

Welcome to Christ Lutheran Church & Preschool

Ash Wednesday

February 14, 2024 • 7 p.m.

Rev. Gail Heidtke

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Member of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
(ELCA – www.elca.org)



All Are Welcome – All the Time!

You do not need to be a member of this church or Lutheran to participate in any part of worship. If you wish to take communion, we ask that you desire a relationship with Jesus. His body and blood were given and shed for you.



Christ Lutheran Church & PreSchool is a community committed to the work of equity and inclusion, bringing justice and support for all of God's beloveds. We welcome those who are seeking God's love and grace for the first time or as a life-long believer. We welcome because Jesus shows us how to welcome, regardless of race, culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, economic resources, relationship status, health challenges or anything else that too often divides us. It is in our welcome which we commit ourselves to being an anti-racist space, a space where we seek daily to deepen our work of inclusion in the life of our church. Our unity is in Christ. All are welcome here.

Silence is kept as we enter into tonight's worship...

SONG: Come Ye Disconsolate, ELW #607

Printed on bulletin insert or hymnal

Come, ye disconsolate, where'er ye languish;
Come to the mercy seat, fervently kneel.
Here bring your wounded hearts. Here tell your anguish;
Earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal.

Joy of the desolate, light of the straying,
hope of the penitent, fadeless and pure;
Here speaks the Comforter, tenderly saying,
"Earth has no sorrow that heave'n cannot cure."

Here see the Bread of Life; See waters flowing
forth from the throne of God, pure from above.
Come to the feast of love; Come ever knowing
earth has no sorrow but heaven can remove.

WELCOME & INVOCATION

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit that we may perfectly love you
and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

– Silence for reflection –

Most merciful God,

We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves.

**We have sinned against you in thought, word and deed,
by what we have done and what we have left undone.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ have mercy on us.

**Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will
and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

All who wishes may come forward to receive ashes on their forehead or on the back of their hand. Let an usher know if you would like ashes brought to you as you remain seated.

Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

SONG DURING IMPOSITION OF ASHES:

Amazing Grace, ELW #229

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found; was blind but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils and snares I have already come.
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me; his word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be as long as life endures.

When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun,
we've no less days to sing God's praise, than when we'd first begun.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together in Christ. By grace we have been saved. In the name of + Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven.

Almighty God strengthen us with power through the Holy Spirit that Christ may live in our hearts. **Amen.**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you. **And also with you!**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.**

RESPONSIVE READING: Psalm 51:1-12

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

Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.

Against you, you alone, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight,

so that you are justified in your sentence
and blameless when you pass judgment.

Indeed, I was born guilty,
a sinner when my mother conceived me.

You desire truth in the inward being;
therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

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

Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.

Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and put a new and right spirit within me.

Do not cast me away from your presence,
and do not take your holy spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and sustain in me a willing spirit.



READING: 2 Corinthians 5:20 through 6:10

We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain.

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! We are putting no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see – we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; as 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

THE GOSPEL READING

The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the 15th chapter.

Glory to You, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Luke 15:11-32

Jesus said, “There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the wealth that will belong to me.’ So he divided his assets between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant region, and there he squandered his wealth in dissolute living.

– continued –

When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that region, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that region, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, and no one gave him anything. But when he came to his senses he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands."' So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe – the best one – and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate, for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

"Now his elder son was in the field, and as he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf because he has got him back safe and sound.' Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command, yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your assets with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!' Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.' "

The Gospel of our Lord. Praise to You, O Christ.

MESSAGE – Pastor Gail Heidtke

SONG: Softly and Tenderly, ELW #608

(Printed on bulletin insert or in hymnal)

Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling. Calling for you and for me.
See, on the portals he's waiting and watching.
Watching for you and for me.

**“Come home, come home! You who are weary, come home.”
Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling.
Calling, “O sinner, come home!”**

Why should we tarry when Jesus is pleading?
Pleading for you and for me?
Why should we linger and heed not his mercies?
Mercies for you and for me? **“Come home...”**

Oh, for the wonderful love he has promised.
Promised for you and for me!
Though we have sinned, he has mercy and pardon.
Pardon for you and for me. **“Come home...”**



PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Trusting in God's promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need.

Hear us, O God.... Your mercy is great.

Additional prayers follow

Accompany us on our journey, God of grace. Receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. And also with you.

– Please share a sign of peace or greeting –

GREAT THANKSGIVING

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 our thanks and praise.



WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION AT THE FRONT

All are welcome to receive the Real Presence of Christ in the bread and wine of Holy Communion. You do not need to be a member of this church or Lutheran to receive the sacrament. We ask that you desire a relationship with Jesus Christ. Those who are interested will be invited by an usher to come up the center aisle to the front to select a single-serving Communion kit from the tray, or to receive a blessing. Then return to your seat via the side aisle to open the kit and partake in Communion. Please let an usher know if you would like Communion brought to you as you remain seated. An usher will offer a basket to collect the empty container. **All are welcome.**

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

BENEDICTION

May God who has called us forth from the dust of the earth,
and claimed us as children of the light,
strengthen you on your journey into life renewed.

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

May the Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

May the Lord look upon you with favor and give you His peace.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

SONG: Precious Lord, Take My Hand, ELW #773

(Printed on bulletin insert or in hymnal)

Precious Lord, take my hand, lead me on, let me stand.
I am tired, I am weak, I am worn.
Through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the light.
Take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.

When my way grows drear, precious Lord, linger near,
when my life is almost gone.

Hear my cry, hear my call, hold my hand lest I fall.

Take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.

When the darkness appears, and the night draws near,
and the day is past and gone.

At the river I stand, guide my feet, hold my hand.

Take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Walk with Christ.

Thanks be to God!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Lenten Devotions** – Check the website (ChristLutheranVH.org) for devotions and resources to support you during our Lenten Journey.
- **Mother's Day Joy Bags!** Sue's Pantry asked if we could create a treat for the many women she serves. Holly is gathering items for us to pack gift bags for Mother's Day. Assembly date to be determined. If you would like to donate toward the cost of the items, please reach out to Holly (HollySJ@earthlink.net). Thank you.
- **Caring Hands** – February 17, March 16, April TBD, May 18, June 15 rom 9 to noon.
- **Encampment Collection** – Thank you to all who contributed to our first delivery to the Chicago homeless encampment near Pastor Pdraig's house. We continue to collect blankets/sleeping bags (new or gently used/clean), socks, hand warmers, gloves, feminine products, and Mariano's gift cards (store closest to camp). Next delivery soon.
- **Sanctuary Support** – We continue to collect items for asylum seekers living in Police Stations and community centers in Chicago, a Sanctuary City. New wishlist includes children's/adult cold medicines, cough drops, Advil, Tylenol, heart burn relief, lotion, coats all sizes, men's clothing, men's shoes10.5+, strollers, book bags and suitcases.
- **Sue's Pantry** – Looking for small sizes of flour, cooking oil, sugar. Also anything needed to keep a home and family clean – dish soap, laundry detergent, body wash, shampoo.
- **Love INC** – Always looking for housewares, nonperishables and volunteers. Want to learn more about this amazing organization? Have a child or family in need of a bundle of clothes or housewares? Give the details to Natalie and on behalf of the church, we will request support – and Natalie will get us covered! (Thanks, Natalie.)
- **COOL Ministries** – We support the COOL pantry in Waukegan as well as Vernon Township Pantry with non-perishables. Collection bins in hallway or give online.
- **BSA Troop 273** – Thank you to all who who support our partner Scouts as they have supported us. **Looking to restart Cub Scout Pack 273!** Children/families ages Kindergarten through 4th grade are encouraged to reach out to Theresa (tcalabrese98@gmail.com).
- **Prayer concerns?** Please consider reaching out, so that our network of Prayer Warriors can pray for you or your concerns. You may remain anonymous. Please email ChristLutheranVH@aol.com with your request, and we will email the prayer team to lift up your prayer. If you would like to be part of the Prayer Team, please send an email.
- **THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.** Your presence in worship is very important as we join together in worship and praise. Thank you for being part of this community of faith so that we can lift our prayers together. If you would like to support the efforts of this community, we welcome donations, which can be provided by credit card or Paypal through the link at the bottom of our webpage, ChristLutheranVH.org. Thank you.