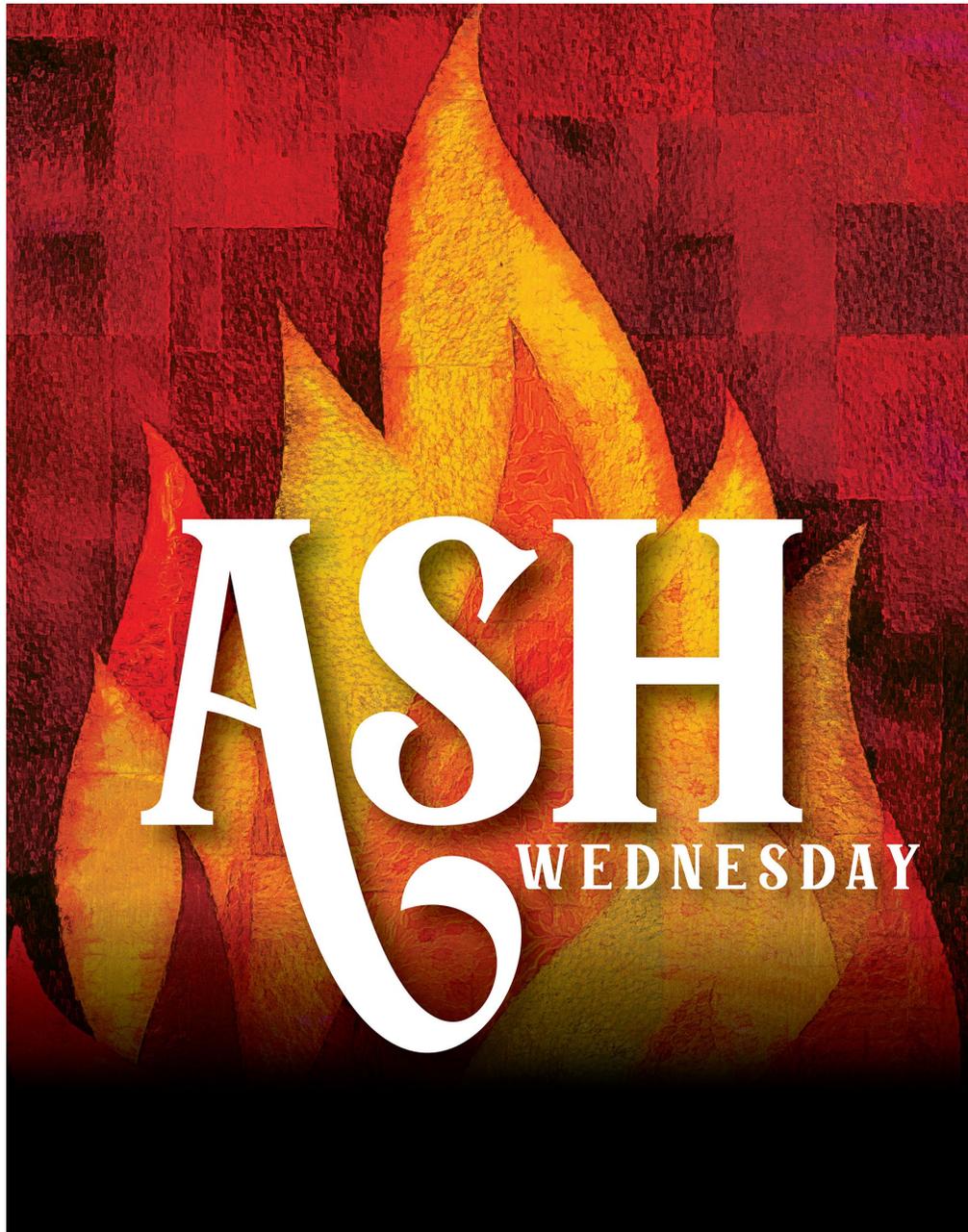


Ash Wednesday
Wednesday, February 18, 2026
Noon and 7:00 p.m.



*"Touched by the Gospel, we see to be instruments of God's Peace,
for the sake of the World."*

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
1747 W. Milham Avenue ♦ Portage, MI 49024
Pastor Rachel Laughlin
Church phone: 269/343-3453 ♦ fax: 269/343-2025
Website: popportage.org
Prayer-mail: prayer@popportage.org
Find us on Facebook: *Prince of Peace, Portage, MI-ELCA*



Welcome in the name of Christ

Entering Worship

- ▶ Fully accessible restrooms (men's, women's, gender-neutral) are located behind you as you face the altar. The women's room and nursery have changing tables.
- ▶ People of all ages and stages are encouraged to worship together. A staffed nursery is available 9 AM – Noon.
- ▶ All are welcome to share Christ's communion regardless of age or faith tradition. The bread is gluten, nut, and dairy free. Wine and grape juice are available.

Embodying Praise

- ▶ Postures are a way in which we engage the body in worship. These movements (sitting, standing, making the sign of the cross) are optional; please engage in them only as you are comfortable or able.
- ▶ Some brains need a quiet activity to help them learn. Feel free to borrow a worship bag or a fidget toy to help your brain and body stay engaged. Ask an usher for assistance.
- ▶ If your body would benefit from extra motion during worship, you are welcome to get up and move about during the service. The Prayground in the Gathering Space is equipped with activities and soft toys for anyone to use. The service is still audible there.
- ▶ Hearing assistance devices direct clearer sound directly to your ears. They are available from the ushers. If you use Bluetooth-enabled hearing aids, see the back of the bulletin for instructions on connecting to the assistive listening system in our sanctuary.

Engaging in Community

- ▶ Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we strive to be an open, welcoming place for all people. Please join us in the Gathering Space after worship for snacks, coffee, and fellowship.
- ▶ This bulletin may be recycled in the basket on the floor near the glass door to the front parking lot. We invite you to take home the Peace Proclamations page with announcements and upcoming events.
- ▶ If you'd like to learn more about our community you can: greet Pastor Rachel at the door by the baptismal font after worship, visit the welcome table to pick up informational brochures or staff business cards, or visit our website: www.popportage.org

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP

Worshippers responses in bold.

Music for the Beginning of Worship

"The Glory of These Forty Days"

arr. Dietrich Buxtehude

Welcome





1 As the win - ter days grow long - er, draw - ing short the hours of night;
 2 As the vines burst in - to blos - som, fra - grant in the morn - ing air,
 3 As we jour - ney through this sea - son, pil - grims through a thirst - y land,



as our ea - ger ex - pec - ta - tion waits for Eas - ter's dawn - ing light—
 lift - ing spir - its with their sweet - ness, lur - ing hearts to thank - ful prayer—
 quench us with your liv - ing pres - ence; guide us with your lov - ing hand.



yearn - ing peo - ple, here we gath - er, turn - ing watch - ful eyes to you:
 Lent - en peo - ple, here we gath - er, seek - ing lives re - freshed from sin.
 Wan - d'ring peo - ple, here we gath - er, called to rest a - long our way.



God who bless - es earth with spring - time, shine with - in our world a - new!
 God who bless - es earth with spring - time, bloom with - in our hearts a - gain!
 God who bless - es earth with spring - time, grant us sab - bath joy this day!

Greeting and Prayer of the Day

Pastor: The grace of the Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray,

All: Gracious God, out of your love and mercy you breathed into dust the breath of life, creating us to serve you and our neighbors. Call forth our prayers and acts of kindness, and strengthen us to face our mortality with confidence in the mercy of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

WE HEAR THE WORD OF GOD

First Reading

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

Blow 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 – a 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.

Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from punishment. 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 aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room and the bride her canopy.

Between 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?’ ”

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm

Psalm 51:1-17

Reader: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;

All: in your great compassion blot out my offenses. Wash me through and through from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my offenses, and my sin is ever before me. 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.

High: Indeed, I was born steeped in wickedness, a sinner from my mother’s womb.

Low: Indeed, you delight in truth deep within me, and would have me know wisdom deep within.

All: Remove my sins with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be purer than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; that the body you have broken may rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my wickedness.

Reader: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

All: Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.

High: Let me teach your ways to offenders, and sinners shall be restored to you.

Low: Rescue me from bloodshed, O God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness.

All: O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise. For you take no delight in sacrifice, or I would give it. You are not pleased with burnt offering. The 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

We entreat you on behalf of Christ: be reconciled to God. For our sake God made the one who knew no sin to be sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. As we work together with him, we entreat 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."

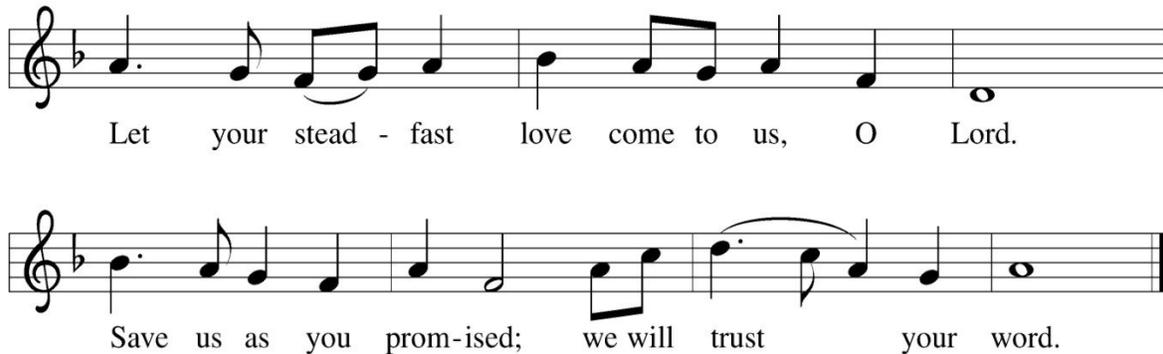
Look, now is the acceptable time; look, now is the day of salvation! We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: in great endurance, afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; in 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 look – 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.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

Stand

Gospel Acclamation



Let your stead - fast love come to us, O Lord.

Save us as you prom-ised; we will trust your word.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 6th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[[Jesus said to the disciples:]] "Beware of practicing your righteousness before others in order to be seen by them, for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

"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. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"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. But 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.

“And whenever you fast, do not look somber, like the hypocrites, for they mark their faces to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so 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.

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

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

Sit

Sermon

Pastor Rachel Laughlin

Stand

Hymn of the Day

“Be Thou My Vision”

No. 793

Sit

Invitation to Lent

Pastor: 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 a 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

Pastor: Holy and merciful God,

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

*Pastor continues to recite confessions and after each the people respond,
“Have mercy on us, O God” The confession concludes with –*

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

All: Hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.

Imposition of Ashes

Those worshiping in person may come forward to receive ashes (palm ash and olive oil) from Pastor.

Those joining us via YouTube are invited to make the sign of the cross on their brows using what they have available, such as water, olive oil, makeup, or palm ash.

Music During the Imposition of Ashes

7:00p.m. only

Sing, hum

Re - mem - ber that you are dust, and to
dust you shall re - turn.

After the Imposition of Ashes

Pastor: Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,

All: that we may show forth your glory in the world.

Pastor: By the cross and passion of your Son, our Savior,

All: bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.

Pastor: Almighty God, have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life.

All: Amen.

Prayers of the Church

After "Generous God," worshipers respond "Pour out your Love."

WE SHARE IN HIS MEAL

Sharing the Peace

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

All: And also with you.

*Worshipers share a sign of God's peace with one another,
greeting each other with words like "Peace be with you. . .and also with you"*

Sit

Offering

*Please **date** and complete the fellowship registration pad*

For members of the Prince of Peace community, an offering is our expression of gratitude to God and a way we share God's love with the world. If you are visiting with us today, your presence is already a great gift.

Anthem

7:00p.m. only

"Hosea"
Sanctuary Choir

Gregory Norbert

*Come back to me with all your heart. Don't let fear keep us apart
Trees do bend though straight and tall; so must we to others' call.*

*Long have I waited for your coming home to me
and living deeply our new life.*

*The wilderness will lead you to your heart where I will speak.
Integrity and justice, with tenderness, you shall know.
You shall sleep secure with peace; faithfulness will be your joy.*

*Long have I waited for your coming home to me
and living deeply our new life.*

Offering Response

Noon	"O Lord, throughout These Forty Days"	No. 319
7:00p.m.	"O Lord, throughout These Forty Days" <i>vs. 1 and 4</i>	No. 319

Liturgical Hand Washing

I wash my hands in innocence, and go around your altar, O Lord, singing aloud a song of thanksgiving, and telling all your wondrous deeds. - Psalm 26:6-7

Offering Prayer

Asst: 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.

All: **Amen.**

Stand

Great Thanksgiving - Grace Before the Meal

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

All: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Pastor: . . . and join in their unending hymn.

All: **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Eucharistic Prayer

Pastor: Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth, for you have had mercy on us and given your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. We give you thanks for the priceless grace you have bestowed upon us through Jesus Christ, who died upon the tree of Calvary and rose again to make us living branches, drawing our life from him and bearing fruit in all the world. Send your Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth and power, to renew our faith as we receive our crucified and risen Lord who comes to us in his body and blood.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

The Lord's Prayer

Pastor: With the confidence of the children of God, we are bold to pray:

All: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Invitation to the Meal

Pastor: If you desire to receive what God offers, come to this Table. Come with your faith and your doubt. Come with your questions and your hopes. Come with your grief and your love. Come taste the Lord's goodness. There is room for you here because this is Christ's table. You are welcome.

Sit

Holy Communion - the Lord's Supper

All are welcome at Christ's table regardless of age or membership status. All communion servers will have sanitized their hands before handling the communion elements. Ushers will direct you to come forward. The pastor and assisting minister will distribute the bread (gluten-free) and the other servers will distribute the wine (red) or grape juice (white). Individually packaged gluten free wafers and sets of completely sealed elements (wheat wafer and grape juice) are available on the stands near the bread distributors. You may pick one of those up yourself, if you prefer. You may place your empty cup in the baskets on the tables as you return to your seat.

If you would prefer not to receive communion, you are invited to come forward for a blessing. Please cross your arms over your chest to indicate your preference to the servers.

Lamb of God

**All: Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.**

Communion Hymns

"Let Us Break Bread Together"

No. 471

"Just As I Am, without One Plea"

No. 592

Table Blessing

Pastor: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

All: Amen.

Asst: 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.

All: Amen.

Stand

Final Blessing

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

All: Amen.

Sending Hymn

"Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery"
vs. 1 and general

No. 334

Dismissal

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

All: Thanks be to God.

Music for the Close of Worship

“Tree of Life”

Marty Haugen



“Store up for yourselves treasures
in heaven, where moth & rust do
not destroy, & where thieves do not
break in and steal.”
M a t t h e w 6 : 2 0

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Today's Servers

Noon

Worship Asst.: Kathleen Robinson
Reader: Em Witteveen
Ushers: Em Witteveen
Technology: Paul Swodzinski, Mike Whately
Sacristy Asst.: Kathy Eklov
Altar Guild: Dorothy Tisland

Today's Servers

7:00 p.m.

Worship Asst.: Em Witteveen
Reader: Kathleen Robinson
Ushers: Kay Kincaid
Technology: Paul Guthrie, Paul Swodzinski
Sacristy Asst.: Laila Poisson
Altar Guild: Dianne Hellman
Church Lockup: Alison Carlson

Use this QR code to donate online to
Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
and it's ministries.
See the Peace Proclamations for more details.



Hearing Aid Compatible Assistive Listening System



1. Use this  QR code connect to the "pop_listen" Wi-fi network.
2. Use this QR  Code to download the *Listen Everywhere* app, either from the Apple Store or the Google Play Store.



3. On your phone go to your settings. Tap on Connections, tap on Wi-fi, look for the "pop_listen" network and tap on it.
4. Then find your "Listen Everywhere" app, open it and tap on "POP Service"
5. After that you should be receiving audio in your hearing aids. If you need assistance, see an Usher.

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church Staff

Church phone: 269/343-3453

Staff

Pastor: Rachel Laughlin ext 11	Intern: Kathleen Robinson ext 15
Administrative Asst: Tamara Preston ext 10	Music Director: Janet Hill ext 16
Accountant: Marilyn Storch ext 14	Custodian: Steve Haddix ext 20
Technology Manager: Mike Whately ext 13	Nursery: Melissa Copeland & Megan Zimmerman ext 17
Engagement Coor: Em Witteveen ext 12	Care Team Email: prayer@popportage.org

It is finished.

Wednesdays in Lent

Feb. 25

March 4, 11, 18, 25

Soup Supper 6:00 PM

Prayer around the Cross 7:00 PM

In person or online

www.popportage.org

