Welcome to Christ Lutheran Church & Preschool

Ash Wednesday

February 18, 2026 • 7 p.m.

Rev. Gail Heidtke

Website: ChristLutheranVH.org

Twitter: @ChristLuthVH

Facebook: /ChristLutheranVH

Church: 847-367-5787
ChristLutheranVH@aol.com

Preschool: 847-367-5791
CLCPreschool@aol.com

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…
Chimes

SONG: Just As I Am, ELW #592

Printed on bulletin insert or hymnal

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.

> 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.

Just as I am, thou wilt receive; Will welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because thy promise I believe, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

> Just as I am; thy love unknown, has broken every barrier down;
> Now to be thine, yes, thine alone, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

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.

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.**

READING: Isaiah 58:1-12

Shout out; do not hold back! Lift up your voice like a trumpet! Announce to my people their rebellion, to the house of Jacob their sins.

Yet day after day they seek me and delight to know my ways, as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness and did not forsake the ordinance of their God; they ask of me righteous judgments; they want God on their side.

“Why do we fast, but you do not see? Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?” Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day and oppress all your workers. **Y**ou fast only to quarrel and to fight and to strike with a wicked fist. Such fasting as you do today will not make your voice heard on high.

Is such the fast that I choose, a day to humble oneself? Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush and to lie in sackcloth and ashes? Will you call this a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord?

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you; the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, “Here I am.”

If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday. The Lord will guide you continually and satisfy your needs in parched places and make your bones strong, and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water whose waters never fail. Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to Go**

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: 1 John 1:5-9

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

– *Please stand as you are able –*

LENTEN GOSPEL ACCLAMATION – ELW #616

Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kingdom.
Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom. *(Repeat)*

GOSPEL: Matthew 7:1-5, 7-8

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to You, O Lord.**

“Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. \For the judgment you give will be the judgment you get, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. Why do you see the speck in your neighbor’s eye but do not notice the log in your own eye? Or how can you say to your neighbor, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ while the log is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor’s eye.

“Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.”

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

MESSAGE – Pastor Gail Heidtke

SONG: Amazing Grace, ELW #779

Printed on bulletin insert or in hymnal

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.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION (on separate sheet)

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

Hear us, O God… **Your mercy is great.**
Additional prayers follow

Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ,
our strength and salvation. **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 receive Communion or a blessing. If you would like Communion brought to you, please let an usher know. You are also welcome to remain in your seat to pray. Welcome!

Today we will offer both traditional distribution of bread and wine as well as single-serving Communion kits. Please choose as you feel comfortable. If you would like **Traditional Communion,** select an empty cup from the tray and come forward to receive a piece of bread in your open hand. The assistant will then pour wine into your cup. Your empty cup may be placed in the trays at each side as you return to your seat. **Single-serving kits** are available in the second tray. Select a sealed cup and bring it back to your seat to open and partake. Once at your seat, peel back the top layer to find the wafer, and then the bottom seal to drink. An usher will offer a basket to collect the empty container.

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: Abide with Me, ELW #629

*(**Verses 1, 3, 5;** Printed on bulletin insert or in hymnal)*

Abide with me, fast falls the eventide.
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
help of the helpless, oh, abide with me.

I need thy presence every passing hour;
What but thy grace can foil the tempter's pow'r?
Who like thyself my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, Oh, abide with me.

Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes,
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;
Heav'n's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Walk with Christ.

Thanks be to God!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Calendar:**
  PreSchool Open House – Feb. 24 from 4:45 to 6:15 p.m.
  Lay Leader Day in Schaumburg – March 14 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
  Good Friday Worship – April 3 at 7 p.m.
  Birthday Bash – April 25
- **Lenten Devotions** – Check the website (ChristLutheranVH.org) for devotions and resources to support you during our Lenten Journey.
- **Caring Hands** – Meeting from 9 a.m. to noon on the following Saturday mornings – February 21, March 21, April 18, May 16, June 13. Making prayer shawls, comfort blankets, hat and mittens. Reach out for information or projects for home. (CaringHandsVernonHills@gmail.com)
- **Meals in a Bag** – 2 gal ziplocks with all the nonperishable ingredients needed to make a hearty meal – bags and ingredient list/recipe cards available in the Narthex or on our website. We will provide these as needed and encourage everyone to have a couple to hand out.
- **Stock the Pantries! – Non-Perishables Needed.** Bring your donations of nonperishable food, paper goods, hygiene supplies, etc. and we will deliver to local pantries, which need all they help they can get. Also collecting fresh milk, eggs, meat, produce for specific families.Thank you!
- **Sue's Pantry Special Request** – Rice, pasta, Mac & cheese, tuna, canned chicken, zip lock bags with after-school snacks.
- **Here to help.** Do you or someone you know need food or support, especially with the loss of benefits? Reach out to the church at ChristLutheranVH@aol.com or 847-367-5787**.**
- **Alert Whistles & Rights Cards** – On the bulletin table. To use or share as needed.
- **Pray Over Our PreSchool Ministry** – May we continue to effectively bring the message of God's love for all into our community.
- **Donating to Victims of Flood, Earthquake, Fire, Drought, War** – ELCA's Lutheran Disaster Response is one of the oldest, most effective and most respected organizations for getting money where it can be put to good use. Donate at ELCA.org. There is also a link on our website under "WORK."
- **Scouting! –** Christ Lutheran is the Charter Organization for Pack 273 & Troop 273. Programs for girls and boys ages Kindergarten through high school, building skills, making connections and having fun. For younger kids, email committee.chair@Pack273VH.org. For older kids, email committeechair@troop273vh.net. Thanks to Holly & Bill Jones and their volunteers for their efforts in leading the groups. Thanks for supporting our Pack/Troop 273!
- **Sue's Pantry** – Sue has moved her pantry to a space in Arlington Heights. We will continue to collect anything needed to keep a home and family clean.
- **Love INC** – Housewares, nonperishables and volunteers. Know a family in need of a bundle of clothes or housewares? Give the details to Natalie! (https://loveinclakecounty.org/)
- **COOL Ministries** – We support the COOL pantry in Waukegan with non-perishables. Collection bins in hallway or give online. (CoolMinistries.org)
- **Prayer concerns?** Consider reaching out so that our network of Prayer Warriors can pray. You may remain anonymous. Email ChristLutheranVH@aol.com with your request. Would you join with us in prayer? Send an email to be included on the prayer mailing list. The task is simple-but-powerful – when time permits, open the email and read/pray with us.
- **THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.** Thank you for being part of this community of faith. If you would like to support our service, 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!