

Prince of Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church



Rethinking Our Priorities

Ash Wednesday

February 14, 2024



“Learning and sharing the gospel of Christ the Prince of Peace.”

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Evangelical Lutheran Church
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WELCOME!

Welcome to Prince of Peace Lutheran Church. We pray that the time spent here in God’s house helps you to appreciate how dearly God loves you! May God bless our worship today! If you are visiting with us for the first time, please take a moment to fill out one of the information cards found in the pews next to the hymnals. You can either place the completed card in the offering plate or give it to the usher when being ushered out at the end of the service. We look forward to getting to know you better in order to serve you fully with God's word!

THEME FOR TODAY

So many things compete for our attention! It’s easy to think of religion as just another of many activities to cram into our schedules. Sometimes, perhaps, the schedule is just too crowded. So, Jesus lovingly whispers into our ear, “Ashes to ashes. Dust to dust.” Those are the words spoken as a dead body is planted in the ground. The reality is that our time in this world is so short. After comes eternity, spent in one of two very different places. Jesus wants us to grasp that somber truth so we rethink where he should fall among all our priorities. Death can come at any time. So now is the time to cling to Christ in true repentance. Not later. Now. There is no higher priority.

THE LORD’S SUPPER

Scripture teaches us that in the Lord’s Supper:

- The body and blood of Christ are really present with the bread and the wine. (Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Corinthians 11:27)
- Jesus gives true forgiveness, not just a symbol, to each recipient. (Matthew 26:28)
- We are united as one body of believers because we all partake the one body and blood of Christ. “Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all share the one loaf. (1 Corinthians 10:16-17)

For these reasons we ask that, if you are not a part of a WELS (Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod) or ELS (Evangelical Lutheran Synod) church that publicly confesses to believe these same scriptural truths, you speak with our pastor before you take the Sacrament. We do not wish to judge your faith, but want to make sure that we are in agreement before publicly declaring that we share a common faith.

We are careful about the way we celebrate the Lord’s Supper because we want to humbly accept this gift the way God intended.

Stand

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

Confession

CW 154

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.
**If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just
and will forgive us our sins
and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.
**Holy God, gracious Father,
I am sinful by nature
and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.
I have not loved you with my whole heart;
I have not loved others as I should.
I deserve your punishment both now and forever.
But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins
with his innocent suffering and death.
Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

Silence for meditation and reflection

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Lord, Have Mercy

In peace let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.
Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Amen.

The Word

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Almighty and merciful God, you never despise what you have made and always forgive those who turn to you. Create in us such new and contrite hearts that we may truly repent of our sins and obtain your full and gracious pardon; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Be seated

First Reading

Joel 2:12–19

Through the prophet Joel, the LORD tells us that our top priority is to return to him in true repentance. We will find that the LORD is gracious and compassionate.

¹²“Even now,” declares the LORD,
“return to me with all your heart,
with fasting and weeping and mourning.”

¹³Rend your heart
and not your garments.
Return to the LORD your God,
for he is gracious and compassionate,
slow to anger and abounding in love,

and he relents from sending calamity.
¹⁴Who knows? He may turn and relent
and leave behind a blessing—
grain offerings and drink offerings
for the LORD your God.

¹⁵Blow the trumpet in Zion,
declare a holy fast,
call a sacred assembly.

¹⁶Gather the people,
consecrate the assembly;
bring together the elders,
gather the children,
those nursing at the breast.

Let the bridegroom leave his room
and the bride her chamber.

¹⁷Let the priests, who minister before the LORD,
weep between the portico and the altar.

Let them say, “Spare your people, LORD.
Do not make your inheritance an object of scorn,
a byword among the nations.

Why should they say among the peoples,
‘Where is their God?’ ”

¹⁸Then the LORD was jealous for his land
and took pity on his people.

¹⁹The LORD replied to them:

“I am sending you grain, new wine and olive oil,
enough to satisfy you fully;
never again will I make you
an object of scorn to the nations.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

51A Be Merciful, O Lord

Psalm 51A

Second Reading

Revelation 3:1–3

Jesus tells a spiritually dead church what their top priority should be: wake up, repent, and remember what they had heard about God’s grace.

“To the angel of the church in Sardis write:

These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. ²Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have found your deeds unfinished in the sight of my God. ³Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; hold it fast, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Stand

Gospel Acclamation

Ezekiel 18:30,32



Refrain



Glo - ry, praise, and hon - or to you, Lord Je - sus Christ.

“Turn away from all your offenses,” declares the Sovereign LORD.

“I take no pleasure in the death of anyone. Repent and live!”

Refrain

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Gospel

Luke 12:13–21

Jesus tells a parable about a man who forgot that we are all turning back into dust—a man with badly misguided priorities.

¹³Someone in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.”

¹⁴Jesus replied, “Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?” ¹⁵Then he said to them, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.”

¹⁶And he told them this parable: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. ¹⁷He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’”

¹⁸“Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. ¹⁹And I’ll say to myself, “You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.”’

²⁰“But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’

²¹“This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.”

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated

654 Jesus Sinners Does Receive

CW 654

Sermon

Wake Up and Repent!

Revelation 3:1–3

Stand

Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and became fully human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Be seated

Prayer of the Church

Brief intercessory prayers may be added in a fitting place.

Now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation. Let us pray for the people of God in Christ Jesus that, through repentance and faith in the gospel, they may remain secure in your love.

Lord God, gracious Father, we thank you for setting your Son's sacrifice between us and sin's reward. By your Spirit work in us through the gospel, give us repentant hearts, make our faith firm in Christ, and enliven us to serve you faithfully.

Have mercy upon us, Lord, according to your unfailing love.

Lord God, almighty Father, renew your Church throughout the world that it may constantly look to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. Bless us with faithful ministers who always proclaim Christ's cross and resurrection for the salvation of the world.

Have mercy upon us, Lord, according to your unfailing love.

Lord God, loving Father, in your mercy you abundantly supply our needs of body and soul. Create in us the mind of Christ, that in humility and generosity—considering not only our own interests, but also the interests of others—we may be merciful to those in need. Direct our efforts to help poor, lonely, troubled, and ill people.

Have mercy upon us, Lord, according to your unfailing love.

Lord God, heavenly Father, comfort all who are mourning the death of people they loved. Lift their eyes to the cross where your Son defeated death and to the empty tomb where he assured us that we will live with him forever. Teach us to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

Have mercy upon us, Lord, according to your unfailing love.

Lord God, heavenly Father, look with favor upon all sick, injured, and recovering people. [We pray especially for...*here name the person and the cause of the petition.*] If it be your will deliver them from their infirmities. Let them hear of your unfailing love.

Have mercy upon us, Lord, according to your unfailing love.

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

Lord God, eternal Father, we praise you that you have delivered the Christian souls who have gone before us from this world of dust and ashes to paradise. As their prayers continually ascend before your throne, join our prayers to theirs as fragrant incense. Hear us for the sake of him who was crucified for us and always intercedes on our behalf, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

Offering

The Sacrament

Please be sure to see the note on page 2 of this bulletin regarding our communion practice according to God's Word.

Stand

Preface

CW 165

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 him thanks and praise.

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who brought the gift of salvation to all people by his death on the tree of the cross so that the devil, who overcame us by a tree, would in turn by a tree be overcome. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

Holy, Holy, Holy

CW 167

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of heav - en - ly hosts:
heav'n 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,

Two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of lyrics, and the second staff contains the melody for the second line. The lyrics are: "bless-ed is he, bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na, ho-san - na, ho-san - na in the high - est."

Prayer of Thanksgiving

We give thanks to you, O God, through your dear Son, Jesus Christ, whom you sent to be our Savior, our Redeemer, and the messenger of your grace. Through him you made all things; in him you are well pleased. He is the incarnate Word, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. To fulfill your promises, he stretched out his hands on the cross and released from eternal death all who believe in you.

As we remember Jesus' death and resurrection, we thank you that you have gathered us together to receive your Son's body and blood. Send us your Spirit, unite us as one, and strengthen our faith so that we may praise you in your Son, Jesus Christ. Through him, we glorify and honor you, O God our Father, with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

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.**

Words of Institution

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my \dagger body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

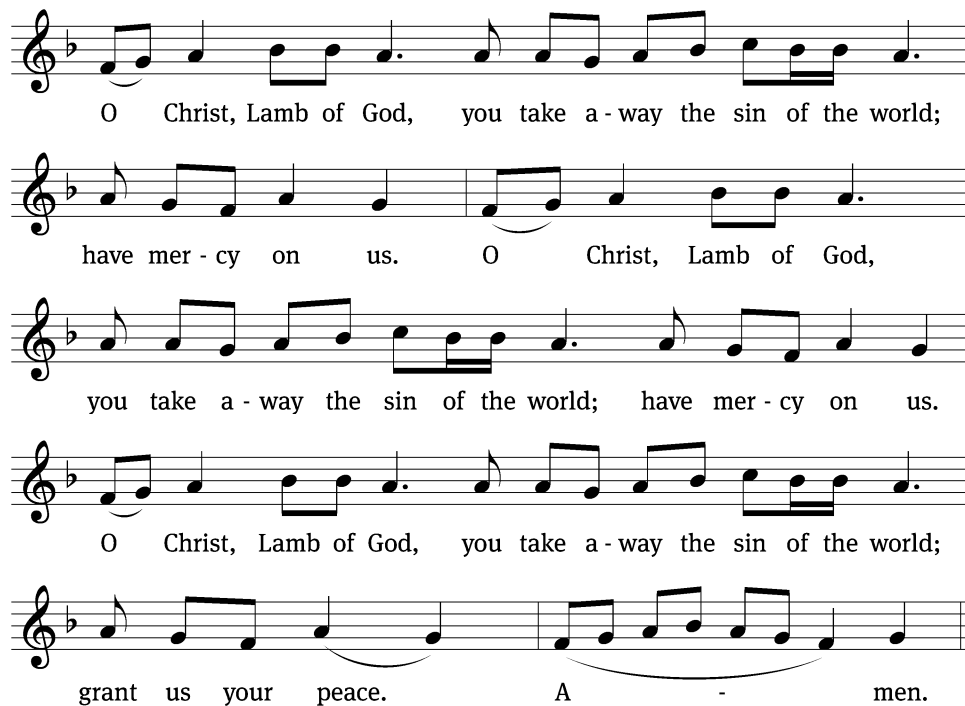
Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my \dagger blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

O Christ, Lamb of God

CW 169



O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;
have mer - cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God,
you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.
O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;
grant us your peace. A - men.

Be seated

Distribution

Distribution Hymn

667 Lord Jesus Christ, You Have Prepared

CW 667 sts. 1, 5–8

Stand

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his mercy endures forever.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this saving gift. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.
Amen.

420 Jesus, I Will Ponder Now

CW 420

Acknowledgments

Setting One from Christian Worship

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