity bags are also located on the coat rack behind the door of the choir loft side of the sanctuary.

P: Pastor **C:** Congregation **L:** Lay Reader **A:** Assisting Minister

If you are communing, please be sure to fill out a communion record card, for our church records, and place it in the offering plate. Thank you.

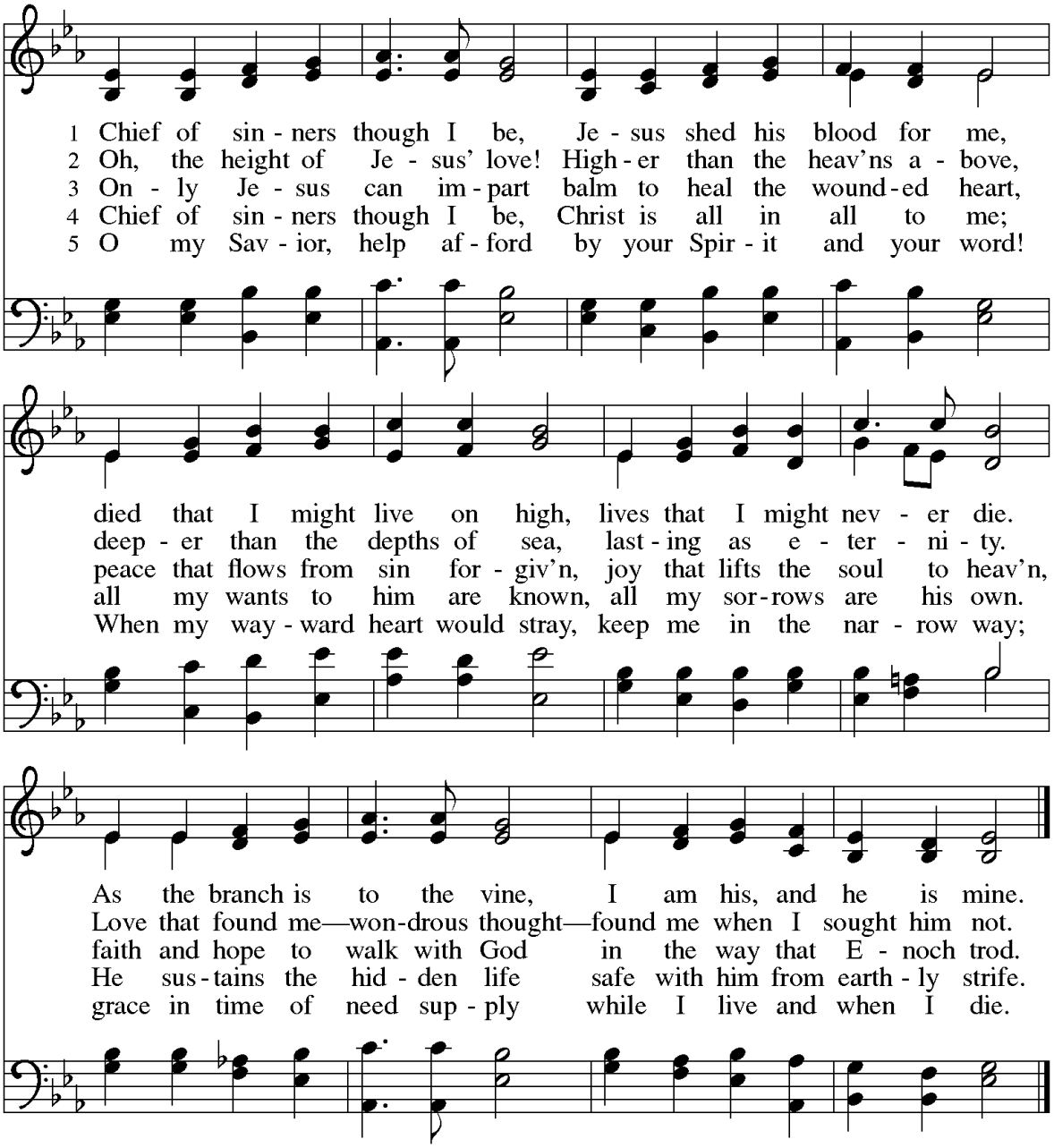
+ ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE +
Imposition of Ashes
February 18, 2026

INTRODUCTION

On Ash Wednesday we begin our forty-day journey toward Easter with a day of fasting and repentance. Marking our foreheads with dust, we acknowledge that we die and return to the earth. At the same time, the dust traces the life-giving cross indelibly marked on our foreheads at baptism. While we journey through Lent to return to God, we have already been reconciled to God through Christ. We humbly pray for God to make our hearts clean while we rejoice that "now is the day of salvation." Returning to our baptismal call, we more intentionally bear the fruits of mercy and justice in the world.

WELCOME

***HYMN** *"Chief of Sinners Though I Be"* ELW 609



***GREETING**

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C And also with you.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P Let us pray,
Gracious God, out of your love and mercy you breathed into dust the breath of life, creating us to serve you and our neighbors. Call forth our prayers and acts of kindness, and strengthen us to face our mortality with confidence in the mercy of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

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 declares that God is gracious and asks God to spare the people lest the nations doubt God's power to save.

L The First Reading according to Joel, the 2nd chapter.

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, and abounding in
steadfast love, and relents from punishing. 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; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; 16 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.

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?'"

L The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING 2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10

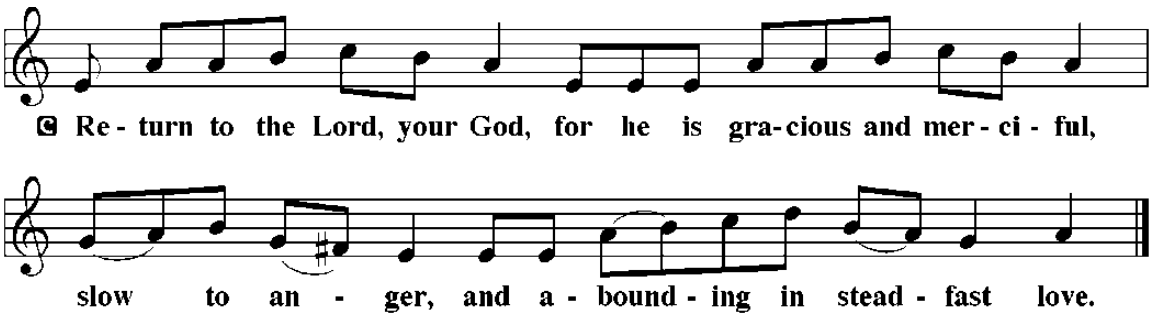
The ministry of the gospel endures many challenges and hardships. Through this ministry, God's reconciling activity in the death of Christ reaches into the depths of our lives to bring us into a right relationship with God. In this way, God accepts us into the reality of divine salvation.

L The Second Reading according to 2 Corinthians, the 5th chapter.

20b We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21 For our sake he
made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the
righteousness of God. 6:1 As we work together with him, we urge 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." See, now is the acceptable time; see,
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: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities,
5 beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; 6 by 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 see—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.

L The word of the Lord.
C Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** *Return to the Lord*



***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.

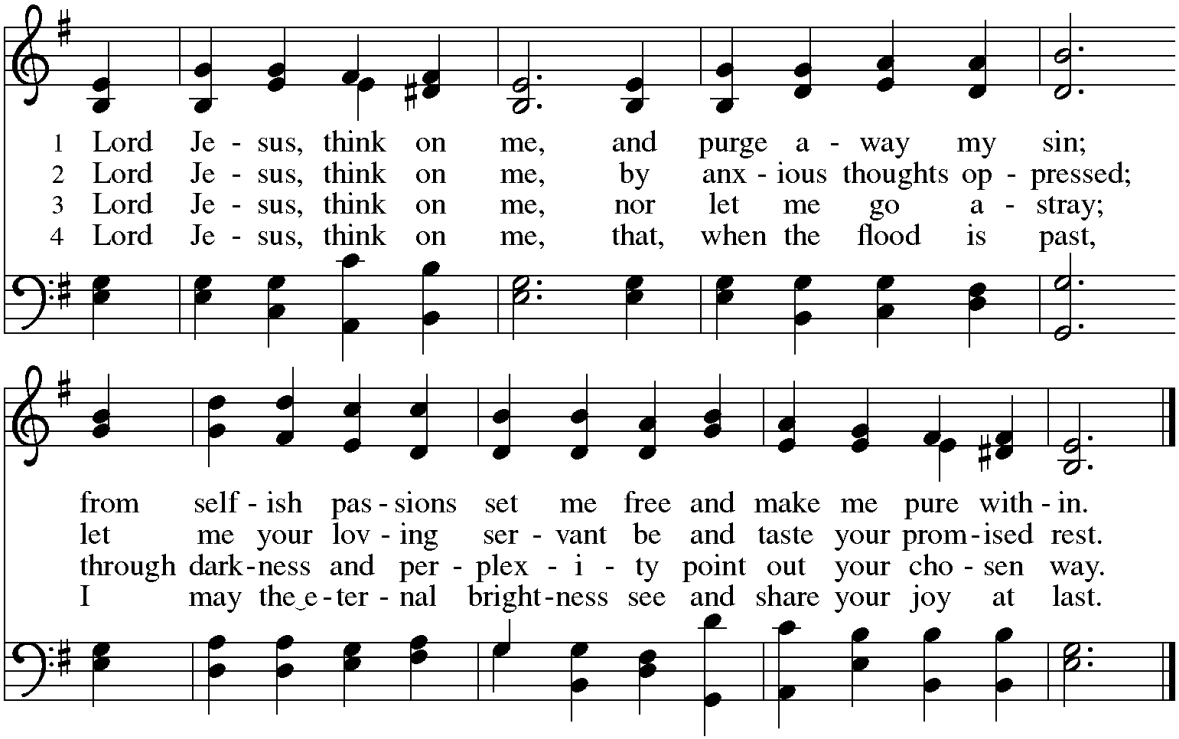
P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 6th chapter.
C Glory to you, O Lord.

P [Jesus said to the disciples:] 1"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. 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. 3But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4so 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. 6But 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 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. 17But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 18so 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; 20but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

P The Gospel of the Lord.
C Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON Pastor Jason Northridge

***HYMN OF THE DAY** *"Lord Jesus, think on Me"* ELW 599



INVITATION TO LENT

P 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.

CALL TO CONFESSION

P People of God, let us confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt and blots out all offenses.

Brief silence for reflection.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

P Gracious God,

C **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**
For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you:
Gracious God,
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.
For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word:
Gracious God,
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.
For failing to recognize your coming reign,
and for hindering the work of the Spirit: Gracious God,
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.
For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition,
and for disdaining the living water Christ offers: Gracious God,
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.
For disregarding voices from the margin,
and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world:
Gracious God,
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.
For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent,
and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life:
Gracious God,
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

P God's steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness abound. Through faith, the free gift of God, you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ. In the name of ☩ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. The Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead dwells in you, pours God's love into your hearts, and gives you life and peace.

C **Amen.**

THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES

P Let us pray,
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.

C Amen.

Those who desire to receive ashes come forward.

"Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

P Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,

C 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.

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.

***PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

P Lifting our voices and turning toward God, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

P We pray for the church….
(*The congregation is invited to pray for the church.*)
The petition concludes: Hear us, O God.
C Your mercy is great.

P We pray for the world….
(*The congregation is invited to pray for the world.*)
The petition concludes: Hear us, O God.
C Your mercy is great.

P We pray for people in need….
(*The congregation is invited to pray for the people in need.*)
The petition concludes: Hear us, O God.
C Your mercy is great.

P Into your hands, merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your steadfast love; through Christ our Lord.
C Amen.

THE MEAL

OFFERTORY ANTHEM *"Just As I Am"* *arr. Arnold Sherman*

Adult Choir

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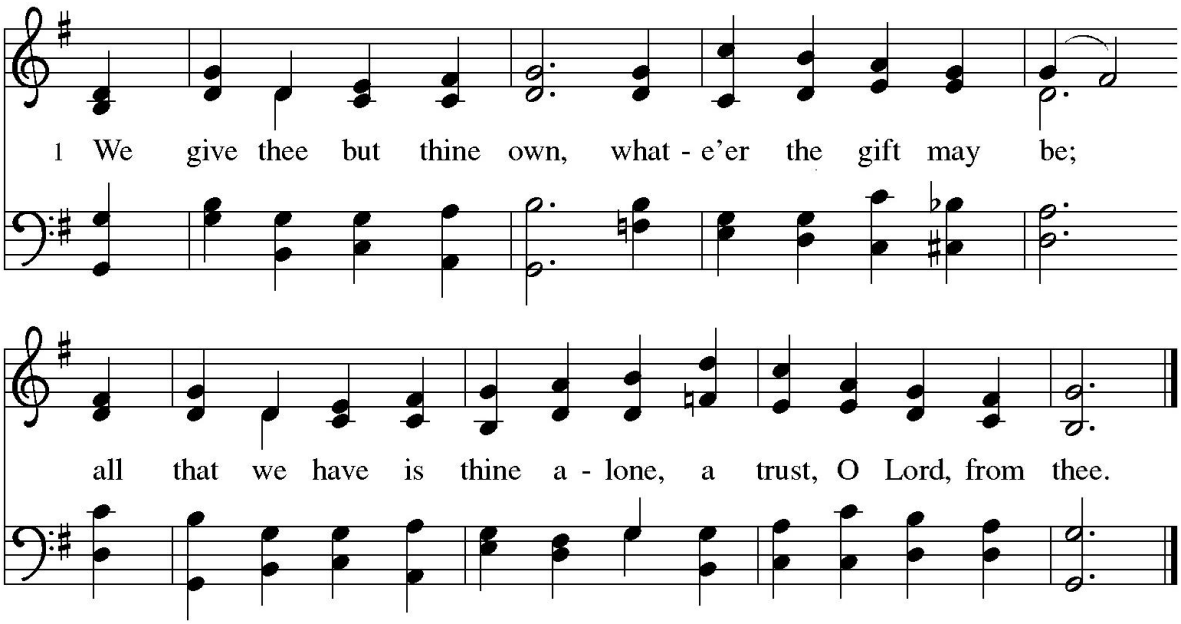
There are several ways of making your offerings to God during this time. One is to place your offering in our offering plates as they are passed. You can give electronically at https://stpaulsyorkst.org/give or scan this QR Code and when the plate passes by, you may simply meditate on the gifts that you are currently making online or monthly. We do have cards that you can put in the plate indicating that you give electronically. A supply of those cards is available at each entrance to the sanctuary.

If you are not able to give monetarily during this time, know that your prayers and praise are a pleasing offering to God. If you can give a little more during this time, please consider doing so as a way of supporting your fellow disciples who are not able to give.

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE



*OFFERTORY PRAYER

P Let us pray,
O God, maker of heaven and earth,

C your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

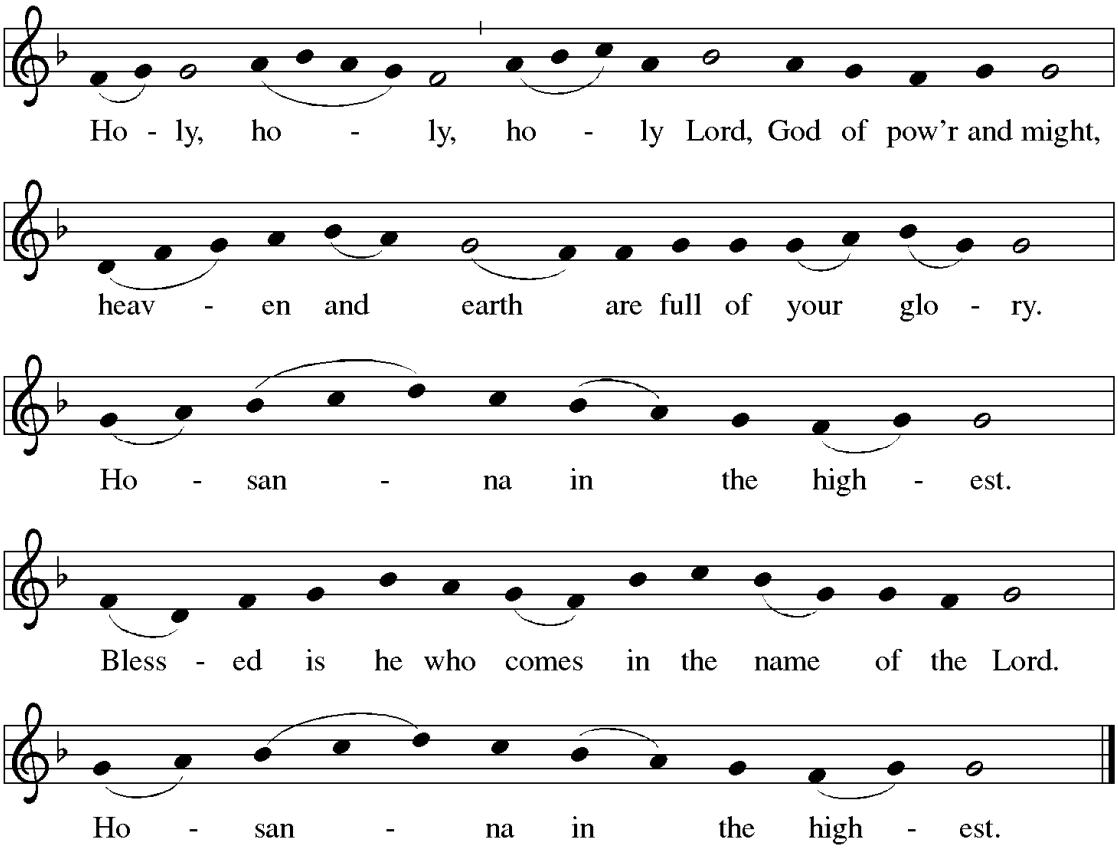
***DIALOGUE**

P The Lord be with you.
C And also with you.
P Lift up your hearts.
C We lift them to the Lord.
P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

***PREFACE**

P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that, renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

***SANCTUS** ELW 162



***THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

P Blessed are you, O God of the universe.
Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age.
Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth.
Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood.
Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea.
Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness to the land of milk and honey.
Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one.
Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ.
Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

In the night in which he was handed over,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's passover from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith:
Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

O God of resurrection and new life:
Pour out your Holy Spirit on us
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Bless this feast.
Grace our table with your presence.
Come, Holy Spirit.

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread.
Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world.
Breathe new life into us.
Send us forth,
burning with justice, peace, and love.
Come, Holy Spirit.

With your holy ones of all times and places,
with the earth and all its creatures,
with sun and moon and stars,
we praise you, O God,
blessed and holy Trinity,
now and forever.
Amen.

***LORD'S PRAYER**

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray…

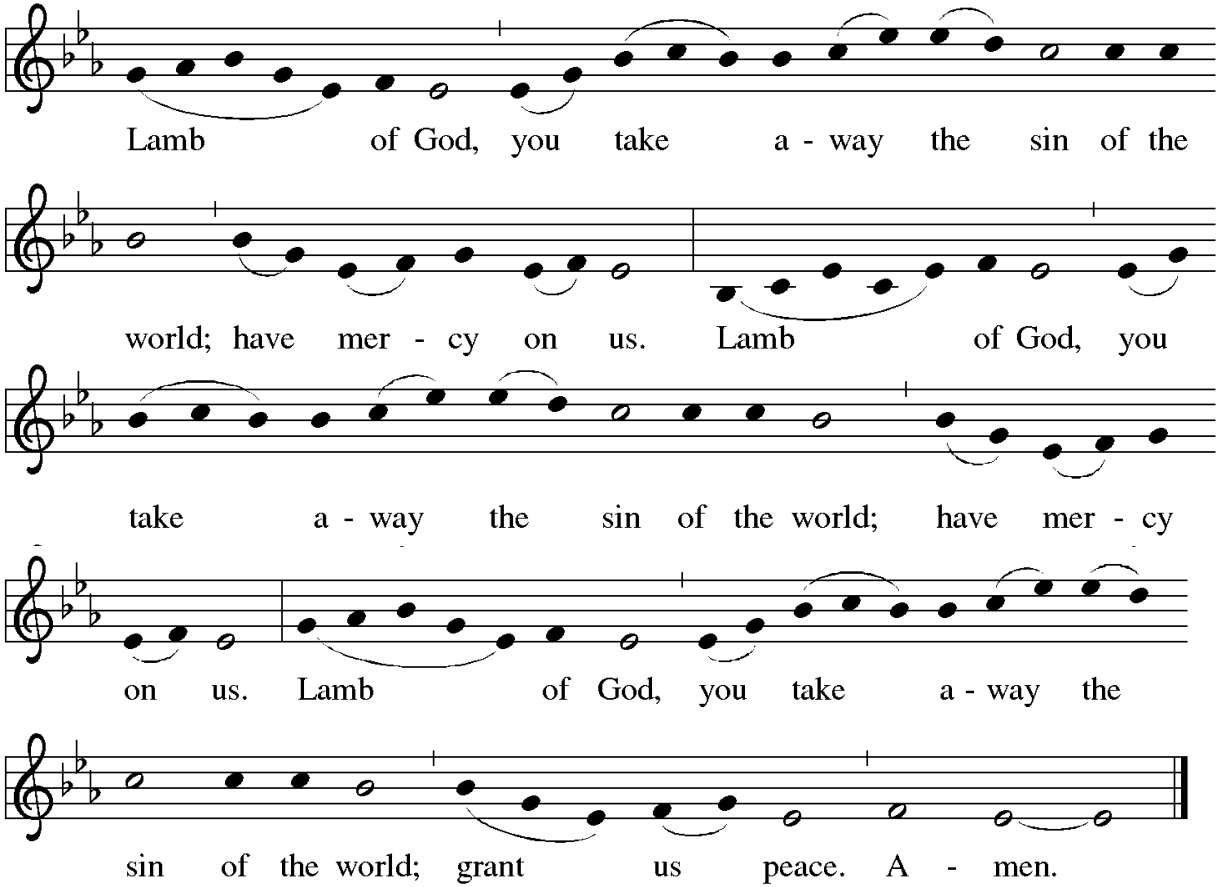
C Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P Come to the table. Feast on God's goodness and mercy.

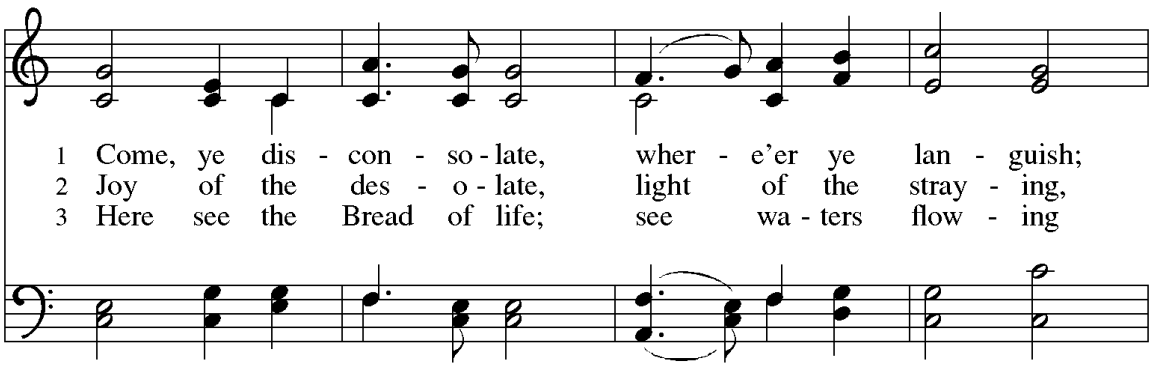
All are welcome to commune.
If you wish to receive communion from your seat, let an usher know.
If you are in need of gluten free wafers, please ask at the bread station.
Grape juice is available in the prefilled cups next to the empty ones.

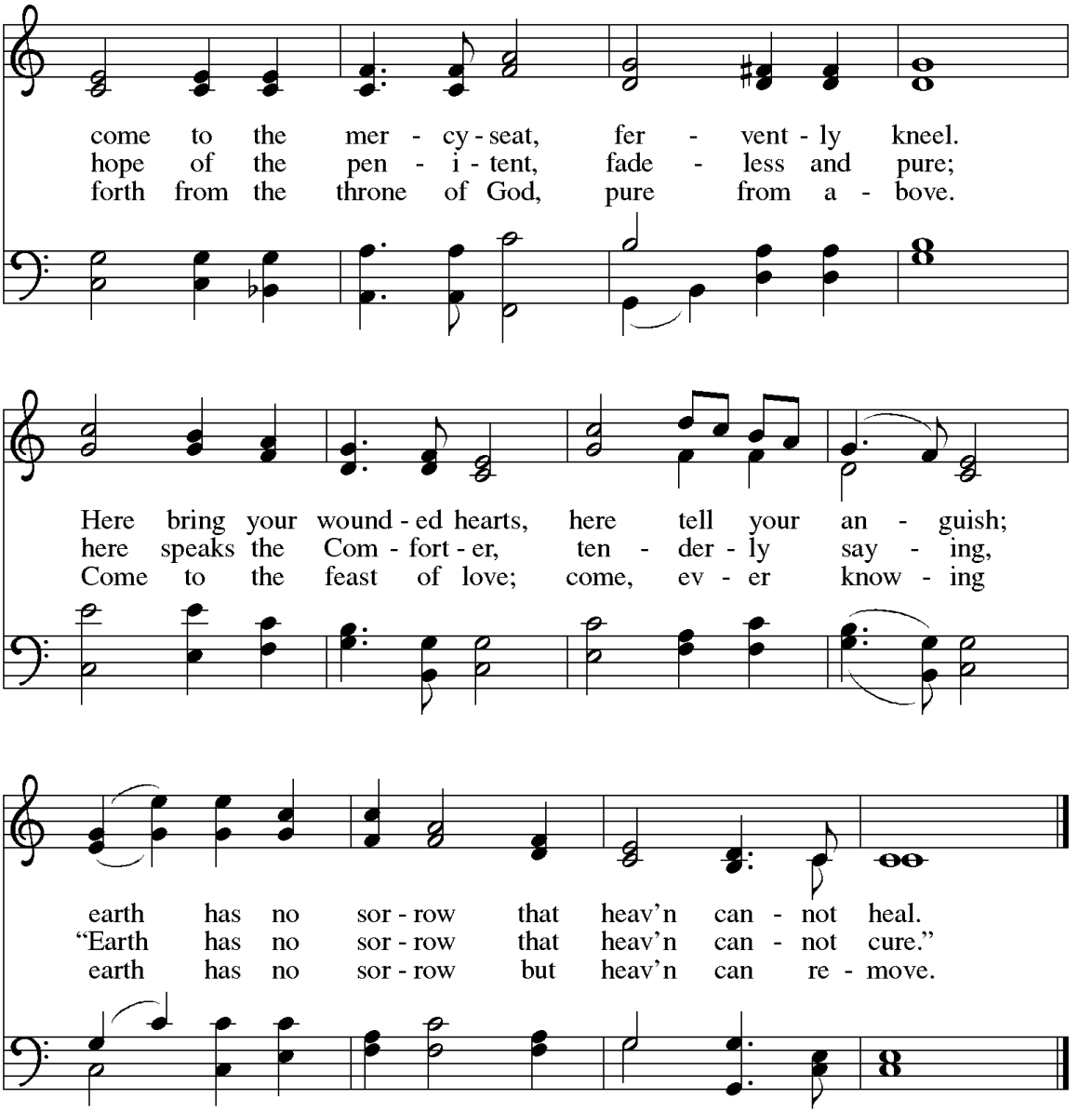
AGNUS DEI ELW 164



DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

COMMUNION HYMN *"Come, Ye Disconsolate"* *ELW 607*




come to the mer - cy - seat, fer - vent - ly kneel.
hope of the pen - i - tent, fade - less and pure;
forth from the throne of God, pure from a - bove.
Here bring your wound - ed hearts, here tell your an - guish;
here speaks the Com - fort - er, ten - der - ly say - ing,
Come to the feast of love; come, ev - er know - ing
earth has no sor - row that heav'n can - not heal.
"Earth has no sor - row that heav'n can - not cure."
earth has no sor - row but heav'n can re - move.

***POST-COMMUNION BLESSING**

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C Amen.

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

A Let us pray,
God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

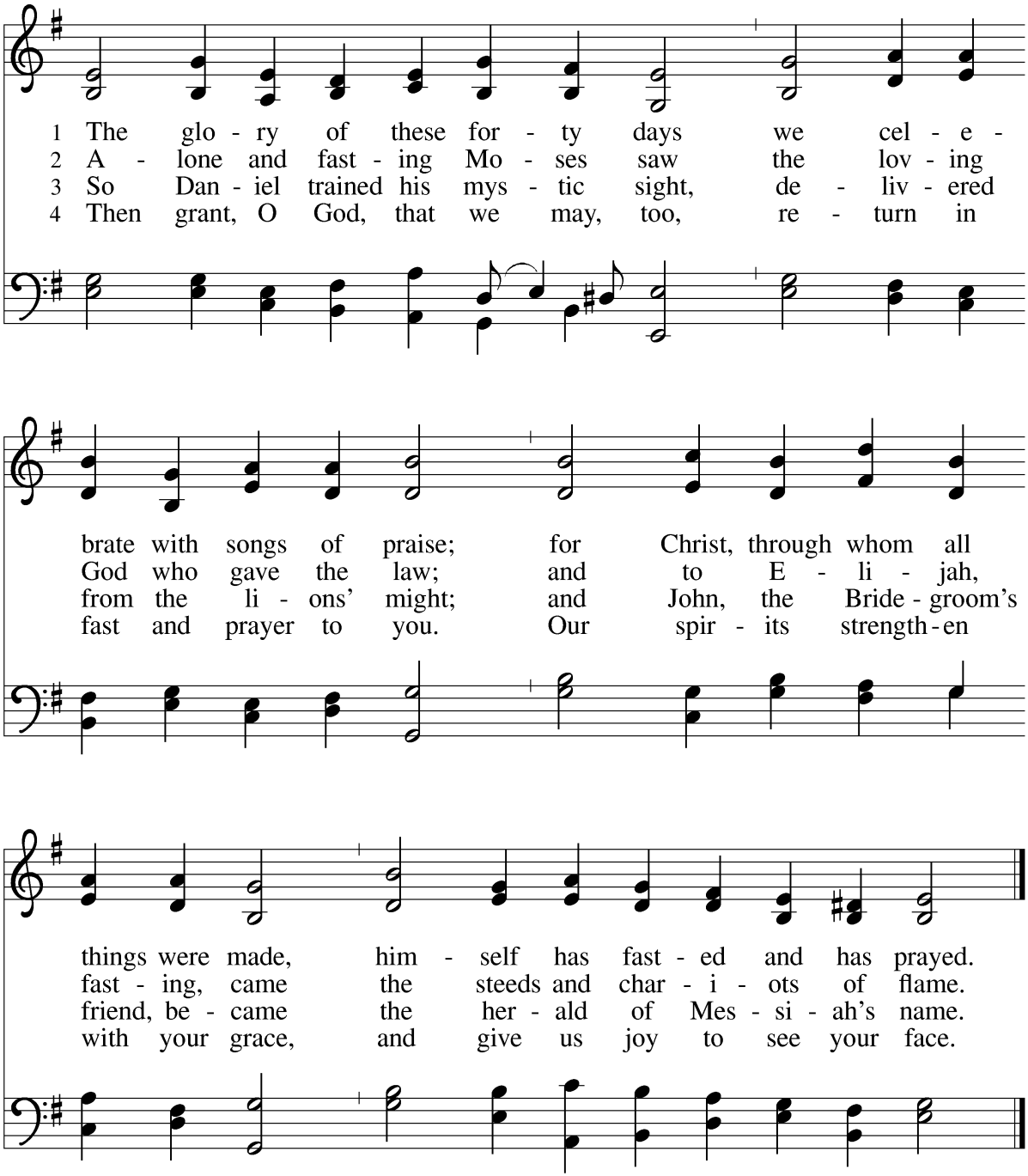
C Amen.

***BLESSING**

P Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity: God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation, ☩ bless you now and always.

C Amen.

***SENDING HYMN** *"The Glory of These Forty Days"* ELW 320



***DISMISSAL**

A Go in peace. Believe the good news.

C We are called through Christ to praise God and love generously. Thanks be to God.

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Assisting Minister	Gretchen Walter
Acolyte	Leah Kaltreider
Lay Reader	Russ Kaltreider
Ushers	Suzanne Butler and Cindy Schmidt
Altar Team	Amy Feeser and Suzanne Butler

TONIGHT'S ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP BULLETINS are sponsored to the glory of God by the Selby family.

LENTEN DEVOTIONS are available on the counter outside of the sanctuary (pulpit side). Our Christian Education committee invites you to pick up a "Love Outpoured" devotional booklet today!

LENT MIDWEEK SERVICES will focus on Embracing Evangelism. Lent is a time we may take on a new discipline to deepen our relationship with God. As a congregation, we will focus on sharing God's story as we love our neighbors. Services will be offered each Wednesday during Lent beginning on February 25 at noon and 7:00 pm.