



Ash Wednesday

March 5, 2025
7:00 p.m.

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church
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Please note: This evening's worship service is being livestreamed and recorded onto Facebook and YouTube, and an edited copy posted onto the St. Matthew webpage. By attending this worship service, you may appear as a part of this digital recording. Thank you.

Lent begins with a solemn call to fasting and repentance as we begin our journey to the baptismal waters of Easter. As we hear in today's readings, now is the acceptable time to **return to the Lord**. During Lent the people of God will reflect on the meaning of their baptism into Christ's death and resurrection. The **sign of ashes** suggests our human mortality and frailty. What seems like an ending is really an invitation to make each day a **new beginning**, in which we are washed in God's mercy and forgiveness. With the cross on our brow, we long for the **spiritual renewal** that flows from the springtime Easter feast to come.

St. Matthew invites you to join us in celebration of Holy Communion!

The Lord's table is open to all who believe and are baptized.
Please join us as we receive the means of grace, where Jesus promises to meet us in the bread and the wine.

*"Pages" are in the front of the hymnal.
"Hymns" are located toward the back of the hymnal.*

*Please stand as you are able.

GATHERING

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

***Gathering Hymn** *Our Father, We Have Wandered* Hymn 606

***Greeting**

A: Behold, now is the acceptable time;

C: now is the day of salvation

A: The grace, mercy, and peace of God be with you all.

C: And also with you.

***Prayer of the Day**

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.

WORD

First Reading

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

¹Blow the trumpet in Zion;
 sound the alarm on my holy mountain!
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,
 for the day of the LORD is coming, it is near—

²a day of darkness and gloom,
 a day of clouds and thick darkness!
Like blackness spread upon the mountains
 a great and powerful army comes;
their like has never been from of old,
 nor will be again after them
 in ages to come.

¹²Yet even now, says the LORD,
 return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;

¹³rend your hearts and not your clothing.
Return to the LORD, your God,
 for he is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love,
 and relents from punishing.

¹⁴Who 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;
 sanctify a fast;

call a solemn assembly;

¹⁶gather the people.
Sanctify the congregation;
 assemble the aged;
gather the children,
 even infants at the breast.

Let the bridegroom leave his room,
 and the bride her canopy.

¹⁷Between the vestibule and the altar
 let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep.

Let them say, "Spare your people, O LORD,
 and do not make your heritage a mockery,
 a byword among the nations.

Why should it be said among the peoples,
 'Where is their God?'"

R: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm

Psalm 51:1-17

- ¹Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;
in your great compassion blot out my offenses.
- ²**Wash me through and through from my wickedness,
and cleanse me from my sin.**
- ³For I know my offenses,
and my sin is ever before me.
- ⁴**Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight;
so you are justified when you speak and right in your judgment.**
- ⁵Indeed, I was born steeped in wickedness,
a sinner from my mother's womb.
- ⁶**Indeed, you delight in truth deep within me,
and would have me know wisdom deep within.**
- ⁷Remove my sins with hyssop, and shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be purer than snow.
- ⁸**Let me hear joy and gladness;
that the body you have broken may rejoice.**
- ⁹Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my wickedness.
- ¹⁰**Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.**
- ¹¹Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
- ¹²**Restore to me the joy of your salvation
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.**
- ¹³Let me teach your ways to offenders,
and sinners shall be restored to you.
- ¹⁴**Rescue me from bloodshed, O God of my salvation,
and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness.**
- ¹⁵O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.
- ¹⁶**For you take no delight in sacrifice, or I would give it.
You are not pleased with burnt offering.**
- ¹⁷The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit;
a troubled and broken heart, O God, you will not despise.

Second Reading

2 Corinthians 5:20b - 6:10

^{20b}We entreat 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.

^{6:1}As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. ²For 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! ³We are putting no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, ⁴but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, ⁵beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; ⁶by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, ⁷truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; ⁸in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; ⁹as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; ¹⁰as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

R: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

***Gospel Acclamation**

Return to the Lord

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***Gospel**

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

P: The holy gospel according to St. Matthew, the sixth chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to the disciples: ¹“Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

²“So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ³But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

⁵“And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ⁶But whenever 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 whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ¹⁷But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

¹⁹“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰but store up for yourselves

treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

P: The gospel of the Lord. **C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Pastor Steve Mahaffey

***Hymn of the Day**

Be Thou My Vision

Hymn 793

***Invitation to Lent**

The assembly is seated. The presiding minister may invite the assembly into the discipline of Lent.

P: Friends in Christ, today with the whole church we enter the time of remembering Jesus' Passover from death to life, and our life in Christ is renewed.

We begin this holy season by acknowledging our need for repentance and for God's mercy. We are created to experience joy in communion with God, to love one another, and to live in harmony with creation. But our sinful rebellion separates us from God, our neighbors, and creation, so that we do not enjoy the life our creator intended.

As disciples of Jesus, we are called to discipline that contends against evil and resists whatever leads us away from love of God and neighbor. I invite you, therefore, to the discipline of Lent - self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love - strengthened by the gifts of word and sacrament. Let us continue our journey through these forty days to the great Three Days of Jesus' death and resurrection.

***Confession of Sin**

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

A: Most holy and merciful God,

C: we confess to you and to one another, and before the whole company of heaven, that we have sinned by our fault, by our own fault, by our own most grievous fault, in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone.

A: We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven.

C: Have mercy on us, O God.

A: We have shut our ears to your call to serve as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

C: Have mercy on us, O God.

A: Our past unfaithfulness, the pride, envy, hypocrisy, and apathy that have infected our lives, we confess to you.

C: Have mercy on us, O God.

A: Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people, we confess to you.

C: Have mercy on us, O God.

A: Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to share the faith that is in us, we confess to you.

C: Have mercy on us, O God.

A: Our neglect of human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty, we confess to you.

C: Have mercy on us, O God.

A: Our false judgements, our uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us, we confess to you.

C: Have mercy on us, O God.

A: Our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us, we confess to you.

C: Have mercy on us, O God.

A: Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us.

C: Have mercy on us, O God, for your mercy is great.

A: Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth. May these ashes be a sign of our mortality and penitence, reminding us that only by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ are we given eternal life; through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

People may come forward and kneel or stand to receive the ashes.

Imposition of Ashes

*Lord Jesus, Think On Me
Chief of Sinners Though I Be*

Hymn 599
Hymn 609

*After those who desire ashes have received them
and returned to their seats, the minister continues.*

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 Savior,

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 our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life.

C: Amen.

***Prayers of Intercession** (*You may stand or kneel.*)

A: Led by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence.

A: God of our journeys, we pray for the church as the season of Lent begins. Guide your people in spiritual practices and preparation for baptism. Strengthen communities of faith in discipleship and witness for the sake of the gospel. God, in your mercy,

C: receive our prayer.

A: God of creation, we pray for the earth. As you once brought forth life from the dust, breathe healing and renewal into all places where ecosystems are stretched and strained. Nurture organic cycles of life, death, and rebirth. God, in your mercy,

C: receive our prayer.

A: God of the nations, we pray for an end to wars and occupations that reduce communities to ash. Turn leaders away from fearful decision-making, and lead all people into the justice and compassion of your reign. God, in your mercy,

C: receive our prayer.

A: God of the suffering, we pray for all who live with any pain, especially Rosemary, Shannon, Wyatt, Alan, Dave, Loretta, Ed, Judy, Jerry, June, Tom, Todd, and those we now name aloud or hold tenderly in our hearts. Comfort people living with chronic or terminal illnesses, addictions, or anxiety. Grant that all who dwell in the dust of grief may know your presence there. God, in your mercy,

C: receive our prayer.

A: God of community, we pray for those who accompany the dying: for first responders, health care and hospice workers, chaplains, and those who facilitate burials of the dead. Sustain them as they serve their neighbors in life and death with dignity and care. God, in your mercy,

C: receive our prayer.

A: God of the cross, we give thanks for those who have completed their lives on earth and have returned to you. Strengthen us with the promise that within the ashes of death are the seeds of resurrection life. God, in your mercy,

C: receive our prayer.

A: Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life.

C: Amen.

***Sharing of the Peace**

A: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

MEAL

Offering

***Offertory Response** *Create in Me a Clean Heart* Hymn 186

***Offertory Prayer**

P: Gracious Provider, you set your immense treasures among us, opening your heart to the world. As we prepare to feast on your bountiful love, deepen our commitment to sharing those treasures with others, through our Savior, Jesus Christ.

C: Amen.

***Great Thanksgiving**

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.

***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.**

***Invitation to Communion**

P: All who are hungry, come! The feast of grace is spread.

Communion Hymns

*Let Us Break Bread Together
Come, Let Us Eat*

Hymn 471

Hymn 491

***Prayer after Communion**

P: Generous Host, you have shared your feast with us and made us new.
Send us now to set tables of love and grace in our communities, that your
liberating love might nourish the world into freedom, in the name of the
crucified one, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

SENDING

***Blessing**

P: God our tender parent, God the crucified one, God the reconciling Spirit,
‡ bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

***Sending Song**

The Glory of These Forty Days

Hymn 320

***Dismissal**

A: Go in peace. Care for others as God cares for you.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

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PRAYERS

Prayers for Healing: Rosemary Evans, Shannon, Wyatt, Alan Ivan, Jr., Dave Anderson, Loretta Thornton, Carol Muhlbach, Ed, Judy Weir, Jerry Jakovcic, June Trenty, Tom Thornton, & Todd Costello.

SUNDAY, MARCH 9 AT ST. MATTHEW

First Sunday in Lent, we will worship in person at 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. with ELW 3 and holy communion., *Livestream at 8:30 a.m.*

Sunday School for all ages at 9:45 a.m.

WORSHIP SERVANTS

Reader:	Helen Graf
Communion	Sandy Andrews
Servers:	Helen Graf
Ushers:	Alan & Delores Ivan
Sound:	Mike Holthouse
Assisting Minister:	Jen Knaggs
Video:	Brian Harris
Altar Guild:	Ron & Peg Huber, Shannon Turney

St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church Staff

The Rev. Steven Mahaffey	Pastor
Deacon Lindsay Stertzbach	Director of Youth & Family Ministries
Cindy Piovarchy	Organist
LaVonne DeBois	Associate Pianist
Deb Musil	Office Administrator
Heather Rohde	Bookkeeper
Joyce Davis	Maintenance Supervisor
Brenda Disbrow	Parish Nurse
Nancy McNeal	Luther Choir Director
Rachel Knaggs	Kids of the Kingdom Director
Kaitlyn Taraschke	Nursery Attendant
Scott Schwandt	Praise Team Leader

Pastor Steve's Contact Information

Email: pastorsteve@stmatthewmedina.org
Cell Phone: 740-525-6149

Church Office Hours

Monday - Thursday: 10:00 am - 3:30 pm
Friday: Office Closed



Hearing Loop
System available.