

Ash Wednesday  
Evensong Service

February 18, 2026  
6:30 pm



**Gathering Music**

*...as we settle into sacred time and space*

**Ringing the Bell**

**Prelude and Candle Lighting** “What Wondrous Love Is This”

*...acknowledging the light of Christ among us*

**Words of Welcome**

**Call to Awareness** (*responsive*)

Jesus said, “Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it shall not have life.”  
**In Lent, we come to know that the only way to life, healing, and wholeness comes paradoxically through letting go.**

We cannot encounter light unless we are willing to enter darkness.

**Fullness of life often means the death of lesser things.**

Come, let us enter this sacred season of Lent, willingly or reluctantly.

**Let us embrace the life Jesus offers – trusting in God’s everlasting power to give life, to heal, and to make whole.**

**Opening Song**

“Gathered Here”

*M. Johnson*

**Cantor sings once | then all sing twice more**

*Text and music: Phil Porter, 1990*

1  
Gath-ered here in the mys-tery of this hour, gath-ered here in one strong  
2  
bod - y, gath-ered here in the strug-ple and the power, Spir - it draw near.  
3  
4

*This chant may be sung as a round.*

**First Reading**

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

*The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language*

**Brief Pastoral Reflection**

**Extended Meditation**

*Singing bowl welcomes us into silence... and back out again*

**Sung Response**

“Take, O Take Me As I Am”

*Iona Community, Scotland*

**Cantor sings once | then all sing twice more**

D      G      em      A      D      G      A

Piano

Take, O take me as I am, sum - mon out what I shall be;

G      A      D      em      A

5 set your seal up - on my heart and live in me.

Detailed description: This is a piano accompaniment for a song. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has four measures. The second system starts with a measure number '5' and has three measures. The music is written in a grand staff with a treble and bass clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. Chord symbols are placed above the notes. The lyrics are written below the notes.

**Second Reading**

“Mortal Hope”

*Black Liturgies: Prayers, Poems, and Meditations for Staying Human, by Cole Arthur Riley*

**Brief Pastoral Reflection**

**Extended Meditation**

*Singing bowl welcomes us into silence... and back out again*

**Sung Response (next page)**

“Return Again”

*Shlomo Carlebrach*

**Cantor sings once | then all sing twice more**

Re-turn a - gain, Re-turn a - gain, Re-turn to the land of your soul

9

Re-turn to who you are. Re-turn to what you are. Re-turn to wher you are. Born and re -

16

born a - gain.

**Third Reading**

**“Blessing for Ash Wednesday”**

*paintedprayerbook.com, by Jan Richardson*

**Brief Pastoral Reflection**

**Extended Meditation**

*Singing bowl welcomes us into silence... and back out again*

**Sung Response**

**“Come and Fill”**

*Taizé*

**Cantor sings once | then all sing twice more**

♩ = 66

Con - fi - te - mi - ni Do - mi - no quo - ni - am bo - nus.  
Come and fill our hearts with your peace. You a - lone, O Lord, are ho - ly.

Con - fi - te - mi - ni Do - mi - no, al - le - lu - ia!  
Come and fill our hearts with your peace, al - le - lu - ia!

## Invitation to the Offering

*We give by cash, check or electronically (scanning the QR code)  
Blue electronic giving cards represent gifts made electronically.*



## Offertory

“In Christ Alone”

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*Holy Communion is open to members and friends of all ages  
as we seek to follow Jesus in the way of radically inclusive love*

## Words of Invitation

### Communion Prayer *(unison)*

**God of the winding path, you are within and around us always. Touch us in some new way through this meal tonight. Reassure us – through the kindness in a neighbor’s eye, the strength of bread, and the savor of the cup – that you move with us along the journey. Amen.**

## Words of Remembrance and Blessing

### Sharing the Bread of Life and Cup of Blessing

*Take a piece of (gluten-free) bread and a cup of juice, receiving words of blessing  
Place your empty cup in a basket on a front pew, returning by a side aisle*

## Communion Hymn

*...sung as we share in Communion*

“Eat This Bread”  
**sung repeatedly**

**Eat this bread, drink this cup,  
Come to me and never be hungry.  
Eat this bread, drink this cup,  
Trust in me and you will not thirst.**

### \*Closing Prayer *(unison)*

**Holy Spirit, we remember that it was you who called Jesus. And it is you who calls and sustains us along the journey. The bread and cup nourish us for the winding and rough road ahead. The mark of ashes reminds us of your presence with us – in every moment and space along our human journey. Amen.**

### \*Benediction

### \*Closing Song (next page)

“May the Blessing of God”

*Miriam Therese Winter*

**Cantor sings once | then all sing twice more**

May the bless - ing of God go be -

fore you. May her grace and peace a - bound. May her

Spir - it live with - in you. May her love wrap you

'round. May her bless - ing re - main with you

al - ways. May you walk on ho - ly ground.

**\*Receiving the Imposition of Ashes**

*As you depart, Pastor Clare offers the mark of ashes on your forehead  
(or on your hand if you hold it out)*

*We depart in peace to love and serve. Thank you for your presence this evening.*

**Postlude**

**“Savior Again, To Your Dear Name”**

*...as we depart quietly*

# Lenten Season at St. Croix United Church

Wednesdays, February 25 - March 25

5:30 pm | FREE Community Supper  
*catered by Son's Deli*

6:30 pm | Lenten Vespers  
*stories of struggle and growth*

## Holy Week



**March 29th, Palm Sunday**

- 9:30 am Worship - *with Jesus, confronting empire*
- Afternoon - *pro-democracy action with neighbors*



**April 3rd, Friday of Terror: a service of lament & healing**

- 6:30 pm Worship - *amid oppression and violence, we offer music, story, silence, and an impulse to heal*



**April 5th, Easter Sunday**

- 8:00 am | **Early Easter Service at Lakeside Park**
- 9:00 am | **Easter Breakfast & Indoor Easter Egg Hunt**
- 10:00 am | **Worship - a joyful celebration of renewed life**



**St. Croix United Church**  
309 N. Third St. | Bayport, MN  
[www.stcroixunitedchurch.org](http://www.stcroixunitedchurch.org)



**FREE**  
**Wednesday**  
**Community**  
**Supper**  
**Bayport**

**Every Wednesday (starts Feb. 18<sup>th</sup>)**  
**5:30 - 6:30 pm**

Hosted at St. Croix United Church  
 309 N. Third St, Bayport

*All ages are welcome!*

\*Sponsored by United Way of Washington County - East

\*Catered by Son's Deli, Bayport



St. Croix United Church  
 309 N. Third St. | Bayport, MN  
 651-439-5667  
[www.stcroixunitedchurch.org](http://www.stcroixunitedchurch.org)



*Listening in Lent.*  
 Stories of Struggle and Growth  
 Wednesdays, 6:30pm  
 February 25 - March 25

**Wednesday Evenings in Lent:**  
**Stories of Struggle and Growth**  
 Feb. 25 - Mar. 25 | 6:30 pm

During Lent, we make time to reflect on our journey in faith - seeking to follow Jesus in the ways of love and justice amidst life's challenges. We recognize that through every struggle (be it painful, rigorous, or both), we can grow and rise.

*Give blood.*  
 Every 2 seconds someone in the U.S. needs blood.  
**American Red Cross**

**BLOOD DRIVE**

**ST. CROIX UNITED CHURCH**

309 N Third St  
 Bayport, MN 55003

**Wednesday, February 25th**  
**9:00 am - 3:00 pm**

Please call 1-800-RED CROSS or visit [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org) and enter "Bayport" to schedule an appointment.

**Faith & Spirit**  
**Book Club**  
*expanding*  
*our perspectives*

**Separation of Church and Hate:**  
 A Sane Person's Guide to Taking Back the Bible from Fundamentalists, Fascists, and Flock-Fleecing Frauds  
*by John Fugelsang*

For more info about the book, click the QR code.

Discussed across two gatherings...  
**March 5th & March 19th**  
**5:30 - 6:30 pm**  
 Hosted at St. Croix United Church & Zoomed

**St. Croix United Church | 309 N. Third St in Bayport**  
[www.stcroixunitedchurch.org](http://www.stcroixunitedchurch.org)

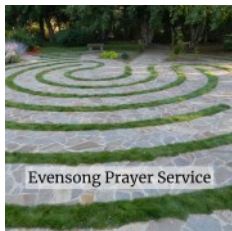
Interested? Contact us: [office@stcroixunitedchurch.org](mailto:office@stcroixunitedchurch.org)  
 Valley Bookseller in Stillwater has copies for 15% off!



## *Listening in Lent.*

Stories of Struggle and Growth

Wednesdays, 6:30pm  
February 25 - March 25



Evensong Prayer Service

We welcome you to return for Evensong Prayer Service  
on April 15 and May 20...

Gratitudes: Debi Orff, Worship Accompanist (piano), Heather Kennedy-Bordeaux, Choir Director (vocals), Carol Dusbabek & Gary Piasecki (ushers), Mary Piasecki (liturgist), Bob Dickie (tech).



**St. Croix United Church**

[www.stcroixunitedchurch.org](http://www.stcroixunitedchurch.org)

**Pastor Clare Gromoll**

[pastor@stcroixunitedchurch.org](mailto:pastor@stcroixunitedchurch.org), (651) 600-6409

[office@stcroixunitedchurch.org](mailto:office@stcroixunitedchurch.org), (651) 439-5667

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