



CROWN OF LIFE | LUTHERAN
CHURCH

April 6th, 2025
5th Sunday in Lent

11721 Morrison Rd. | New Orleans, LA | 70128
Pastor Daniel Kramer | crownoflifepastor@gmail.com
(504)595-0373 | (504)354-1999



A Service of Worship and Praise

-We Gather as God's People to Worship Him-

OPENING HYMN

Christian Worship 125

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

PLEASE STAND

Minister says: We begin our worship in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

-We Lift Up Our Hands and Voices to God-

We sing:

In Moments Like These

In moments like these I sing out a song,
I sing out a love song to Jesus.
In moments like these I lift up my hands,
I lift up my hands to the Lord.

Singing, "I love you Lord," singing, "I love you Lord;"
Singing, "I love you Lord. I love you."

-We Prepare Our Hearts-

M: We stand here today before our Lord and Maker. He has created us to love Him and serve one another. But we have separated ourselves from Him with our sins. Let us be honest and confess to Him our sins.

C: Merciful Father, I confess that I am a sinner. I make no excuses. I have sinned against you by things I have done and the things I have not done. But I know that Jesus died for me. I stand before you in need of, and trusting in, your forgiveness.

We sing:

I Need Thee Every Hour

I need Thee ev'ry hour, Most gracious Lord;
No tender voice like Thine Can peace afford.

I need Thee, O I need Thee; Ev'ry hour I need Thee;
O bless me now, my Savior, I come to Thee.

I need Thee ev'ry hour, Teach me Thy will;
And Thy rich promises In me fulfill.

I need Thee, O I need Thee; Ev'ry hour I need Thee;
O bless me now, my Savior, I come to Thee.

M: It is my duty and privilege as a called servant of God to announce to you that you are forgiven. You have been washed in the blood of the Lamb, Jesus Christ and stand before Him forgiven of all your sins, His child, and an heir of eternal life. Let's thank Him for His amazing grace.

We sing:

He Looked Beyond My Fault

Amazing grace shall always be my song of praise,
For it was grace that bought my liberty.

I do not know just why Christ came to love me so,
He looked beyond my fault and saw my need.

I shall forever lift mine eyes to Calvary,
To view the cross where Jesus died for me;

How marvelous the grace that caught my falling soul,
He looked beyond my fault and saw my need.

BE SEATED

-We Listen to God's Word-

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Isaiah 43:16-21

¹⁶ Thus says the LORD, who makes a way in the sea
And a path through the mighty waters,
¹⁷ Who brings forth the chariot and horse,
The army and the power
(They shall lie down together, they shall not rise;
They are extinguished, they are quenched like a wick):
¹⁸ "Do not remember the former things,
Nor consider the things of old.
¹⁹ Behold, I will do a new thing,
Now it shall spring forth;
Shall you not know it?
I will even make a road in the wilderness
And rivers in the desert.
²⁰ The beast of the field will honor Me,
The jackals and the ostriches,
Because I give waters in the wilderness
And rivers in the desert,
To give drink to My people, My chosen.
²¹ This people I have formed for Myself;
They shall declare My praise.

We sing:

Order My Steps (v1)

Order my steps in Your Word dear Lord,
Lead me, guide me, every day,
Send Your anointing, Father, I pray.
Order my steps in Your word.
Please, order my steps in Your word.

I want to walk worthy, My calling to fulfill.
Please order my steps, Lord, And I'll do Your blessed will,
The world is ever changing, but You are still the same.
If You order my steps, I'll praise Your name.

^{4b} If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so:
⁵ circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, *of* the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee;
⁶ concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.
⁷ But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.
⁸ Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; ¹⁰ that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, ¹¹ if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.
¹² Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. ¹³ Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, ¹⁴ I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

We sing:*Order My Steps (v3)*

Bridle my tongue, let my words edify;
Let the words of my mouth be acceptable in Thy sight.
Take charge of my thoughts, both day and night.
Order my steps in Your word.
Please, order my steps in Your word.

I want to walk worthy, My calling to fulfill.
Please order my steps, Lord, And I'll do Your blessed will,
The world is ever changing, but You are still the same.
If You order my steps, I'll praise Your name.

PLEASE STAND

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 20:9-19

⁹ Then He began to tell the people this parable: "A certain man planted a vineyard, leased it to vinedressers, and went into a far country for a long time. ¹⁰ Now at vintage-time he sent a servant to the vinedressers, that they might give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the vinedressers beat him and sent *him* away empty-handed. ¹¹ Again he sent another servant; and they beat him also, treated *him* shamefully, and sent *him* away empty-handed. ¹² And again he sent a third; and they wounded him also and cast *him* out.

¹³ "Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son. Probably they will respect *him* when they see him.' ¹⁴ But when the vinedressers saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.' ¹⁵ So they cast him out of the vineyard and killed *him*. Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do to them? ¹⁶ He will come and destroy those vinedressers and give the vineyard to others."

And when they heard *it* they said, "Certainly not!"

¹⁷ Then He looked at them and said, "What then is this that is written:

'The stone which the builders rejected
Has become the chief cornerstone'?

¹⁸ Whoever falls on that stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder."

¹⁹ And the chief priests and the scribes that very hour sought to lay hands on Him, but they feared the people—for they knew He had spoken this parable against them.

BE SEATED

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

HYMN OF THE DAY

African-American Heritage Hymnal 459

Abide With Me

SERMON

On What is Your Confidence Based?

Philippians 3:4b-14

PLEASE STAND

CONFESSION OF FAITH

Apostle's Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of Heaven and Earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His 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 into Hell. The third day, He rose again from the dead. He ascended into Heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there, He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

AMEN.

BE SEATED

OFFERING

Instrumental

PLEASE STAND

PRAYERS

The Lord's Prayer

THE SACRAMENT

M: Our Lord has given us a holy Supper in which we receive His true body and blood for the forgiveness of sins and the strengthening of our faith. In this supper, we celebrate the gift of His redemption, we bear witness to the fellowship we share as confessors of the truth, and we proclaim His death until He returns.

C: Now have come the salvation and the power and kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ. To Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and thanks and honor and glory forever and ever.

We sing:

Awesome God

Our God is an awesome God.
He reigns from heaven above
with wisdom, power, and love.
Our God is an awesome God.

Our God is an awesome God.
He reigns from heaven above
with wisdom, power, and love.
Our God is an awesome God.

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night He was betrayed, took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to His disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then He took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, "Drink from it all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

BE SEATED

FOR ALL OF US: Paul instructed in I Cor. 11:28: "Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup." Questions like these help us examine ourselves:

- Am I sorry for my sin?
- Do I trust that Jesus has lived and died to save me from my sin?
- Do I believe that Jesus's body and blood are truly present to assure me of forgiveness?
- Do I intend, with God's help, to live a more God pleasing life?

*WELS and ELS members may come and receive Christ's body and blood.
Proceed up the center aisle as directed by the ushers.*

FOR OUR GUESTS AND VISITORS: *You may find that we regard Holy Communion with much greater seriousness than most churches today. The Bible teaches that communion is, among other things, a public statement of intimate unity and spiritual agreement with a church's teachings. Therefore, if you are unaware or unclear about what we teach and believe, you will want to compare your own beliefs with ours before communing with us. We are eager to establish this fellowship with you and look forward to your inquiry on how to enter into fellowship! Pastor Kramer is happy and ready to speak with you!*

DISTRIBUTION HYMN

Christian Worship 310

I Come, O Savior, to Your Table

THANKSGIVING HYMN

My Tribute

How can I say thanks for the things You have done for me
Things so undeserved, Yet you give to prove Your love for me?
The voices of a million angels could not express my gratitude.
All that I am and ever hope to be, I owe it all to Thee.

To God be the glory, To God be the glory, To God be the glory
For the things He has done!

With His blood He has saved me,
With His pow'r He has raised me
To God be the glory For the things He has done!

Just let me live my life, Let it be pleasing, Lord, to Thee;
And should I gain any praise, Let it go to Calvary.

With His blood He has saved me,
With His pow'r He has raised me
To God be the glory For the things He has done!

C: O God the Father, source of all goodness, in Your loving kindness you sent Your Son to share our humanity. We thank You that through Him You have given us pardon and peace in this sacrament. We also pray that You will not forsake us but will rule our hearts and minds by Your Holy Spirit so that we willingly serve You day after day, through Jesus Christ, our Lord who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. AMEN.

M: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. AMEN.

CLOSING HYMN

African-American Heritage Hymnal 508

Blessed Assurance

Continuing challenges and clear blessings

The 2024 WELS statistics have been gathered by WELS Congregational Services. We are thankful to the 95 percent of our congregations that furnished their statistics—an incredibly good level of participation. While some of the statistics indicate continuing challenges in some areas, others provide some very good news and reasons to thank God for some significant blessings. Certainly, our confidence does not rest in statistics. Our confidence and optimism rest in the hands of a gracious God who continues to work through his Word and sacrament. Following are some significant details, both positive and negative, in those statistics:

- WELS **total membership declined** from 330,618 in 2023 to 327,943 at the end of 2024. That is a **loss of 2,675 members** (-0.8 percent), but on the positive side, it is the **smallest annual decline since 2011**.
- Weekly in-person **worship attendance increased** from 124,042 in 2023 to 127,594, a 2.9 percent rise. The percentage of WELS members in worship each week is now close to where it was prior to COVID.
- There were **increases in adult and youth Bible study** attendance. Both rose last year by 1.9 percent and 0.8 percent, respectively. This was the **fourth year of annual increases**.
- **Spiritual gains have been trending upward, and spiritual losses downward.** In 2024, the Spirit blessed WELS congregations with **4,126 adult confirmations**. That is the **most adult confirmations since 2012** and the **second highest total in 50 years**. The 4,126 confirmations is a **significant increase** compared to the average of 3,300 confirmations annually for the last decade. Professions of faith (those coming to WELS from other Lutheran church bodies) remained stable at around 1,700 annually.
- **Spiritual losses** (those who left to join other churches not in fellowship with us or who walked away from church completely—sometimes called “backdoor losses”) are **decreasing**. In 2024, WELS had 2,315 net spiritual losses, the **lowest total of net spiritual losses since WELS began keeping such records**. Over the decade prior, the average annual net spiritual loss was approximately 5,300.
- In 2024, 2,985 children were born to WELS members, while 3,345 WELS members went home to heaven. That is **five straight years when total births were at or fewer than 3,000**. In the decade prior, the average annual number of births was 5,700. While the **number of deaths has been fairly consistent**, 2024 marks the **fifth straight year that WELS had more deaths than births**.
- In 2024, WELS had **3,445 youth confirmations**, the **lowest in WELS history** (a 20-year trend that reflects the declining birth rate).

Given the demographics of our synod (an aging church population and fewer births), it seems likely that our synod will continue to decline in total membership in the next decade. But if the Lord continues to bless some of the positive trends (increased worship attendance, more spiritual gains, and fewer spiritual losses), it is possible that the losses will flatten out and possibly even be replaced by membership gains. All of this, of course, is in the Lord’s hands. We plant and water, but ultimately, he is the one who makes his church grow.

Serving with you in Christ,
WELS President Mark Schroeder

NOTE: The full 2024 WELS statistical report is available on welscongregationalservices.net. A more detailed analysis will be available in June.

<u>Serving at Col.:</u>	<u>Today</u>	<u>Next Sunday</u>
Music	Katherine, Elijah	Karis, Elijah
Ushers	Lee, Tony	Mike, Gary
Reader	Mike	
Altar	Karis	
Streaming	Noah	Noah
Refreshments	Karis	
Cleaning	Virginia, Jake	Karis
Mowing		

CALENDAR

Wednesday	7:00 PM Online Bible Class
Sunday	10:00 AM Bible Class, Sunday School
Sunday	11:00 AM Worship
Apr 12	8:00 AM Workday; 10:00 AM Easter for Kids
Apr 13	Church Council; Ladies Guild
Apr 17	Maundy Thursday; 7:00 PM Seder Meal
Apr 18	Good Friday; 7:00 PM Service
Apr 20	Easter; 11:00 AM Worship
May 4	Crawfish Boil
Jul 28-Aug 2	VBS: Wonder Junction

OFFERING	Total	Budget	%Budget	Projected
Last Week	\$2,184.00	\$2,710.40	80.6%	
March	\$25,069.00	\$11,745.08	213.4%	\$25,069.00
Qtr-to-Date	\$45,591.07	\$35,235.25	129.4%	\$45,591.07
Year-to-Date	\$45,591.07	\$140,941.00	32.3%	\$176,460.73



*"...give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."
II Corinthians 9:7*

in your bank app:



zelle®



CROWN OF LIFE