

SOLOMON'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
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...but that you be united in the



same mind and the same purpose

1 C O R I N T H I A N S 1 : 1 0

"Solomon's Evangelical Lutheran Church, following the example of Jesus Christ, seeks to live in the confidence and fullness of God's grace; to preach the Good News boldly and truthfully; to support and serve others in faith; to work in harmony with all creation."

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY
FEBRUARY 1, 2026

February 1, 2026
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Jesus begins his public ministry by calling fishers to leave their nets and follow him. In Jesus the kingdom of God has come near. We who have walked in darkness have seen a great light. We see this light most profoundly in the cross—as God suffers with us and all who are oppressed by sickness, sin, or evil. Light dawns for us as we gather around the word, the font, and the holy table. We are then sent to share the good news that others may be “caught” in the net of God’s grace and mercy.

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

ORGAN PRELUDE *Voluntary on “In Babilone” - arr. David N. Johnson*

LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✙ one God,
the Creator of heaven and earth,
the Word who spoke life into being,
the Wind stirring the waters.

Amen.

Let us turn in confession to the one who knows us completely.

Mighty God, lover of justice,
you call us to life in community,
but we have served our own interests
at the expense of our neighbors.
We have sown deceit where honesty was needed.
We say the right words,
but our hearts are far from you.
Turn us to seek your face.
Knit us together and give us the mind of Christ,
that we may do justice, love mercy,
and walk humbly with you, our God.
Amen.

The former things have passed away,
and new things God now declares:
Like a spring of water that never fails,
God covers you in the righteousness of Christ,
and forgives your sin in ✙ Jesus’ name.
May the Spirit give you strength to live for others,
and bless you with the gift of peace.
Amen.

***GATHERING SONG *Holy Spirit, Ever Dwelling* (ELW 582)**



1 Ho-ly Spir-it, ev-er dwell-ing in the ho-liest realms of light;
 2 Ho-ly Spir-it, ev-er liv-ing as the church's ver-y life;
 3 Ho-ly Spir-it, ev-er work-ing through the church's min-is-try;



Ho-ly Spir-it, ev-er brood-ing o'er a world of gloom and night;
 Ho-ly Spir-it, ev-er striv-ing through us in a cease-less strife;
 quick-'ning, strength-'ning, and ab-solv-ing, set-ting cap-tive sin-ners free;



Ho-ly Spir-it, ev-er rais-ing those of earth to thrones on high;
 Ho-ly Spir-it, ev-er form-ing in the church the mind of Christ:
 Ho-ly Spir-it, ev-er bind-ing age to age and soul to soul



liv-ing, life-im-part-ing Spir-it, you we praise and mag-ni-fy.
 you we praise with end-less wor-ship for your gifts and fruits un-priced.
 in com-mu-nion nev-er end-ing, you we wor-ship and ex-tol.

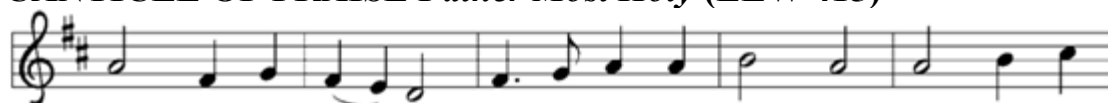
Text: Timothy Rees, 1874–1939, alt.

Music: IN BABILONE, *Oude en Nieuwe Hollandse Boerenliedjes en Contradansen*, 1710

***GREETING**

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

***CANTICLE OF PRAISE *Father Most Holy* (ELW 415)**



1 Fa - ther most ho - ly, mer - ci - ful, and ten - der; Je - sus, our

4 Lord God Al - might-y, un - to thee be glo - ry, one in three



Sav - ior, with the Fa - ther reign - ing; Spir - it of com - fort,

per - sons, o - ver all ex - alt - ed! Glo - ry we of - fer,



ad - vo - cate, de - fend - er, light nev - er wan - ing.

praise thee and a - dore thee, now and for - ev - er.

Text: Latin hymn, 10th cent.; tr. Percy Dearmer, 1867–1936, alt.

Music: CHRISTE SANCTORUM, Paris *Antiphoner*, 1681

Text from *The English Hymnal* outside the USA © Oxford University Press 1906. All rights reserved.

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***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

Lord God, your lovingkindness always goes before us and follows after us. Summon us into your light, and direct our steps in the ways of goodness that come through the cross of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

CHOIR ANTHEM *I Have Decided to Follow Jesus* - arr. R. Kevin Boesiger

FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:1-4

A reading from Isaiah.

The northern tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali experienced the gloom of defeat by Assyrian military forces, but they are assured that their condition will be reversed when God makes a light-filled appearance. The joy they will experience will resemble celebrations of great harvests, because God will deliver them from everything that diminishes or oppresses them.

¹ There will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time [the LORD] brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

² The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.

³ You have multiplied exultation;
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.

⁴ For the yoke of their burden
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 27:1, 4-9

(read responsively between lector and congregation, beginning with the lector)

¹ The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom then ¹ shall I fear?
The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I ¹ be afraid?

⁴ **One thing I ask of the LORD; one ¹ thing I seek;**
that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life; to gaze upon
the beauty of the LORD and to seek God ¹ in the temple.

⁵ For in the day of trouble God will ¹ give me shelter,
hide me in the hidden places of the sanctuary, and raise me high up- ¹ on a rock.

⁶ **Even now my head is lifted up above my enemies ¹ who surround me.**
Therefore I will offer sacrifice in the sanctuary, sacrifices of rejoicing; I will sing
and make music ¹ to the LORD.

⁷ Hear my voice, O LORD, ¹ when I call;
have mercy on me and ¹ answer me.

⁸ **My heart speaks your message— ¹ “Seek my face.”**
Your face, O LORD, ¹ I will seek.

⁹ Hide not your face from me, turn not away from your ser- ¹ vant in anger.
Cast me not away—you have been my helper; forsake me not, O God of ¹ my
salvation.

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:10-18

A reading from 1 Corinthians.

Paul calls on the Corinthians to end their dissensions and share the unified outlook of the gospel. Discord arises when we forget that we belong not to human leaders or institutions but to Christ. Indeed, the unifying word of the cross of Christ is the center of the gospel and the power of God's salvation.

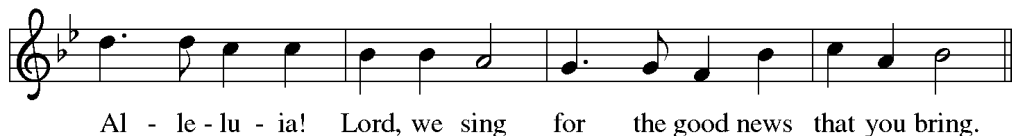
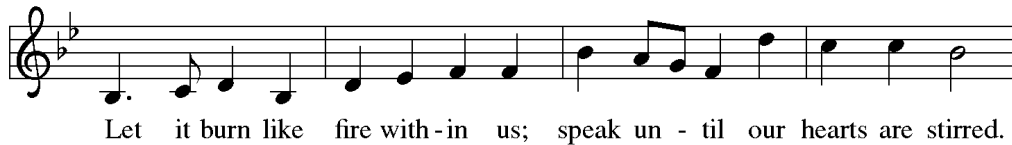
¹⁰ Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you but that you be knit together in the same mind and the same purpose. ¹¹ For it has been made clear to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters. ¹² What I mean is that each of you says, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ." ¹³ Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? ¹⁴ I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, ¹⁵ so that no one can say that you were baptized in my name. ¹⁶ I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else. ¹⁷ For Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim the gospel—and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power.

¹⁸ For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW S 205A)



***GOSPEL: Matthew 4:12-23**

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus begins his public ministry shortly after John the Baptist is imprisoned by Herod. He proclaims the nearness of God's reign and calls four fishermen to be his first disciples.

¹² Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. ¹³ He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, ¹⁴ so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

¹⁵ “Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali,
on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the gentiles—
¹⁶ the people who sat in darkness
have seen a great light,
and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death
light has dawned.”

¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to proclaim, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

¹⁸ As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishers. ¹⁹ And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people.” ²⁰ Immediately they left their nets and followed him. ²¹ As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. ²² Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

²³ Jesus went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON Rev. Julia Brown

***HYMN OF THE DAY** *Will You Come and Follow Me: The Summons* (ELW 798)



1 "Will you come and fol - low me if I but call
 2 "Will you leave your - self be - hind if I but call
 3 "Will you let the blind - ed see if I but call
 4 "Will you love the you you hide if I but call
 5 Lord, your sum - mons ech - oes true when you but call



your name? Will you go where you don't
 your name? Will you care for cruel and
 your name? Will you set the pris - 'ners
 your name? Will you quell the fear in -
 my name. Let me turn and fol - low



know and nev - er be the same?
 kind and nev - er be the same?
 free and nev - er be the same?
 side and nev - er be the same?
 you and nev - er be the same.



Will you let my love be shown, will you let my
 Will you risk the hos - tile stare, should your life at -
 Will you kiss the lep - er clean, and do such as
 Will you use the faith you've found to re - shape the
 In your com - pa - ny I'll go where your love and



name be known, will you let my life be
 tract or scare? Will you let me an - swer
 this un - seen, and ad - mit to what I
 world a - round, through my sight and touch and
 foot - steps show. Thus I'll move and live and



grown in you and you in me?"
 pray'r in you and you in me?"
 mean in you and you in me?"
 sound in you and you in me?"
 grow in you and you in me.

Text: John L. Bell, b. 1949

Music: KELVINGROVE, Scottish traditional

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Please join me as we confirm our faith together in the words of the Apostles' Creed.

***CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.*
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

***PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH** *(Please respond.)*

P: Merciful God, C: receive our prayer.

***PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

***OFFERTORY (VS 1 & 3) *For the Fruit of All Creation* (ELW 679)**



1 For the fruit of all cre - a - tion, thanks be to God.

3 For the har - vests of the Spir - it, thanks be to God.



For these gifts to ev - 'ry na - tion, thanks be to God.

For the good we all in - her - it, thanks be to God.



For the plow - ing, sow - ing, reap - ing, si - lent growth while we are sleep - ing,

For the won - ders that as - tound us, for the truths that still con - found us,



fu - ture needs in earth's safe - keep - ing, thanks be to God.

most of all, that love has found us, thanks be to God.

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903–2000

Music: AR HYD Y NOS, Welsh traditional

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***OFFERING PRAYER**

God of majesty,
no eye has seen, no ear has heard
what you have prepared for those who love you,
yet in this meal you reveal the wideness of your mercy.
Use what we have gathered
to feed us with the reign of God come near,
Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

*GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

*PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations;
in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son;
and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

*HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW p. 108)

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of

pow-er and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -

san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the

name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

***THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

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.

***LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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**

Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!
Come to the table; taste and see.

COMMUNION

Continuous - Please continue down center aisle at the direction of the usher. After you receive the bread, you may take a cup of red wine or white grape juice from the tray. Please place your empty communion cup in the basket. Gluten free wafers are available, ask the Pastor when you come forward. Notify the Head Usher if you would appreciate receiving Communion at your seat rather than walking up to the altar, the Pastor and Communion Assistant will be happy to bring Communion to you.

COMMUNION SONG (ELW p. 154)



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the

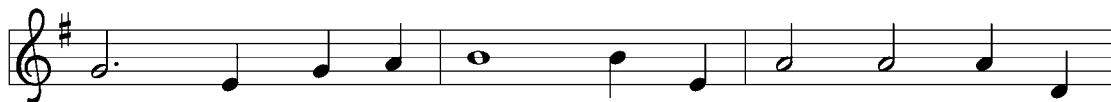


sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMN *Jesus Calls Us; o'er the Tumult* (ELW 696)



1 Je - sus calls us; o'er the tu - mult of our
2 As of old Saint An - drew heard it by the
3 Je - sus calls us from the wor - ship of the
4 In our joys and in our sor - rows, days of
5 Je - sus calls us! By your mer - cy, Sav - ior,



life's wild, rest - less sea, day by day his clear voice
Gal - i - le - an lake, turned from home and toil and
vain world's gold - en store, from each i - dol that would
toil and hours of ease, still he calls, in cares and
may we hear your call, give our hearts to your o -



sound - ing, say - ing, "Chris - tian, fol - low me:"
kin - dred, leav - ing all for Je - sus' sake.
keep us, say - ing, "Chris - tian, love me more."
plea - sures, "Chris - tian, love me more than these."
be - dience, serve and love you best of all.

Text: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1818–1895

Music: GALILEE, William H. Jude, 1851–1922

***COMMUNION BLESSING**

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

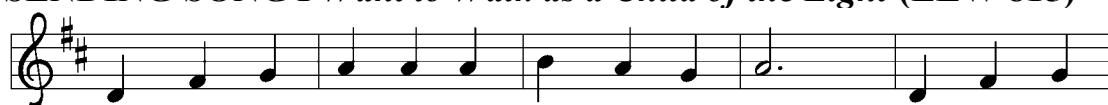
***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Radiant God,
we have seen your glory in the face of Jesus Christ.
In the sacrament of his body and blood
you have drawn us to your heart.
Send us from this table with delight,
that our lives may reflect the beauty of your love,
and bear witness to all we have seen and heard,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

***BLESSING**

May the triune God,
who has put a new song in your mouth
and tuned your heart for praise
✝ bless you now and forever.
Amen.

***SENDING SONG *I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light* (ELW 815)**



1 I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to
 2 I want to see . . . the bright-ness of God. I want to
 3 I'm look - ing for . . . the com - ing of Christ. I want to



fol - low Je - sus. God set the stars to give
 look at Je - sus. Clear Sun of righ - teous-ness,
 be with Je - sus. When we have run . . . with



light to the world. The star of my life is Je - sus.
 shine on my path, and show me the way to the Fa - ther.
 pa - tience the race, we shall know the joy of Je - sus.

Refrain



In him there is no dark-ness at all. The night and the



day are both a - like. The Lamb is the light of the



cit - y of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Je - sus.

Text: Kathleen Thomerson, b. 1934

Music: HOUSTON, Kathleen Thomerson

Text and music © 1970, 1975 Celebration

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***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy.

Thanks be to God.

EXTINGUISHING OF THE CANDLES/SILENT PRAYER

ORGAN POSTLUDE *Postlude in F* - George Blake

SERVING TODAY

Interim Pastor	Rev. Julia Brown
Church Office Email Address	office@solomonslutheran.org
Organist	Mary-Jo Bedsworth
Head Usher	Larry Socks
Acolyte	Janice McEntire
Lector.....	Judy Johnson
Securing Offering.....	Marjorie Dale
Communion Set-Up.....	Becky Pecha
Communion Clean-Up	Becky Pecha
Communion Bread	Janice McEntire
Communion Assist.....	Ron Coldsmith
Coffee Fellowship	Bonney Coldsmith
Attendance last Sunday.....	N/A

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The altar flowers this morning are placed to the glory of God in loving memory of Betty Gayman given by Mark and Sally Gayman.

Welcome Visitors! We welcome you to our worship service. We hope your visit with us will be a time of blessing. If you have any concerns, please talk to the Head Usher. We invite you to worship with us again!

Weekly Calendar Reminders:

February 2 - W&M 6pm
5 - Finance Noon
Choir 7pm
8 - Valentine Luncheon following service

Our upcoming Congregation Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 15, 2026, immediately following our worship service. We will be reviewing our Annual Report for your approval. Please plan to attend and be a part of our faith community as we continue to grow in God's grace.

Communion will be served on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month in addition to all church holidays.

Any pastoral care or concerns can be addressed to Pastor Julia Brown by email jlouisebrown@msn.com or phone 703-434-9220.


Prayer requests for the following: *Family and Friends of William Brindle, Clif Rau, Dennis Hose, Sam Brooks, Ellie Martin, Teahana, Carol Locke, Carole Rau, Peggy Weller, Patricia Yetter, Kaitlyn Dovey, Norm Kuykendall, Phil Johnson, Nancy Deardorff, Susie Bingaman, Patsy Wildeson, Glenn Wildeson, James Bersch, Kristen Hardman, Brandan DeShong, Charles Carl, Marty Wenger, Nancy Marshall, Betty Amt, our world & country, Debbie Aschmann, Donna, Karen, Chuck Bedsworth, Linda Mumaugh, Katy Klutz, Becky Ensinger, and all the Homebound. If anyone has a prayer request, please call Janice McEntire, 717-264-3702.*

Please Be Aware: *We wish to be a praying congregation, and especially for those who are sick or experiencing difficult times. We will continue to name person's (first name only) aloud each Sunday, and we will hold each name for a month. In order to keep our list updated we ask that by the final Thursday of the month, but please call Janice McEntire 717 264-3702 to keep the name on for an extra month. Any name can remain for as long as desired, but we need to hear from the person adding the name, or we will presume the name can be removed. Thank you for your understanding.*

Inclement Weather Cancellation Notification. In the event of inclement weather, Solomon's will announce that our worship services are cancelled by sending an email to the entire membership who have email addresses. Also, the phone message on the office phone at the church (717-267-2266) will state when services are cancelled. **This will be done by 7:30AM Sunday morning.** If you receive an email notifying you of a cancellation and if you know a friend who does not have email, please contact them. **If the church office does not have your current email address, please let Kimberly in the church office know this as soon as possible, so it can be updated!** Above all, safety is our most important concern, so please do not take any unnecessary chances

Bible Study on John's Revelation. Wednesdays at 10:00 AM in the fellowship center conference room.

Souper Bowl time is here! The Super Bowl will be held on February 8. We will have two boxes in the Sunday school room, one for the Seahawks and one for the Patriots. Place a can of soup in the box of your choice. Based on the number of items in each box, we will determine Solomon's Souper Bowl winner. The cans of soup will be delivered to Maranatha.

 **Valentine Luncheon** - Sunday, February 8 in the Fellowship Center following worship. Sponsored by Crusaders for Christ. Chicken will be provided. Those attending are asked to bring either a salad, a side dish or a dessert. The luncheon is open to Solomon's members, family members, and any guests. Sign-up sheet is in the Sunday School Room. Come join the fun and fellowship!!!

ASH WEDNESDAY

Solomon's Lutheran's service will be at 7:00 PM with a 6:00 soup and bread meal. Service will include the imposition of ashes and Holy Communion. Ash Wednesday begins Lent. The ashes are made from the palms we wave on Palm Sunday. Wearing the ashes reminds us of our mortality and focuses our hearts on our need for repentance. Solomon's UCC's Ash Wednesday service will be at 5:30 PM on February 18.

You are invited to attend worship on Ash Wednesday, February 18 with First Lutheran at 43 W Washington St in Chambersburg. At 9:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. we will have a 10-15 minute prayer service with the imposition of ashes. This will be held in our chapel on the first floor. At 7:00 p.m. we will have Holy Communion, music, and sermon along with the imposition of ashes. The 7:00 service is held in the sanctuary on the second floor. An elevator is available. May your Ash Wednesday worship experience draw you closer to Christ as we begin the Lenten season. Pastor Jane Nicholson

The first mid-week Lenten service will be held on Wednesday, February 25 at Corpus Christi Roman Catholic beginning with supper at 5:30, followed by worship beginning at 7:00pm. The offering during this Lenten season will be given to Hearken House Ministry. Hearken House Ministry provides a work/training program for those being released on parole from a Pennsylvania state or county jail and who strongly desire to change the way of life they have chosen in the past. Checks to support Hearken House may be made **payable to LARC**.

The 2026 Chart for Altar flowers is on the table in the Sunday School room. The cost of the two vases will be \$60.00 per week. You will continue to provide Kimberly with the information for the bulletin prior to the week before the Sunday you choose. Include the cost of \$60.00 with the bulletin information.

Weekends of Wonder: Weekends of Wonder is a children's Christian education program offered by Solomon's UCC. On the second Saturday of every month, children ages 3 years and older can join Solomon's from 9:30 AM until noon for stories, songs, and activities designed to teach about God and God's love. Meanwhile, our hope is that guardians are enjoying a well-deserved sabbath! For more information and to download the registration form, visit <https://www.mysolomonsucc.org/childrens-ministry.html>. **If you would like to volunteer, please contact Pastor Julia to get connected.**

Power Pack Meals: We are once again collecting nutritious food for New Franklin Elementary School students in need during the 2025-2026 school year. Please place the items you donate in the tote in the Sunday School room. If you would like to give a monetary donation, please make your check payable to Solomon's Lutheran Church and put Power Pack Meals in the memo of your check.

If you are not taking your altar flowers home, please let Kathy Bowen know to whom or to where you would like them donated. Thanks.

The 2026 sign-up charts for Acolyte, Lector etc. are on the table in the Sunday School room. Please sign up for as many as you can.

Bulletin Announcement Forms are in both pamphlet racks. Please submit all bulletin announcements to the office by the Wednesday prior to the Sunday for inclusion in the bulletin.

Music Notes/Hymn Notes:

One of the most important intentional communities of the 20th and 21st centuries is Scotland's Iona Community. George MacLeod (1895-1991) left a popular parish in Glasgow and established the Community in the 1930s to train ministers in engaging the poor working-class people of Glasgow. John Bell (b. 1949), the composer of this hymn, grew up in Kilmarnock, a rural town south of Glasgow. He received degrees in arts and theology from the University in Glasgow. Ordained by the Church of Scotland in 1978, he was appointed youth coordinator for the Presbytery of Glasgow. In 1980 he was admitted to membership of the Iona Community, having applied because it was "a place where the potentials of the socially marginalized as well as the socially successful would be attested." Since then, he has become the international troubadour of the Iona Community, composing many songs that enumerate the themes of the Community. Our **Hymn of the Day** this morning, "Will you come and follow me" (also known as "The Summons") is perhaps the most famous of Mr. Bell's hymns. The song asks a series of 13 questions, thought to possibly be a record in the annals of hymnody. Characteristic of his style, the text is prophetic, using many words not usually found in traditional hymns. In "The Summons" we are challenged to "leave yourself behind" and to "risk the hostile stare" (stanza two), "set the prisoner free" and "kiss the leper clean" (stanza three), and "use the faith you've found to reshape the world around" (stanza four). The final verse is our commitment to move, live, and grow in our Lord. The tune is a traditional Scottish ballad entitled KELVINGROVE, named after a section of Glasgow. Mr. Bell often uses traditional melodies from Ireland, Scotland and England for his hymns. These tried-and-true tunes make the songs not only singable but often provide a Celtic flavor that is popular today. For Mr. Bell, the purpose of singing is to engage people in a fuller participation in the congregation's song, stretch their faith and encourage them to live in a manner that reflects justice. (umcdiscipleship.org).

From time to time, a hymn captures our imagination because of its simplicity and transparency. This is the case in our Sending Song this morning "I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light." In singing this hymn, we feel the spirit of Epiphany, the season of light, unfold. Written by Kathleen Thompson (1934-1924), this hymn communicates deep conviction and personal sincerity. The first-person perspective invites the singer to join Christ, the Light of the World, in discipleship – a journey of faith. The second line of each stanza deepens this commitment: Stanza 1: "I want to follow Jesus," Stanza 2: "I want to look at Jesus," Stanza 3: "I want to be with Jesus." The simplicity of the music and text do not imply a simplistic faith. "I want to walk as a child" reminds us of one of the paradoxes of our faith, that we need to become as a child to fully understand the realm of God (Matthew 18:2-4). (umcdisciple.org)