



May your Ash Wednesday be a time  
of reflection and promise.

# Ash Wednesday

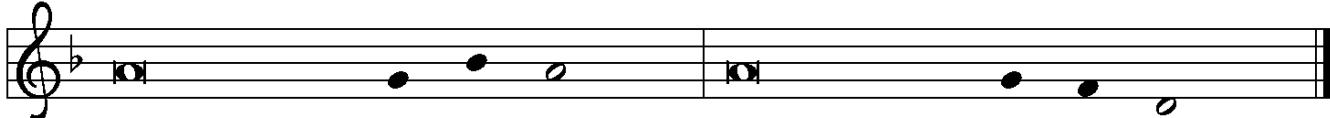
## February 18, 2026

### 6:30 pm

**Please enter in silence.**

*Our service begins in silence.  
Please watch for the entrance of the cross to mark the start of service.*

#### PSALM 51:1-3, 6, 10, 16-17



<sup>1</sup> Have mercy on me, oh God, according to your | steadfast love;  
**in your great compassion blot out | my offenses.**

<sup>2</sup> Wash me through and through | from my wickedness,  
**and cleanse me | from my sin.**

<sup>3</sup> For I know | my offenses,  
**and my sin is ev- | er before me.**

<sup>6</sup> Indeed, you delight in truth | deep within me,  
**and would have me know wisdom | deep within.**

<sup>10</sup> Create in me a clean | heart, oh God,  
**and renew a right spir- | it within me.**

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

<sup>17</sup> The sacrifice of God is a | troubled spirit;  
**a troubled and broken heart, O God, you will | not despise.**

Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins. **His mercy endures forever.**

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.**

**HYMN**      #606

***Our Father, We Have Wandered***

vs 1-3

Our Father, we have wandered and hidden from your face,  
In foolishness have squandered your legacy of grace.  
But not, in exile dwelling, we rise with fear and shame,  
As, distant but compelling, we hear you call our name.

And now at length discerning the evil that we do,  
behold us, Lord, returning with hope and trust to you.  
In haste you come to meet us and home rejoicing bring,  
In gladness there to greet us with calf and robe and ring.

O Lord of all the living, both banished and restored,  
Compassionate, forgiving, and ever-caring Lord,  
Grant now that our transgressing, our faithlessness may cease,  
Stretch out your hand in blessing, in pardon, and in peace.

## **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--  
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.

Yet even now, says the LORD,  
return to me with all your heart,  
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;  
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.  
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?

Blow the trumpet in Zion;  
sanctify a fast;  
call a solemn assembly;  
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.

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.**

## **SECOND READING**

## **2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10**

<sup>20</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.

**6**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,

<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

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.

## GOSPEL

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

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

**6**“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. **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 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. **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 of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

## SPECIAL MUSIC:

***Father Forgive Us***

SPLC Adult Choir

## SERMON

**Pastor Stefanie Rowinski**

## **A CONFESSION OF OUR NEED FOR GOD**

Almighty God: you alone are good and holy. Purify our lives and make us brave disciples. We do not ask you to keep us safe, but to keep us loyal, so we may serve Jesus Christ, who, tempted in every way as we are, was faithful to you. Amen.

From lack of reverence for truth and beauty; from a calculating or sentimental mind; from going along with mean and ugly things;

***O God, deliver us.***

From cowardice that dares not face truth; laziness content with half-truth; or arrogance that thinks we know it all;

***O God, deliver us.***

From trite ideals and cheap pleasures; from mistaking hard vulgarity for humor;

***O God, deliver us.***

From being dull, pompous, or rude; from putting down our neighbors;

***O God, deliver us.***

From cynicism about others; from intolerance or cruel indifference;

***O God, deliver us.***

From being satisfied with things as they are, in the church or in the world; from failing to share your indignation about injustice;

***O God, deliver us.***

From selfishness, self-indulgence, or self-pity;

***O God, deliver us.***

From token concern for the poor, for lonely or loveless people; from confusing faith with good feeling, or love with wanting to be loved;

***O God, deliver us.***

For everything in us that may hide your light;

***O God, light of life, forgive us.***

Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us.

***Hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.***

Accomplish in us the work of your salvation,

***That we may show forth your glory in the world.***

By the cross and passion of your Son our Lord,

***Bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.***

## **ABSOLUTION**

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **AMEN.**

## **HYMN**

### **#328 *Restore in Us, O God***

Restore in us, O God, the splendor of your love;  
renew your image in our hearts, and all our sins remove.

O Spirit, wake in us the wonder of your pow'r;  
from fruitless fear unfurl our lives like spring-time bud and flow'r.

Bring us, O Christ, to share the fullness of your joy;  
baptize us in the risen life that death cannot destroy.

Three-personed God, fulfill the promise of your grace,  
that we, when all our searching ends, may see you face to face.

## **INVITATION TO LENT**

### **Pastor Stefanie Rowinski**

Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth: Grant that these ashes may be to us a sign of our mortality and penitence, that we may remember that it is only by your gracious gift that we are given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

## THE HOLY COMMUNION

The Lord be with you.

***And also with you.***

Lift up your hearts.

***We lift them up to the Lord.***

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

***It is right to give him thanks and praise.***

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. You bid your faithful people cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the Paschal feast; that, fervent in prayer and in works of mercy, and renewed by your Word and Sacraments, they may come to the fullness of grace which you have prepared for those who love you. Therefore, we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your name:

### **HOLY, HOLY, HOLY**

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,  
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.  
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes  
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Therefore, we proclaim the mystery of faith:

***Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.***

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

***Our Father, who are in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is 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.***

Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

***Therefore, let us keep the feast.***

## DISTRIBUTION OF THE ELEMENTS

The Body of Christ, the bread of heaven.

The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation.

## IMPOSITION OF THE ASHES

*(You are invited to receive the imposition of ashes after you receive communion.)*

Merciful God, accompany our journey 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.***

Almighty God, Father, +Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. ***Amen.***

## **POSTLUDE**

### **DISMISSAL**

Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness;  
Be of good courage;  
Hold fast to what 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.**

### **WEDNESDAYS IN LENT—The Temptations of Jesus**

Gather with us each Wednesday in Lent to walk through the temptations of Jesus. We will use Henri Nouwen's book, *In the Name of Jesus*, as our guide.

Soup supper begins at 5:45pm in the Activity Center. Sign up to bring a soup to share!

Service in the sanctuary at 6:30 pm and age group activities from 7:00-7:30. Adult choir rehearsal begins at 7:00. There will be service and choir rehearsal only on March 18<sup>th</sup>.

### **HOLY WEEK INFORMATION**

**Palm Sunday:** Children's Palm Procession at the beginning of worship.  
5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Fellowship Potluck following worship.

Carnival and Egg Hunt from 12:00-2:00pm. More information coming soon!

**Maundy Thursday** Service at 7:00pm on April 2.

**Good Friday** Service at 7:00pm on April 3.

**Resurrection Sunday** Service will be at 9:30 am on April 5<sup>th</sup>.