

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, February 18, 2026

4:00 PM



130 S. Lone Oak Dr. Leesburg, FL 34748

Email: gloriadeilutheranleesburg@gmail.com Phone: 352-787-3223



We welcome all who worship with us. If you are a guest, we are especially glad that you have chosen to worship with us today. Our worship is always enhanced by new faces and voices. If you are already a part of our church family, welcome home.

On Ash Wednesday we begin our forty-day journey toward Easter with a day of fasting and repentance. Marking our foreheads with dust, we acknowledge that we die and return to the earth. At the same time, the dust traces the life-giving cross indelibly marked on our foreheads at baptism. While we journey through Lent to return to God, we have already been reconciled to God through Christ. We humbly pray for God to make our hearts clean while we rejoice that “now is the day of salvation.” Returning to our baptismal call, we more intentionally bear the fruits of mercy and justice in the world.

Participating in Today’s Service:

Pastor: Pastor Lynn M. Fonfara

Music Director: Len Cremisio

After Worship Secretary: Julie Eld *(In order to assist the Pastor, if you need the Pastor to contact someone or address something)*

Assistant Ministers

Reader: Linda Hide

Crucifer: John Kelly

Assisting Minister: Patricia Bressler

Ushers: Crystal Kirkpatrick, Byron Kirkpatrick, John Kelly, Craig Carlson

Prelude:

WELCOME AND WORSHIP ANNOUNCEMENTS

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP: ELW 801 “Change My Heart, O God”

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.

ENTRANCE HYMN: ELW 592 “Just As I Am, without One Plea”

KYRIE: ELW 154 Kyrie *(Sing 2 or 3 times)*

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.

The assembly is seated.

WORD

FIRST READING: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

Because of the coming Day of the LORD, the prophet Joel calls the people to a community lament. The repentant community reminds God of his gracious character and asks God to spare the people, lest the nations doubt God’s power to save.

- ¹ 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—
² 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.
- ¹² Yet even now, says the LORD,
 return to me with all your heart,
 with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
¹³ 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.

¹⁴ 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?

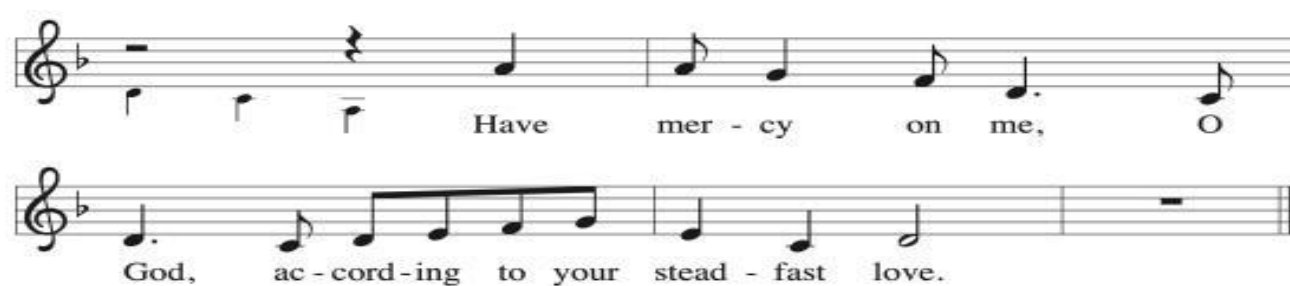
¹⁵ Blow the trumpet in Zion;
 consecrate a fast;
 call a solemn assembly;

¹⁶ 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.

¹⁷ 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?' "

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 51:1-17



Psalm 51:1
 Psalm refrain reproduced from *Psalter for Worship Year A* © 2007 Augsburg Fortress.
 May be reproduced by permission for local use only.

¹ Have mercy on me, O God, according to your ¹ steadfast
 love;
 in your great compassion blot out ¹ my offenses.

² **Wash me through and through ¹ from my wickedness,
 and cleanse me ¹ from my sin.**

³ For I know ¹ my offenses,
 and my sin is ev- ¹ er before me.

⁴ **Against you only have I sinned and done what is
 evil ¹ in your sight;
 so you are justified when you speak and right ¹ in your
 judgment. R**

- ⁵ Indeed, 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.**
- ⁷ Remove my sins with hyssop, and I | shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be pur- | er than snow.
- ⁸ **Let me hear | joy and gladness;
that the body you have broken | may rejoice. R**
- ⁹ Hide your face | from my sins,
and blot out | all my wickedness.
- ¹⁰ **Create in me a clean | heart, O God,
and renew a right spir- | it within me.**
- ¹¹ Cast me not away | from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spir- | it from me.
- ¹² **Restore to me the joy of | your salvation
and sustain me with your boun- | tiful Spirit. R**
- ¹³ Let me teach your ways | to offenders,
and sinners shall be re- | stored to you.
- ¹⁴ **Rescue me from bloodshed, O God of | my salvation,
and my tongue shall sing | of your righteousness.**
- ¹⁵ O Lord, o- | pen my lips,
and my mouth shall pro- | claim your praise.
- ¹⁶ **For you take no delight in sacrifice, or | I would give it.
You are not pleased | with burnt offering.**
- ¹⁷ The sacrifice of God is a | troubled spirit;
a troubled and broken heart, O God, you will | not despise. **R**

SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

The ministry of the gospel endures many challenges and hardships. Through this ministry, God's reconciling activity in the death of Christ reaches into the depths of our lives to bring us into a right relationship with God. In this way, God accepts us into the reality of divine salvation.

^{20b} We entreat you on behalf of Christ: be reconciled to God. ²¹ 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.

^{6:1} As we work together with him, we entreat you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. ² 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! ³ We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, ⁴ but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: in great endurance, afflictions, hardships, calamities, ⁵ beatings,

imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; ⁶ in purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, ⁷ truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; ⁸ in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors and yet are true, ⁹ as unknown and yet are well known, as dying and look—we are alive, as punished and yet not killed, ¹⁰ as sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich, as having nothing and yet possessing everything..

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: ELW 176 Lenten Acclamation

GOSPEL: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus commends almsgiving, prayer, and fasting, but emphasizes that spiritual devotion must not be done for show.

The holy gospel according to Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹ “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.

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. ³ But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴ so 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. ⁶ 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.

¹⁶ “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. ¹⁷ But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸ 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.

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.”

The gospel concludes:

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

The assembly is seated.

Silence for reflection follows the sermon.

HYMN OF THE DAY: ELW 793 “Be Thou My Vision”

P: INVITATION TO LENT

Friends in Christ, today with the whole church we enter the time of remembering Jesus’ Passover... Jesus' death and resurrection.

P: CONFESSION

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

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Most holy and merciful God,

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.

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.

Have mercy on us, O God.

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.

Have mercy on us, O God.

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

Have mercy on us, O God.

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

Have mercy on us, O God.

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

Have mercy on us, O God.

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

Have mercy on us, O God.

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

Have mercy on us, O God.

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

Have mercy on us, O God.

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

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

P: IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Let us pray.

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. **Amen**

Those who desire to receive ashes may come forward and stand or kneel.

Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

After all who desire ashes have received them, the minister leads the congregation in prayer.

Let us pray. Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation, **that we may show forth your glory in the world.** By the cross and Passion of your Son, our Savior, **bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.**

May 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.

Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

PEACE

The presiding minister and the assembly greet each other.

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace, and may say, "Peace be with you," or similar words.

The assembly is seated.

MEAL

OFFERING

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.

Deuteronomy 16:17

Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord, your God, which he has given you.

OFFERTORY: ELW 185 "Create in Me a Clean Heart"

OFFERTORY PRAYER

After the table is set, the assisting minister leads in prayer. Please stand at the invitation to pray:

O God, maker of heaven and earth,
your steadfast love embraces all creation.
You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth
and bring forth its bounty.
Through these gifts of bread and wine,
draw us into the death and life of your Son,
who calls us to bear witness to his saving work.
We ask this in Jesus' name.

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....

...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS: ELW 189 "Holy, Holy, Holy"

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

The Presiding minister leads the Eucharistic Prayer

Blessed are you ... without end.

At the conclusion of the Eucharistic Prayer, all say:

Amen.

***THE LORDS PRAYER** *(Sung)* **ELW Pg. 305**

(Those who wish may hold hands as a sign of Christian unity).

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to the table.

Feast on God's goodness and mercy.

LAMB OF GOD: ELW 198 "O Lamb of God"

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

All Baptized Christians are welcome to commune. Those who do not wish to commune are invited to come forward to receive a blessing (fold your arms over your chest).

The Body is available as bread or gluten-free Host.

The Blood is available as wine (large chalices) or non-alcoholic juice (small chalice).

When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say:

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

The appropriate response is:

Amen.

During the distribution, please pray silently or join in singing.

HYMN: ELW 328 "Restore in Us, O God"

CHOIR: "Ashes to Ashes"

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Please remain seated:

God of our salvation,
we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls,
reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey.
Through the body and blood of your Son,
may we become Christ's body in the world,
bearing witness to your love for all creation,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SENDING

BLESSING

Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity:
God, who calls all things into existence,
Jesus Christ, who redeems us,
and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation,
✠ bless you now and always.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN: ELW 803 “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross”

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Believe the good news.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: Voluntary

***The end of Worship –
The beginning of Christian Ministry.***

Reprinted from Evangelical Lutheran Worship, copyright 2024
Used by permission of Augsburg Fortress license number #14240-ELW

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
www.gloriadeielca.com
130 South Lone Oak Drive
Leesburg, Florida 34748

Pastor Lynn M. Fonfara	c. 352-249-8533
Evelyn Rollins, Administrator	c. 352-787-3223
Leonard Cremisio, Music Director	c. 352-638-3695

Altar Care: Crystal & Byron Kirkpatrick,
Craig Carlson

After Worship Sec.: 9:30 a.m. Julie Eld *(In order to assist the Pastor, if you need the Pastor to contact someone or address something)*

Counters: Arlene Kelly, Lillian Ostrander

Greeters: **9:30 a.m.**

Fellowship:

Communion Wine: For February is given to the Glory of God.

Altar Flowers: Given to the Glory of God

ANNOUNCEMENTS!

THIS WEEKS CALENDAR

Sun.	2/15	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Worship
			Hunger Offering
Mon.	2/16	7:00 p.m.	Zoom Bible Study
Tues.	2/17	10:00 a.m.	Morning Prayer
Wed.	2/18	9:30 a.m.	Call Committee Meeting
		11:00-12:30	Ashes to Go
		4:00 p.m.	Ash Wednesday Service
		4:30 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal

NEXT WEEKS CALENDAR

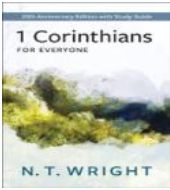
Sun.	2/22	9:30 a.m.	Sunday Worship
Mon.	2/23	7:00 p.m.	Zoom Bible Study
Tues.	2/24	10:00 a.m.	Morning Prayer
Wed.	2/25	9:30 a.m.	Call Committee Meeting
		4:00 p.m.	Lent Service
		4:30 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal

Attendance for Sunday, February 8, 2026: 82

BIRTHDAYS

Marti Yance	February 18 th
Ellen Clement	February 18 th
Taeko Mincer	February 20 th

BIBLE STUDIES



Zoom Bible Study

For the Monday Zoom Bible Study we are studying *1 Corinthians for Everyone*, by NT Wright. We meet **Every Monday at 7pm**. Contact the church office for the Zoom meeting link.

Interested in Leading a Bible Study? We are looking for individuals who feel called to lead a Bible Study group. If you have a passion for scripture and a desire to help others grow in their faith, we encourage you to consider this opportunity. If you're interested or would like more information, please speak with Christine Carlson.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

No Flowers During Lent

In keeping with the solemn season of Lent, there will be no flowers in the sanctuary from **February 18 through April 2**. This practice helps us reflect prayerfully as we journey toward Holy Week and Easter.

Request for Dried Palms

Congregation members are invited to bring in **dried palms** to be used in preparation for the Lenten season.

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS.....



Soup Supper Volunteers Needed!

Join us in serving during Lent! Volunteers are needed for Soup Suppers on Wednesdays, **February 25–March 25**, starting at **4:30 PM right after the Lenten service**. A sign-up sheet is available in the Fellowship Hall. We'd love your help—thank you for serving! 🍲



We need **volunteers for Assisting Ministers, Crucifers and Readers!!!** If you would like to try it but need a little more information, please contact the church office. Thank you.



Help Host Our After-Worship Gatherings!

We're looking for volunteers to provide light refreshments—such as snacks, coffee, and juice—after worship on Sundays. It's a great way to extend our fellowship and hospitality. **If you'd like to help, please enter your name on the kitchen counter sign-up sheet or contact the church office.** Thank you!



Prayer List Update. Our Daily Prayer List has grown quite long over time, and many entries are now out of date. In order to keep our prayers current and meaningful, the following categories will be removed **from the Daily Prayer List starting February 8th.**

Special Requested Prayer

Memorium

Healing

Chronic Illness

If you would like to have someone included on the updated Prayer List, please contact the Church office at 352-787-3223 or Christine Carlson at 516-458-7355 or email at skauvold.carlson@gmail.com so we may continue to lift up current prayer needs together.

Thank you for helping us keep this ministry active and relevant.



Order Easter Plants. Honor or Memorialize a loved one or special event by ordering Easter plants to decorate the sanctuary. Fill out the included form and return it by **Sunday, March 29th.** Thank you for helping make our Easter celebration beautiful and memorable!



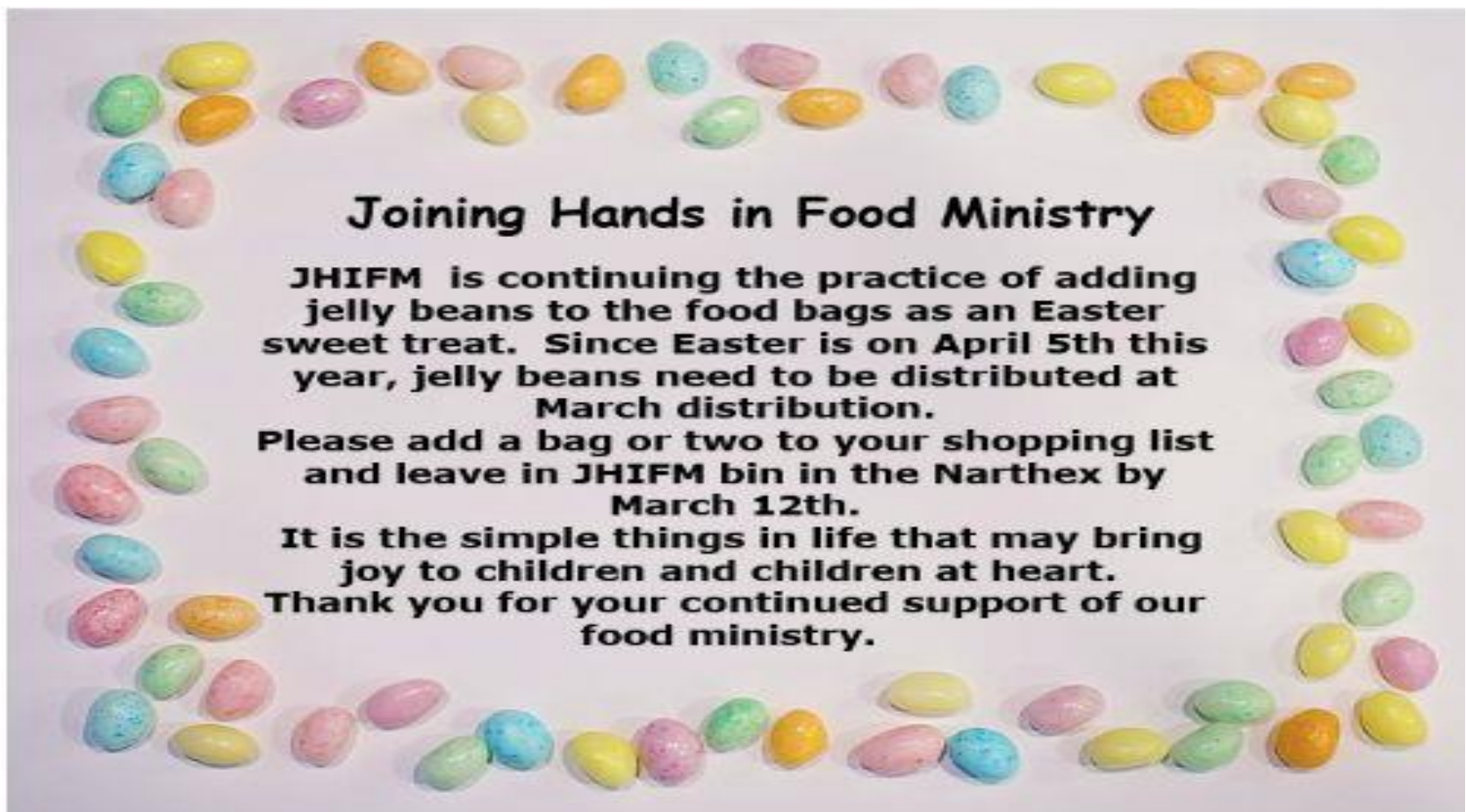
Lenten Journey at Gloria Dei

Join us this Lent for worship and reflection.

Ash Wednesday is February 18, with worship at 4:00 PM.

"Ashes to Go" will be offered from 11:30 AM–1:00 PM.

All are welcome at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church.



Notes From the Office

We want to thank everyone who contributes articles to ***The Glorion***—your time, creativity, and dedication truly make it special. To help ensure a smooth and timely production process, please note that article submission deadlines will now be **set in stone**. Any articles received after the stated deadline will be held and published in the **following month's bulletin**.

Because ***The Glorion*** is scheduled to be distributed by the **1st of each month**, late submissions unfortunately cause delays in production. While we understand that schedules can be busy, meeting the deadline is essential for keeping everything on track.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation as we work together to make ***The Glorion*** the best it can be. Thank you for your continued support!

