

ASH WEDNESDAY

February 18, 2026

12:00 & 6:30 pm

Grace Lutheran Church
Wenatchee, WA



Welcome to Grace!

The stained-glass windows in our church display a beautiful collection of glass pieces, each one unique and important. The same is true for all of God's children. As people of Grace Lutheran Church, our diversity makes us stronger and more resilient.

We strive to welcome all. We want to be a church where all are safe, all are welcome. Believers, non-believers, doubters, seekers and questioners: You are welcome here. Old and young. Able or disabled. People of all sexual orientations and gender identities: You are welcome here. Rich and poor. Black, brown and white: You are welcome here. Jeans and a T-shirt or a suit and tie. Addiction and mental health concerns: You are welcome here.

You are welcomed and valued here, because we are all pieces of stained glass, broken and beautiful in our own way.

As a church, we resolve to open our hearts, our minds, and our doors. We seek to reconcile ourselves to one another and to God, the master artist.

Our Mission Statement: "To proclaim and celebrate the gospel of Jesus Christ through word and sacraments so that a community of believers is created, trained, nurtured, and sent into mission."

Grace Lutheran is a Reconciling in Christ Congregation



Introduction to the day

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.

+++ GATHERING +++

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

The assembly gathers in silence.

Please stand as you are able.

GATHERING SONG

Kyrie

A cantor introduces each line, which is repeated by all.

Sing in harmony, in either language.

The musical score consists of three systems, each with a vocal line and a bass line. The lyrics are in English and Afrikaans. The first system has the lyrics: "Nko - si, Nko - si, yi - ba nen - ce - ba. Lord, have mer - cy, have mer - cy up - on us." The second system has the lyrics: "Kres - tu, Kres - tu, yi - ba nen - ce - ba. Christ, have mer - cy, have mer - cy up - on us." The third system has the lyrics: "Nko - si, Nko - si, yi - ba nen - ce - ba. Lord, have mer - cy, have mer - cy up - on us." The music is written in a simple, accessible style with a key signature of one flat and a 4/4 time signature.

Text: South African
Music: G. M. Kolisi
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GREETING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Almighty and ever-living God, you have made all things, 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.**

Please be seated.

+ + + WORD + + +

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

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.

A reading from Joel.

¹Blow 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—

²a 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.

¹²Yet even now, says the LORD,
 return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
 ¹³rend 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.

¹⁴Who 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?

¹⁵Blow the trumpet in Zion;
 sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly;
¹⁶gather 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.

¹⁷Between 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

Give Me a Clean Heart

Refrain

Give me a clean heart so I may serve
 thee. Lord, fix my heart so that I may be used by
 thee. For I'm not wor - thy of all these bless - ings.
 Give me a clean heart, and I'll fol-low thee.

Last time

Verses

1. I'm not ask - ing for the rich - es of the land.
 2. Some-times I am up and some-times I am down.

I'm not ask - ing for the proud to know my name.
 Some-times I am al - most lev - el to the ground.

Please give me, Lord, a clean heart, that

I may fol - low thee. Give me a clean heart

and I'll fol - low thee.

1. 2. D.C.

Text: Margaret Pleasant Douroux, b.1941, © 1970, Rev. Earl Pleasant Publishing
 Tune: Margaret Pleasant Douroux, b.1941, © 1970, Rev. Earl Pleasant Publishing; arr. by Albert Dennis Tessier and Nolan Williams, Jr., b.1969,
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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.

A reading from 2 Corinthians.

^{20b}We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹For 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. ²For 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! ³We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, ⁴but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, ⁵beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; ⁶by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, ⁷truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; ⁸in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; ⁹as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; ¹⁰as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

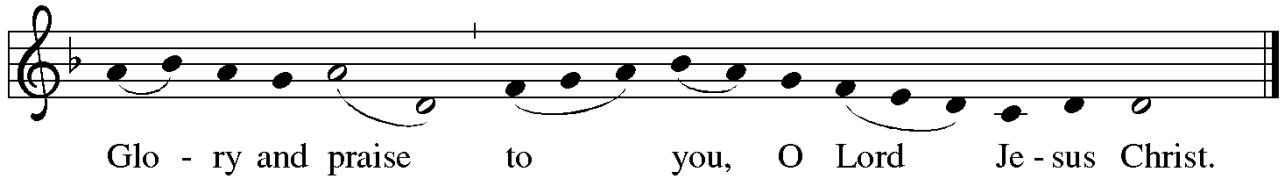
The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Please stand as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

At noon:



At 6:30:

Sung by the choir:

Return to the Lord, Your God

Carl Schalk

Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, 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 holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹⁴“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.

24“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. 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; 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.

Please be seated.

SERMON

Silence for reflection.

Please stand as you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY

All Things of Dust to Dust Return

This text by Thomas Troeger draws a connection between the mortality of all creation and our own death, just as the cross drawn in ash on our foreheads reminds us that we are connected to Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection through our baptism. Even the stars die out eventually, but our hope lies in God's "undying fire."

The tune name, THIRD MODE MELODY, refers to the musical scale that was often used by composers of the Renaissance era for penitential music, making the tune especially fitting for this solemn text.



1 All things of dust to dust re - turn on earth and in the sky.
2 Lord, mark with dust and ash my brow so I may com-pre-hend
3 Lord, mark up - on my brow this sign: a stark and bar-ren cross



The hot - test, bright - est suns that burn in time grow dim and die.
that ev - 'ry mo - ment here and now links me to that same end
re - mind-ing me that though di - vine you know my pain and loss,



The fish that leap, the birds that soar, the new-born young that play,
I share with all that breathe and burn, that flare and fade and tire
and at the touch of dust and ash a - wake my heart to view



the leaves that fill the for - est floor re - vert to dust and clay.
yet by their wan - ing light dis-cern your own un - dy - ing fire.
how death it - self is but a flash that dies a - way in you.

Text: Thomas H. Troeger, b. 1945

Music: THIRD MODE MELODY, Thomas Tallis, 1505–1585

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INVITATION TO LENT

Friends in Christ...Let us continue our journey through these forty days to the great Three Days of Jesus' death and resurrection.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Let us confess our sin on behalf of ourselves and the world in the presence of God and of one another.

Please be seated.

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 and has broken our relationships with the neighbor and you, we confess to you.
Have mercy on us, O God.

Our resistance to self-sacrifice for the greater community, 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, our clinging to nostalgia and unwillingness to change or experience you in different ways, 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

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.**

All are invited to come forward and kneel or stand as you are able to receive the ashes. Each person is marked with a cross of ashes, followed by these words: Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return. After all have returned to their places, the service 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.

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 INTERCESSION

Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs.

After each portion of the prayers:

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation. **Amen.**

OFFERING HYMN

ELW #592, *Just As I Am, without One Plea*
Harmonies may be found in ELW – the cranberry hymnal.



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.

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

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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 + + +

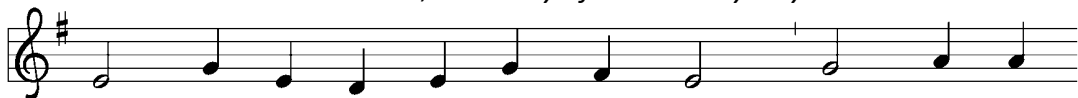
God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

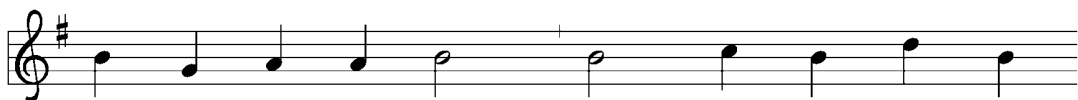
Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG

ELW #320, *The Glory of These Forty Days*



1 The glo - ry of these for - ty days we cel - e -
2 A - lone and fast - ing Mo - ses saw the lov - ing
3 So Dan - iel trained his mys - tic sight, de - liv - ered
4 Then grant, O God, that we may, too, re - turn in



brate with songs of praise; for Christ, through whom all
God who gave the law; and to E - li - jah,
from the li - ons' might; and John, the Bride - groom's
fast and prayer to you. Our spir - its strength - en



things were made, him - self has fast - ed and has prayed.
fast - ing, came the steeds and char - i - ots of flame.
friend, be - came the her - ald of Mes - si - ah's name.
with your grace, and give us joy to see your face.

Text: Latin hymn, 11th cent.; tr. Maurice F. Bell, 1862–1947, alt.

Music: ERHALT UNS, HERR, J. Klug, *Geistliche Lieder*, 1543

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DISMISSAL

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.

Please depart in silence.

+ + +

Serving in Today's Worship

Presiding Minister:	Rev. James Aalgaard
Pastoral Intern:	Laura Olsen
Readers:	Sharon Bolz (12:00), Chris Prince (6:30)
Tech:	Marlena La Paz

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GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH STAFF

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Just As I Am, without One Plea Text: Charlotte Elliott, 1789-1871. P.D. Music: William B. Bradbury, 1816-1868. P.D.

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