

ASH WEDNESDAY

Wednesday, March 5, 2025



Bethlehem

LUTHERAN CHURCH

Gathering – Welcoming – Serving – Restoring

WHO WE ARE

*As forgiven children of God, Bethlehem Lutheran Church
shows Christ's love through acts of service
so that we can share the hope of the Gospel with others.*

WELCOME TO WORSHIP AT BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

We are so glad you're here! Bethlehem is a caring community of believers committed to being a birthplace of hope in southeast Fort Wayne. We are a congregation of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, where Christ's sacrificial love shapes who we are and how we serve.

Our worship centers on God's gifts to us in His Word and Sacraments. Here, Jesus meets us through His promises of forgiveness, life, and salvation, and we respond with prayer, praise, and thanksgiving. Whether this is your first time worshiping with us or your spiritual home, you are part of our family today.

Thank you for joining us as we rest in God's grace and grow in His love. May you be refreshed by the beauty of Christ's sacrifice and sent out to reflect His light in the world!

HOLY COMMUNION EXAMINATION

In the Bible the Apostle Paul wrote, "A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup." (I Corinthians 11:28) In order to examine yourself before attending the Lord's Supper, ask yourself the following questions:

Do I believe that I am a sinner, and am I sorry for my sins?
(Proverbs 28:13; Romans 3:23; I John 1:8-9)

Do I believe that Jesus Christ by His death offers me forgiveness for all my sins?
(Romans 5:8; Colossians 2:13; Hebrews 9:28; I John 1:7)

Do I believe that I receive the body and blood of Christ in and with the bread and wine (not merely symbolically present)?
(Matthew 26:26-28; I Cor. 10:16; I Cor. 11:24-25)

Do I desire to turn from my sinful ways and live a God-pleasing life?
(Isaiah 1:16; John 8:11; Romans 6:12)

If you are unable to answer "yes" to these questions or believe further instruction is needed, please talk to a pastor or an elder before communing as participating without a proper understanding of Holy Communion can be spiritually harmful (I Corinthians 11:27-29). If you can answer "yes" to these questions, then come with a repentant heart and join us in the reception of the Lord's Supper. If not, adults and children who have not yet taken part in communion instruction classes are invited to come forward for a blessing and are asked to keep their arms folded over their chest during the distribution.

***(Children's Activity bags are available in the Narthex.
Please remember to return them to the rack after the service.)***

+ *PREPARATION* +

PRESERVICE MUSIC

WELCOME

RINGING OF THE BELLS

INTROIT

Choir

“Call to Lent” (arranged by J. Jerome Williams)

What wondrous love is this,
O my soul, O my soul;
What wondrous love is this,
O my soul.

What wondrous love is this
that caused the Lord of bliss
to bear the dreadful curse
for my soul, for my soul,
to bear the dreadful curse
for my soul.

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.

O LORD, THROUGHOUT THESE FORTY DAYS

1 O Lord, through - out these for - ty days You
 2 You strove with Sa - tan, and You won; Your
 3 Though parched and hun - gry, yet You prayed And
 4 Be with us through this sea - son, Lord, And

prayed and kept the fast; In - spire re - pen - tance
 faith - ful - ness en - dured; Lend us Your nerve, Your
 fixed Your mind a - bove; So teach us to de -
 all our earth - ly days, That when the fi - nal

for our sin, And free us from our past.
 skill and trust In God's e - ter - nal Word.
 ny our - selves, Since we have known God's love.
 Eas - ter dawns, We join in heav - en's praise.

Text: based on Claudia F. Hernaman, 1838–98; para. Gilbert E. Doan, 1930–2024

Tune: The Psalmes of David in Prose and Meeter, 1635, Edinburgh

Text: © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110001608

Tune: Public domain

(Stand)

INVOCATION

Pastor In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation Amen.

EXHORTATION

Pastor We would prefer to remain on the mountaintop with Jesus, shining in glory. But we know what follows: Lent and Holy Week. We cannot celebrate Easter resurrection without dying to sin, without our faults and failings being forgiven, and without receiving new life by the grace of God for Jesus' sake. We need to hear the accusing Law with its death sentence as well as the invigorating Gospel in which Christ calls us to new and eternal life. We need to hear God's Word in our own ears so that the ashes we receive today are not mere outward symbols but are reflections of our faith in God's grace in becoming one of us in our Savior, His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

OPENING SENTENCES

Joel 2:12–17

Pastor “Yet even now,” declares the LORD, “return to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments.”

Congregation 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.

Pastor 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; consecrate a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather 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. Between 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?’”

CONFESSION

Psalm 51

Pastor Let us humbly go to God, confessing our sins.

Congregation Almighty, eternal, loving Father,
we confess to You and one another not only that we have sinned in our thoughts, words, and actions but that each failing has been a symptom of our sinful condition. We have tried to overlook our faults but realize the truth of our fallenness. We have tried to do better by our own strength but have fallen back into sin again. We are helpless to change by ourselves.

Pastor We mirror the sins of our spiritual ancestor, whom You, gracious God, guided to write in the Psalms: Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your steadfast love; according to Your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

Congregation **Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.**

Pastor Against You, You only, have I sinned and done what is evil in Your sight,

Congregation **so that You may be justified in Your words and blameless in Your judgment.**

Pastor Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Congregation **Behold, You delight in truth in the inward being, and You teach me wisdom in the secret heart.**

Pastor Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
Congregation **wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.**

Pastor Let me hear joy and gladness;
Congregation **let the bones that You have broken rejoice.**

Pastor Hide Your face from my sins,
Congregation **and blot out all my iniquities.**

Pastor Let us go to our gracious God, asking for mercy.
Congregation **We are not the people You would have us be; we are not what we had hoped for; we throw ourselves on the mercy of Your holy court, asking Your forgiveness and renewal of life for the sake of our Savior, Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Pastor As a sign of your repentance and trust in God's mercy and grace, please come forward as you are directed to receive the sign of the cross on your forehead and to hear the words: "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

(All may come forward to receive ashes.)

ABSOLUTION

Joel 2:18–19

Pastor Then the LORD became jealous for His land and had pity on His people. The 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.

God does not desire the death of sinners, but that they may live forgiven in His presence. He sent His Son, our Lord Jesus, to take our sins upon Himself and then to rise in our place, drawing people of faith to His eternal realm. In the stead and by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation **Amen.**

+ *WORD* +

SALUTATION

Pastor The Lord be with you.

Congregation And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, You despise nothing You have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and contrite hearts that lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness we may receive from You full pardon and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Congregation Amen.

(Sit)

READING

Genesis 3

¹Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” ²And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, ³but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” ⁴But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. ⁵For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” ⁶So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. ⁷Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. ⁸And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹But the LORD God called to the man and said

to him, “Where are you?” ¹⁰And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.” ¹¹He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” ¹²The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.” ¹³Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.” ¹⁴The LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. ¹⁵I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.” ¹⁶To the woman he said, “I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.” ¹⁷And to Adam he said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; ¹⁸thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. ¹⁹By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” ²⁰The man called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. ²¹And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them. ²²Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—” ²³therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

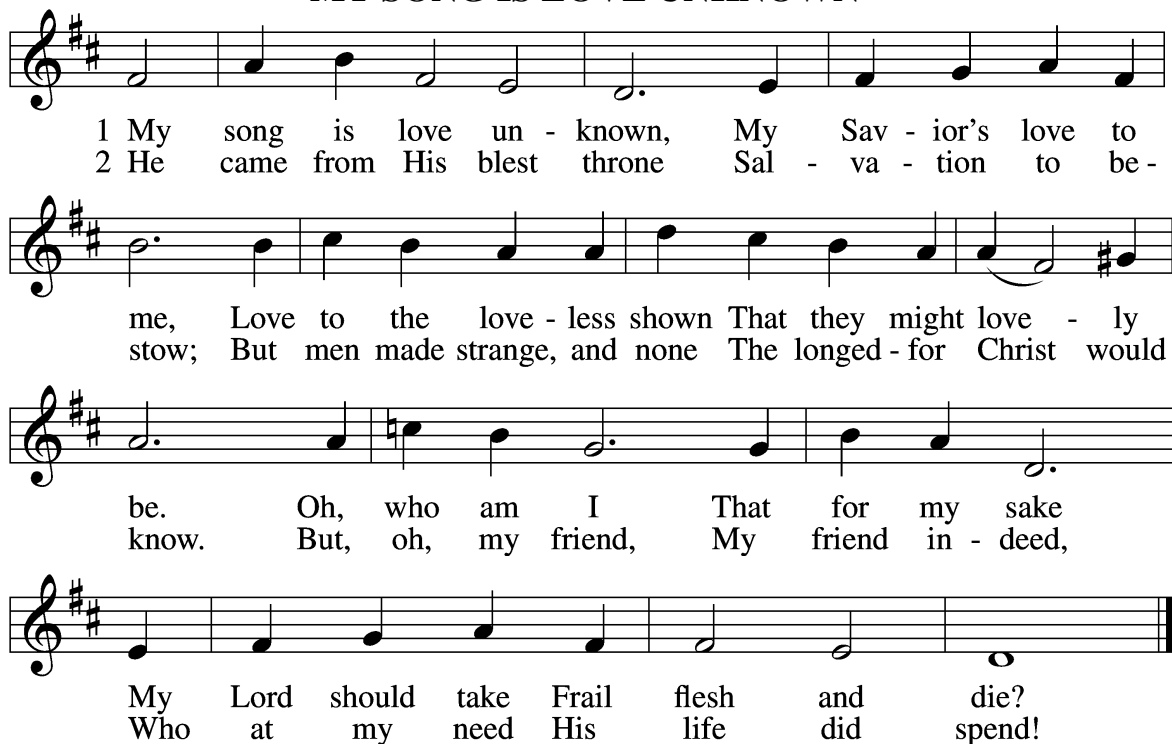
Leader This is the Word of the Lord.

Congregation Thanks be to God.

HYMN

LSB #430 (verses 1-2) (with Handbells)

MY SONG IS LOVE UNKNOWN



1 My song is love un - known, My Sav - ior's love to
2 He came from His blest throne Sal - va - tion to be -
me, Love to the love - less shown That they might love - ly
stow; But men made strange, and none The longed - for Christ would
be. Oh, who am I That for my sake
know. But, oh, my friend, My friend in - deed,
My Lord should take Frail flesh and die?
Who at my need His life did spend!

Text: Samuel Crossman, c. 1624–1683

Tune: John N. Ireland, 1879–1962

Text: Public domain

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SERMON

“The Frailty of Humanity”

(Stand)

NICENE CREED

(Sit)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Choir

“Lamb Of God” (by Craig Courtney)

Your only Son, no sin to hide,
but you have sent Him from Your side
to walk upon this guilty sod
and to become the Lamb of God.

Your gift of love they crucified.
They laughed and scorned Him as He died.
The humble King, they named a froud
and sacrificed the Lamb of God.

O Lamb of God, sweet Lamb of God,
I love the holy Lamb of God.
O wash me in Your precious blood,
My Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God.

I was so lost, I should have died,
but you have brought me to Your side
to be led by Your staff and rod
and to be called a lamb of God.

O Lamb of God, sweet Lamb of God,
I love the holy Lamb of God.
O wash me in Your precious blood,
'til I am just a Lamb of God.

+ SACRAMENT +

(Stand)

PREFACE

Pastor The Lord be with you.

Congregation And also with you.

Pastor Lift up your hearts.

Congregation We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Congregation It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

PROPER PREFACE

SANCTUS

LSB pg. 208



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth a - dored;



Heav'n and earth with full ac-claim shout the glo-ry of Your name.



Sing ho - san-na in the high-est, sing ho-san-na to the Lord;



Tru - ly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

LSB pg. 209

LORD'S PRAYER

LSB pg. 209

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

LSB pg. 209

PAX DOMINI

LSB pg. 209

Pastor The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Congregation Amen.

AGNUS DEI

LSB pg. 210

C 1 O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,
2 O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,
You take the sin of the world a - way;
You take the sin of the world a - way;
O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,
Have mer - cy on us, Je - sus Christ,
Have mer - cy on us, Lord, we pray.
And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.

Text: Stephen P. Starke

+ *DISTRIBUTION HYMNS* +

(Sit)

PRAYERFUL MEDITATION

(Stand)

NUNC DIMITTIS

LSB pg. 211

C 1 O Lord, now let Your ser - vant De -
2 All glo - ry to the Fa - ther, All

part in heav'n - ly peace, For I have seen the
glo - ry to the Son, All glo - ry to the

glo - ry it, Of Your re - deem - ing grace:
Spir - it, For - ev - er Three in One;

A light to lead the Gen - tiles Un -
For as in the be - gin - ning, Is

to Your ho - ly hill, The glo - ry of Your
now, shall ev - er be, God's tri - une name re -

peo - ple, Your cho - sen Is - ra - el.
sound - ing Through all e - ter - ni - ty.

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

BENEDICTION

Pastor Having received the Sacrament and bearing ashes,
remember God's continued presence with you. You have
been baptized into Christ, our Brother! 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.

Congregation Amen.

(Sit)

HYMN

LSB #569

IN ADAM WE HAVE ALL BEEN ONE



1 In Ad - am we have all been one, One huge re - bel - lious man;
2 We fled Thee, and in los - ing Thee We lost our broth - er too;
3 But Thy strong love, it sought us still And sent Thine on - ly Son
4 O Thou who, when we loved Thee not, Didst love and save us all,



We all have fled that eve - ning voice That sought us as we ran.
Each sin - gly sought and claimed his own; Each man his broth - er slew.
That we might hear His Shep - herd's voice And, hear - ing Him, be one.
Thou great Good Shep - herd of man - kind, O hear us when we call.

5

Send us Thy Spirit, teach us truth; Thou Son, O set us free
From fancied wisdom, self-sought ways, To make us one in Thee.

6(Stand)

Then shall our song united rise To Thine eternal throne,
Where with the Father evermore And Spirit Thou art one.

MINISTRY TEAM

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SCHOOLS

Lutheran South Unity School.....lsusfw.org.....**744-0459**

Concordia Lutheran High School.....clhscadets.com.....**483-1102**

COUNSELING NEEDS

Please talk to Pastor Ben Ahlersmeyer for a referral for counseling to Cross Connections.

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Office Hours: 10:00am – 4:00pm (Monday – Friday)

Our Worship Schedule:

Saturday Afternoon Worship Service at 4:00pm

Sunday Morning Worship Service at 9:00am

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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

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