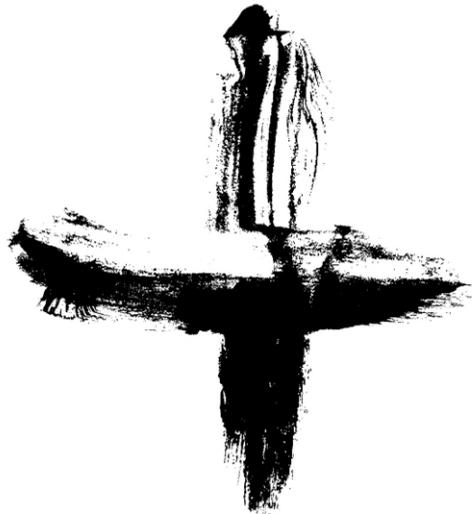


ASH WEDNESDAY
February 18, 2026
7:00 PM



Swamp Evangelical Lutheran Church
Reinholds, Pennsylvania

WELCOME TO WORSHIP AT SWAMP LUTHERAN CHURCH

Guests are welcome and invited to make themselves at home. If you're interested in learning more about Swamp Lutheran, have questions, or are looking for a church home, speak with Pastor Scott or church members. Please complete a visitor card and place it in the offering plate or sign guest register in narthex.

Restrooms are located off the narthex (lobby) by the coat rack.

The worship service is printed in this bulletin. **Hymns** are found in the red hymnal Evangelical Lutheran Worship. **Children's** active presence is welcomed in our worship. There are special kids bulletins available in the narthex and at the side entrance.

Offering plates are passed. Additionally, there is an offering drop box in the narthex. Online giving via cell phone is easy and secure. Just use this QR code from your phone's camera app.



Our worship is rooted in the ancient pattern of the church—gathering, word, meal, sending. The shape of this liturgy and much of the actual words/prayers come directly from scripture. Though we make seasonal shifts, the constancy of our worship reflects God's constant love and promises through forgiveness, scripture, and the sacraments of baptism and communion. Following this liturgical pattern, as well as the Revised Common Lectionary, a three-year cycle of scripture readings, connects us through our worship with Christians around the world and throughout time.

All baptized Christians are welcome to receive **Holy Communion**. We believe "Holy Communion is the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ given with bread and wine, instituted by Christ himself for us to eat and drink." (Small Catechism, Martin Luther) Children who do not yet receive Holy Communion are welcome to come forward for a blessing.

Website – Be sure and check our website www.swamplutheran.org regularly for updates and schedules of ongoing activities of the church. Full prayer list is in the newsletter each month.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

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.

COVERING OF THE CROSS – Throughout Lent, it is proper that the processional cross be covered symbolizing austerity, purification and spiritual cleansing. The solemnity of the season omits a musical prelude and postlude.

GATHERING HYMN CHIEF OF SINNERS, THOUGH I BE ELW 609

GREETING

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

And also with you.

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.

Sit

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song

READING **Joel 2:1-2, 12-17**

GRADY DAUB

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.

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 Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Psalm 51:1-17 *read responsively*

GRADY DAUB

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 ev- | er 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 pur- | er 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 spir- | it within me.**
- ¹¹ Cast me not away | from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spir- | it from me.
- ¹² **Restore to me the joy of | your salvation
and sustain me with your boun- | tiful Spirit.**
- ¹³ Let me teach your ways | to offenders,
and sinners shall be re- | stored to you.
- ¹⁴ **Rescue me from bloodshed, O God of | my salvation,
and my tongue shall sing | of your righteousness.**
- ¹⁵ O Lord, o- | pen my lips,
and my mouth shall pro- | claim 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**

BONNIE STAFFORD

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.

^{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 Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and mer - ci - ful,
slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

HOLY GOSPEL **MATTHEW 6:1-6, 16-21**

REV. TIMOTHY L. CRAVEN

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.
Glory to you, O Lord

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

[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.”

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

Sit

SERMON

FIRE AND ICE

REV. TIM CRAVEN

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.

Stand

CONFESSION OF SIN

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.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

After each petition:

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

Please share the peace.

Sit

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

OFFERTORY

DUST AND ASHES

BRIAN WREN

OFFERING

Tonight's loose offering will be divided equally between Swamp and Mellingers. Checks made payable to a specific congregation will go to that congregation.

As the offering is brought to the table, the congregation stands and sings.

CREATE IN ME A CLEAN HEART

ELW 186



Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right
spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your pres - ence, and take
not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store to me the joy of
your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

OFFERING PRAYER

O God, maker of heaven and earth,
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.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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.

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.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
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.

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.**

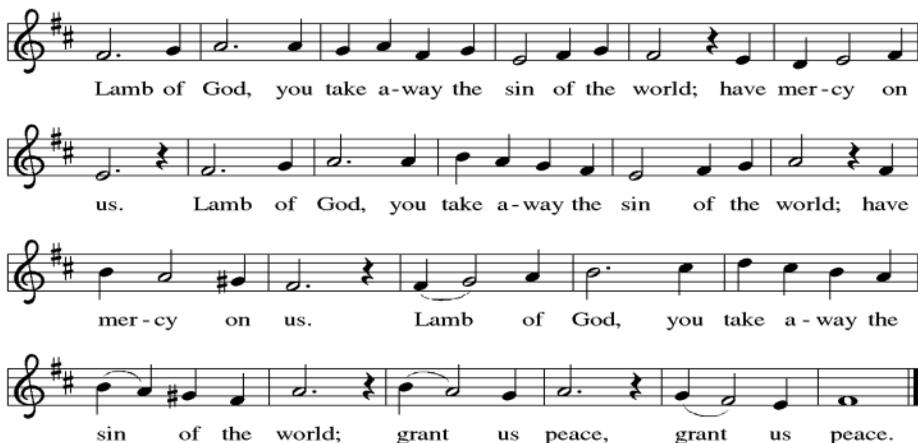
**For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

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

Thanks be to God.

LAMB OF GOD *remain standing*



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

Sit

IMPOSITION OF ASHES AND DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Following the direction of the ushers, approach by the center aisle and return to your pew by the side aisles. Please get a cup from the stack by the first pew before receiving ashes and bread. Grape Juice and gluten free options are available.

HYMNS DURING IMPOSITION OF ASHES & COMMUNION

COME, YE DISCONSOLATE
SAVIOR, WHEN IN DUST TO YOU

ELW 793
ELW 601

After all have communed, stand

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

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. **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

BLESSING

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. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

BE THOU MY VISION

ELW 793

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Believe the good news.
Thanks be to God!

2026 Cluster Lenten Services 1 CORINTHIANS 12:12

Date	Location	Preacher
Wed. Feb. 25, 7 pm	Faith United, Denver	Pastor Marissa Becklin
Wed. Mar. 4, 7 pm	Bergstrasse, Ephrata	Pastor Jim Goodyear
Wed. Mar. 11, 7 pm	St. Paul's, Adamstown	Pastor Sandy Gideon
Wed. Mar 18, NOON	Muddy Creek, Denver	Pastor Stacy Chavis
Wed. Mar. 25, 7 pm	Mellingers, Schoeneck	Pastor Tim Craven
Ascension Thurs, May 14, 7 pm	Swamp, Reinholds	Pastor Scott Brubaker

Swamp Evangelical Lutheran Church

717-336-2849

www.swamplutheran.org

secretary@swamplutheran.org

Office Hours: Monday – Friday 8:30AM – 12:00 noon

The Rev. Scott V. Brubaker, Pastor

Cell: 717-598-4663 Email: pastor@swamplutheran.org

Terri Renninger, Church Secretary – 717-336-2849

Jonathan Gyorke, Sexton – 717-435-3091

Sue Kreitz, Organist/Choir Director – 717-336-3272

Grady Daub, Assistant Organist – 717-917-2430

Doug Kulp, Bell Choir Director – 717-336-7798

Cody Leisey, Council President – 717-984-0248

SUNDAY WORSHIP 8:30AM

SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:45AM

You are Welcome Here!

At Swamp Lutheran Church, *Grace is Spoken Here!* We welcome with full participation and inclusion all who are seeking God's love and grace. We welcome all because God welcomes all, regardless of race or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, or relationship status. We welcome all without regard to addictions, imprisonment, physical or mental health, socio-economic circumstances or anything that too often divides us. Together as one in the Spirit, our unity is in Jesus Christ.

Notice Regarding Audio/Video Recording and/or Photography of Services/Events:

Persons participating in events or worship services sponsored by Swamp Evangelical Lutheran Church are subject to being recorded by photographic, video, and/or audio devices. Your photo/recording may be used without your written permission. By attending a Swamp Evangelical Lutheran Church service or event, you release our employees and officers and all persons involved from any liability connected with the taking, recording, digitizing, and/or publication of photographs, computer images, video and/or sound recordings.

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