

Welcome!

to
*St. Paul Lutheran Church
Clay Center, KS*

*Thank you
for joining us for worship!*

Ash Wednesday

February 18, 2026

Worship Folder



St. Paul Lutheran Communion Statement:

COMMUNION WELCOME-God calls upon His people to exercise care in the use of His Supper because harm results when Communion is received without repentance or a right understanding (1 Corinthians 11:23-30) and when fellowship is practiced without agreement in God's Word (Galatians 5:9; 2 Thessalonians 2:15, 3:14). In Communion Jesus gives us His true Body and Blood, in with and under the bread and wine, to forgive our sins (Matthew 26:26-28 and 1 Corinthians 10:16-21). We also profess agreement in the teachings of the church at whose altar we commune. Thus, we cannot offer this Supper to those who have not received instruction per the mysteries of this meal. We do invite fellow members of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod to join our members as we receive the Sacrament today. Others are asked to speak with the pastor before receiving the Lord's Supper. Those who desire to come forward for a blessing are invited to do so, indicating their intent to receive a blessing by crossing their arms in front.

Distribution of the bread is to the hand of the communicant. "Gluten Free" wafers are available. Please let the ushers know PRIOR to service if you are needing this substitution.

Distribution of the wine is by choice of individual cup or common chalice. If you receive with the individual cup, please keep the small cup visible to the minister with the common cup. Individual cups of unfermented grape juice will be provided at the center of each of the trays for those who prefer grape juice over wine. Both are "fruit of the vine" and in the sacrament become means by which Christ grants us his blood to assure us of forgiveness, life and salvation. The unfermented grape juice is light in color.

RINGING OF THE BELL

PRELUDE

AS WE GATHER

All of us are conscious of people watching us, and we all adjust our words and our actions as we are watched. As Christians, we are caught in the tension of our lives within our nation and culture and our lives as the baptized people of God. The warnings of Jesus heard on Ash Wednesday are not to hide the witness of our words and deeds but to prevent the hypocrisy of words and deeds shaped by what others think instead of an honest faith. It is impossible to look religious when our hearts are empty, and it is impossible for the faithful not to practice that faith. So our Lord calls us to look at our hearts and lives and to do so in the shadow of the cross where our redemption was paid. We begin that time of reflection with confession, with a renewed call to faithfulness, and with an intentional desire to live the faith we confess.

† PREPARATION †

THE LITANY

P Dear brothers and sisters of our Lord Jesus Christ, on this day the church begins a holy season of prayerful and penitential reflection. Our attention is especially directed to the holy sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. From ancient times the season of Lent has been kept as a time of special devotion, self-denial, and humble repentance born of a faithful heart that dwells confidently on His Word and draws from it life and hope. Let us pray that our dear Father in heaven, for the sake of His beloved Son and in the power of His Holy Spirit, might richly bless this Lententide for us so that we may come to Easter with glad hearts and keep the feast in sincerity and truth.

Stand in silence to reflect upon the Law of God and meditate upon our sins.

P O Lord,
C **have mercy.**

P O Christ,
C **have mercy.**

P O Lord,
C **have mercy.**

P O Christ,
C **hear us.**

P God the Father, in heaven,
C **have mercy.**

P God the Son, Redeemer of the world,
C **have mercy.**

P God the Holy Spirit,
C **have mercy.**

P Be gracious to us.
C **Spare us, good Lord.**

P Be gracious to us.
C **Help us, good Lord.**

P By the mystery of Your holy incarnation; by Your holy nativity; by Your Baptism, fasting, and temptation; by Your agony and bloody sweat; by Your cross and Passion; by Your precious death and burial; by Your glorious resurrection and ascension; and by the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter:
C **Help us, good Lord.**

P In all time of our tribulation; in all time of our prosperity; in the hour of death; and in the day of judgment:
C **Help us, good Lord.**

P We poor sinners implore You
C **to hear us, O Lord.**

P To prosper the preaching of Your Word; to bless our prayer and meditation; to strengthen and preserve us in the true faith; to give heart to our sorrow and strength to our repentance:
C **We implore You to hear us, good Lord.**

P To draw all to Yourself; to bless those who are instructed in the faith; to watch over and console the poor, the sick, the distressed, the lonely, the forsaken, the abandoned, and all who stand in need of our prayers; to give abundant blessing to all works of mercy; and to have mercy on us all:

C **We implore You to hear us, good Lord.**

P To turn our hearts to You; to turn the hearts of our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers; and graciously to hear our prayers:

C **We implore You to hear us, good Lord.**

P Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,
C **we implore You to hear us.**

P O God, You desire not the death of sinners but rather that they turn from their wickedness and live. We implore You to have compassion on the frailty of our mortal nature, for we acknowledge that we are dust and to dust we shall return. Mercifully pardon our sins that we may obtain the promises You have laid up for those who are repentant; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Those who desire to receive ashes come forward at this time and stand before the pastor. The pastor applies ashes in the shape of a cross on the forehead while saying to each person, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

[After the distribution of ashes:]

P Accomplish in us, O God, the work of Your salvation,
C **that we may show forth Your glory in the world.**

P By the cross and Passion of Your Son, our Lord,
C **Bring us with all Your saints to the joy of His resurrection.**

P Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through Jesus Christ, our Lord, strengthen us in all goodness, and, by the power of the Spirit, keep us in eternal life.

C **Amen.**

SALUTATION

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

God of love, mercifully look upon Your redeemed people, purchased and won from all sins and called to be Your own in Baptism. Bring us again to genuine repentance that, confessing all our sin, we may know the blessing of forgiveness and the gift of a clear conscience. Restore us who have fallen that nothing may separate us from You. By Your Holy Spirit, renew us in the paths of holiness and obedience all our days; through our Lord Jesus Christ, who with You and the Spirit are one God, one Lord, now and forevermore.

C **Amen.**

WORD

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Joel 2:12-19

12 "Yet even now," declares the LORD,
 "return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
 13 and rend your hearts and not your garments."

Return to the LORD, your God,
 for he is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love;
 and he relents over disaster.

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?
15Blow the trumpet in Zion;
consecrate a fast;
call a solemn assembly;
16gather the people.
Consecrate the congregation;
assemble the elders;
gather the children,
even nursing infants.
Let the bridegroom leave his room,
and the bride her chamber.
17Between the vestibule and the altar
let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep
and say, "Spare your people, O LORD,
and make not your heritage a reproach,
a byword among the nations.
Why should they say among the peoples,
'Where is their God?'"
18Then the LORD became jealous for his land
and had pity on his people.
19The LORD answered and said to his people,
"Behold, I am sending to you
grain, wine, and oil,
and you will be satisfied;
and I will no more make you
a reproach among the nations."

P This is the Word of the Lord.
C **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM

P ¹Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.

Psalm 51:1–13 (14–19)

C ²Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin!
P ³For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.
C ⁴Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight,
so that you may be justified in your words
and blameless in your judgment.
P ⁵Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
and in sin did my mother conceive me.
C ⁶Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being,
and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.
P ⁷Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
C ⁸Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones that you have broken rejoice.
P ⁹Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.
C ¹⁰Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit with in me.
P 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 uphold me with a willing spirit.
P ¹³Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will return to you.

EPISTLE

2 Corinthians 5:20b–6:10

We implore 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.

¹Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. ²For he says,

"In a favorable time I listened to you,
and in a day of salvation I have helped you."

Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. ³We put no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, ⁴but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, ⁵beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; ⁶by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; ⁷by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; ⁸through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; ⁹as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; ¹⁰as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

VERSE

C **Return to the LORD, your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.**

HOLY GOSPEL Matthew 6:1–6, 16–21

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the sixth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

¹[Jesus said:] "Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

²"Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ³But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand

know what your right hand is doing, ⁴so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

⁵"And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ⁶But when 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 when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ¹⁷But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, ¹⁸that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

¹⁹"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

From Depths of Woe I Cry to Thee

LSB 607

SERMON

NICENE CREED

C **I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,**

**begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and
the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and
glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life \ddagger of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P We give You thanks and praise, O Lord, holy God, almighty Father, for Your goodness in creating all things and for Your mercy, which bore with us sinners until You sent forth Your Son in flesh to accomplish our salvation by His death and resurrection. Keep us in this holy faith and fear all our days. Lord, in Your mercy,
C **hear our prayer.**

P We give You thanks and praise, O mighty and everlasting God, for establishing Your church, for calling us into her life through Baptism, and keeping us as Your own possession through the grace of absolution and the food of Your Son's Table. Give us ears to hear and hearts to heed His voice ever calling us back to You that we may live holy, upright, and godly lives now until we dwell in Your presence on high. Lord, in Your mercy,
C **hear our prayer.**

P We give You thanks, O merciful God, for the innumerable riches of Your grace, which You have so bountifully showered upon us and our land. Deliver us from ingratitude, guard our leaders from sin and every evil, and silence the voices of sensuality and violence, both here and over all the world. Lord, in Your mercy,
C **hear our prayer.**

P We give You thanks, O Lord, God of our fathers, for bearing with us in our trials and in our weakness, in our afflictions and in the hour of our death. Hear us on behalf of all for whom we pray, that You may be their strength, their healing, their comfort, and their peace. Lord, in Your mercy,
C **hear our prayer.**

P We give You thanks, O gracious God, for Your kindness in looking upon our weakness and sin, forgiving us our sin, and setting us a place at our Lord's Table. What we here receive, help us to keep in holy hearts and lives. Lord, in Your mercy,
C **hear our prayer.**

P We give You thanks, O Lord God, heavenly Father, for looking upon us with compassion and for not counting our sins against us because of Christ alone. Help us to earnestly wear the marks of our repentance and even more earnestly still to believe in Your gift of salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
C **Amen.**

OFFERING

Luke 16:11 "If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth (money), who will entrust you with the true riches?"

OFFERTORY

C What shall I ren-der to the Lord for all His ben-e-fits to
me? I will of - fer the sac-ri-fice of thanks-giv - ing and will
call on the name of the Lord. I will take the cup of sal-
va - tion and will call on the name of the Lord. I will pay my
vows to the Lord now in the pres-ence of all His peo-ple, in the
courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Je - ru - sa - lem.

† SACRAMENT †

PREFACE

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 Him thanks and praise.**

PROPER PREFACE

P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who overcame the assaults of the devil and gave His life as a ransom for many that with cleansed hearts we might be prepared joyfully to celebrate the Paschal Feast in sincerity and truth. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

SANCTUS


C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:
 Heav-en and earth are full of Your glo - ry. Ho - san-na. Ho -
 san-na. 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.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

P Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have had mercy on those whom You created and sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross.

Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg You, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My \ddagger body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My \ddagger blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST

P As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

C Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

P Recalling His death that gives us life and His life that raises us from death, we give You thanks and praise that He has ascended to Your right hand and intercedes for us still with His own blood. Bring us at last with all the faithful from every time and place that we may be faithful unto death and receive the crown of everlasting life in Christ. Hear us, O Lord, for the sake of Jesus Christ, who has taught us to pray:

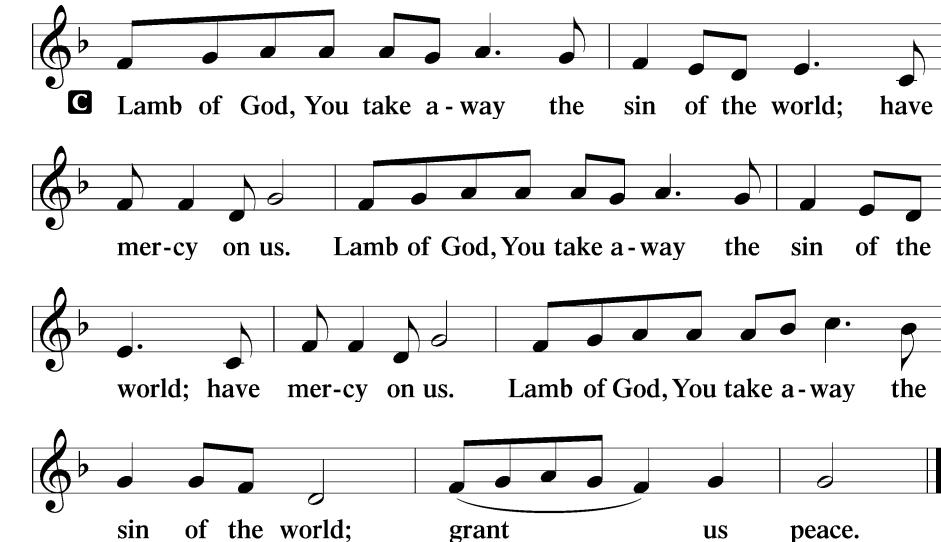
LORD'S PRAYER

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.

PAX DOMINI

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.
C Amen.

AGNUS DEI



DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

Jesus Sinners Doth Receive	LSB 609
Lord Jesus, Think on Me	LSB 610
Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness	LSB 563
Today Your Mercy Calls Us	LSB 915

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

P Let us pray.
Keep us, O Lord, from receiving the fruits of our Savior's redeeming work in vain, lest we display in our lives a faith that does not live in our hearts. Preserve us by Your grace that we may pray with renewed confidence, bear witness with renewed hope, and live with renewed joy the holy and obedient life for which we were born again in our Baptism into Christ. Keep us these forty days of Lent and bring us at last to the perfect consummation and peace of heaven; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C **Amen.**

BENEDICTION

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and  give you peace.

C **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

P Let us go forth in peace,
C **in the name of Christ.**

O Lord, throughout These Forty Days

LSB 418

Creative Worship for the Lutheran Parish, Series A, Quarter 2.
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