



First English Lutheran Church
Welcomes You to Worship
9 Third Street NW ~ Ortonville, MN ~ 56278

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Church Office: 320-839-2527

Pastor Cheryl Rondeau-Bassett ~ 605-237-1501

Setting 4

February 18, 2026 – 5:30 pm

Ash Wednesday

Return to the Lord. Turn back to God

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

INVITATION TO LENT

On Ash Wednesday we begin our forty-day journey toward Easter as we gather in somberness 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 forever 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 are called to recognize our repentance is not just about internal, “spiritual” sins, but also about our compliance in the small injustices of our world – our acts of greed... selfishness... lust... exploitation... arrogance... unkindness... lack of consideration... prejudice... bullying... and defensiveness.

It is our unwillingness to do the difficult work of self-examination, honest evaluation, and willing transformation of our worse selves.

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.

P: We gather in the name we were baptized, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Call to Worship for the start of Lent: *(inspired by Joel 2: 12)*

L: Turn away from the calls of worldly success

C: Repent, and turn back to God.

L: Turn away from the desire to have what everyone else has

C: Repent, and turn back to God.

L: Turn away from greed and the race for power

C: Repent, and turn back to God.

L: As we enter Lent, may we turn back to God

C: May we seek forgiveness, may we seek healing, may we seek wholeness. May our hearts be renewed in this time of worship.

Song of Meditation 'Chief of Sinners Though I Be' #609

1. Chief of sinners though I be, Jesus shed his blood for me, died that I might live on high, lives that I might never die. As the branch is to the vine, I am his, and he is mine.

2. Oh, the height of Jesus' love! Higher than the heav'ns above, deeper than the depths of sea, lasting as eternity. Love that found me—wondrous thought— found me when I sought him not.

3. Only Jesus can impart balm to heal the wounded heart, peace that flows from sin forgiv'n, joy that lifts the soul to heav'n, faith and hope to walk with God in the way that Enoch trod.

4. Chief of sinners though I be, Christ is all in all to me; all my wants to him are known, all my sorrows are his own. He sustains the hidden life safe with him from earthly strife.

5. O my Savior, help afford by your Spirit and your word! When my wayward heart would stray, keep me in the narrow way; grace in time of need supply while I live and when I die.

Text: William McComb, 1793-1870. Music: Richard Redhead, 1820-1901.

RESPONSIVE READING: Psalm 51:1-17

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

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

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

C: 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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

CONFSSION: Restore what has been broken

We continue with Our confession - We bring our burdens and our sins to You, O Christ, who bears the heavy load for us.

C: We place upon You our excuses, our shortcomings, our anger and our desire, knowing You can remove these sins from us and restore us to life.

We confess we have gone astray. We confess we have not loved You fully and have not loved our neighbor as ourselves. We confess that we have not fully loved even our very selves.

Forgive us our sins. Help us to turn back to You. Restore what has been broken, transform what has been twisted, find what has been lost, so we may be the living, loving image of You in creation. In Your precious name we pray. Amen.

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

L: In our Scriptures, we read that our spiritual ancestors would sometimes cover themselves in ashes as a public demonstration of their penance – an outward expression of their repentance for having sinned.

Many Christians continue that practice on Ash Wednesday. Having confessed our sins before God and one another, those who wish may now come to one of the stations to receive the mark of these ashes as a sign of your repentance and total dependence upon God.

All are welcome to receive the mark of ashes – either on your forehead or the back of your hand.

*Each person who comes forward is marked with a cross of ashes,
Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.*

Hymn: 'Lord Jesus, Think on Me' verses 1-3 #599

1. Lord Jesus, think on me, and purge away my sin; from selfish passions set me free and make me pure within.

2. Lord Jesus, think on me, by anxious thoughts oppressed; let me your loving servant be and taste your promised rest.

3. Lord Jesus, think on me, nor let me go astray; through darkness and perplexity point out your chosen way.

Text: Synesius of Cyrene, 375-430; tr. Allen W. Chatfield, 1808-1896, alt. Music: W. Daman, The Psalms of David, 1579, alt.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

P: The Lord says, "Return to the LORD, your God, with fasting and weeping and mourning, for He is gracious and merciful, filled with steadfast love for you.

Do not focus on your inadequacies but on God's gift which transforms hearts and minds, for He has poured out His Spirit upon your flesh. As faithful people you are pardoned and cleansed from all your sins. Be at peace for you have been rescued through Christ. **C: Thanks be to God!**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray... Almighty and ever-living God,

C: 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.

WORD

First Lesson: Isaiah 58: 1-12

OT pg. 533

L: Word of God, Word of Life. **C: Thanks be to God.**

L: Word of God, Word of Life. **C: Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation 'Return to the Lord' pg. 151

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

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Holy Gospel: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 NT pg. 4-5

P: The Holy Gospel according to... **C: Glory to you, O Lord.**P: The Gospel of the Lord. **C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

MESSAGE

Pastor Cheryl Rondeau-Bassett

Silent Reflection

Special Music 'At the Lamb's High Feast, We Sing' Senior Choir

TESTIMONY OF FAITH:

I believe in God the Creator, who made me and all things, who set me on my path in this world.

I believe in God the Savior, who is one with the Creator, who rescued me and all creation from the depredations of our violations against God and creation. This man, Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, walked a path through this world, taking on human form having been born of a woman through the power of the Holy Spirit. He lived and worked in this world among people just like me. He walked God's path to death on a cross, and rose from the dead to open our pathway to eternal life.

I believe in God the Holy Spirit, my counselor and guide, who is one with the Creator and the Christ, who through the body and blood of Jesus brings me into communion with all people, past, present and future; who calls me to walk a sacred way of life through this world, caring for creation and the people I meet on the way, loving them, helping them, welcoming them without prejudice, being God's hands and feet in the world.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

P: Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the needs of others.

R: Lord in your mercy,

C: Let us turn back to God

Time of Offering

(Lenten Offerings are designated to local Water's Edge Scholarships)

Offering Song 'When I Survey the Wondrous Cross' #803

- 1. When I survey the wondrous cross on which the prince of glory died, my richest gain I count but loss and pour contempt on all my pride.**
- 2. Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast save in the death of Christ, my God; all the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to his blood.**
- 3. See, from his head, his hands, his feet, sorrow and love flow mingled down. Did e'er such love and sorrow meet, or thorns compose so rich a crown?**
- 4. Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were a present far too small; love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.**

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748. Music: Lowell Mason, 1792-1872.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION:

P: Let us pray... Almighty God, who made us who we are, we offer all of ourselves to You. Take our talents, our energy and our joy, and use us to share Your love. Take our mistakes, our regrets and our pain, and use us to bring Your healing. Magnify the gifts we offer before You today, to spread Your peace in the world. **C: Amen.**

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

P: Most merciful Lord, your love compels us to come in. Our hands were unclean, our hearts were unprepared; we were not fit even to eat the crumbs from under your table. But you, Lord, are the God of our salvation, and share your bread with sinners. So cleanse and feed us with the precious body and blood of your Son, that he may live in us and we in him; and sit at your table in your kingdom. **C: Amen.**

THE MEAL

Words of Institution

pg. 109

Lord's Prayer

pg. 208

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.

Distribution Hymn

'Lamb of God'

pg. 154

Distribution Hymn

'Restore in Us, O God'

#328

Distribution Hymn

'O Christ, Our Hope'

#604

1. O Christ, our hope, our hearts' desire, creation's mighty Lord, redeemer of the fallen world, by holy love outpoured, by holy love outpoured.

2. How vast your mercy to accept the burden of our sin, and bow your head in cruel death to make us clean within, to make us clean within.

3. But now the bonds of death are burst, the ransom has been paid; you reign above at God's right hand, in robes of light arrayed, in robes of light arrayed.

4. Oh, let your mighty love prevail to purge us of our pride, that we may stand before your throne by mercy purified, by mercy purified.

5. All praise to you, ascended Lord; all glory ever be to Father, Son, and Spirit blest through all eternity, through all eternity!

Text: Latin hymn, c. 8th cent.; tr. John Chandler, 1806-1876, adapt. Music: Nikolaus Herman, 1480-1561.

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

P: Now may the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace, to life eternal. **C: Amen.**

POST COMMUNION PRAYER:

P: God of our salvation, **C: 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.**

ASH WEDNESDAY BENEDICTION

P: Our loving Creator does not desire...Bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

SENDING

Closing Hymn 'Just as I am, Without One Plea' #592

1. Just as I am, without one plea, but that thy blood was shed for me, and that thou bidd'st me come to thee, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.
2. Just as I am, though tossed about with many a conflict, many a doubt, fightings and fears within, without, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.
3. Just as I am, thou wilt receive, wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve; because thy promise I believe, O Lamb of God, I come, I come,
4. Just as I am; thy love unknown has broken ev'ry barrier down; now to be thine, yea, thine alone, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Text: Charlotte Elliott, 1789-1871, Music: William B Bradbury, 1816-1868

Dismissal

L: Go in peace, washed and renewed. **C: We Will. Thanks be to God.**

The Assembly Leaves in Silence

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This Week's Ministry Assistants — Ash Wed, 5:30 pm FELC February 18th

Organist: Carol Ydstie **Tech Desk:** Liz Ketz & Cameron Anderson

Lay Assistants: Kari & Archer Dorry

9th Grade Confirmation Students assisting with the worship tonight are...

Liam, Nash, Martino, Bailey, Bennett, Lola, & Liv

Invitation to the Lord's Supper:

All who believe that our Lord Jesus Christ is truly present in the bread and wine of Holy Communion, bringing to us the gift of forgiveness and the promise of eternal life, are welcome to gather at the Lord's Table.

