



Ash Wednesday

February 14, 2024

7:00 p.m.
Worship Service

Ash Wednesday

Lent begins with a solemn call to fasting and repentance as we begin our journey to the baptismal waters of Easter. During Lent the people of God will reflect on the meaning of their baptism into Christ's death and resurrection. The sign of ashes suggests our human mortality and frailty. What seems like an ending is really an invitation to make each day a new beginning, in which we are washed in God's mercy and forgiveness. With the cross on our brow, we long for the spiritual renewal that flows from the springtime Easter feast to come.

Our time of worship begins with quiet reflection during the Prelude.

Prelude.....“Lament”..... Moore
(Kirsten Holzauer, Trish Stocking & Crystal Szewczyk)

Greeting

The grace and mercy of God, who in Christ bears our burdens and saves us from sin, be with you all.

And also with you.

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.**

First Reading*Isaiah 58:6-12*

⁶Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?

⁷Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

⁸Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly;
your vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the LORD
shall be your rear guard. ⁹Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;
you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,

¹⁰if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday. ¹¹The LORD will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail. ¹²Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Psalm 51 **“Be Merciful, O Lord”** *Joncas*
Choir sings refrain once first, then congregation joins; Choirs sing verses.

Refrain

Be mer - ci - ful, O Lord; be
mer - ci - ful, O Lord, Be mer - ci - ful, O
Lord, for we have sinned.

Have mercy on me God in your kindness.
In your compassion blood out my offense.
Oh wash me more and more from my guilt, and cleanse me for my sin.
Refrain

My offenses truly I know them. My sin is always before me.
Against you and you alone have I sinned.
What is evil in your sight I have done. **Refrain**

A pure heart create for me, O God, put a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from your presence, nor deprive me of your holy
spirit.
Refrain

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the sixth chapter.
Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel.....*Matthew 6:1-6,16-21*

[Jesus said to the disciples:] “Beware of practicing your piety 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. ³But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴so 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. ⁶But 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 dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ¹⁷But 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.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon.....*Pastor Jason*

Hymn.....“Dust and Ashes”..... *Wren*

Verses



1. Dust and ash - es touch our face, mark our fail - ure and our
2. Dust and ash - es soil our hands— greed of mar - ket, pride of
3. Dust and ash - es choke our tongue in the waste - land of de -



fall - ing. Ho - ly Spir - it, come, walk with us to - mor - row,
na - tion. Ho - ly Spir - it, come, walk with us to - mor - row,
pres - sion. Ho - ly Spir - it, come, walk with us to - mor - row,



take us as dis - ci - ples, washed and wak - ened by your call - ing.
as we pray and strug - gle through the mesh - es of op - pres - sion.
through all gloom and griev - ing to the paths of res - ur - rec - tion.

Refrain



Take us by the hand and lead us, lead us through the des - ert sands,



bring us liv - ing wa - ter, Ho - ly Spir - it, come.

Invitation to Lent

Siblings 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 are created to experience joy in communion with God, to love all humanity, and to live in harmony with all of creation. But sin distorts our relationship with God, our neighbors, and creation, and so we do not enjoy the life our Creator intended for us. As disciples of Jesus we are called to reject evil and resist everything that leads us away from love of God and neighbor. We are called to repentance through, centering prayer, gratitude, generosity, hospitality and hope—the works of love—for which God strengthens us 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

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

Silence is kept 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.

Imposition of Ashes

Those who desire to receive ashes come forward before the altar. The ministers apply ashes to the forehead of each person with the words:

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 the conclusion of the confession.

Special Music..... “Piacevole non largo”*Telemann*
(*Trish Stocking & Crystal Szewczyk*)

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 Lord,
bring us with all your saints to the joy of the resurrection.

Almighty 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.

Anthem..... “Touch Me With Ashes”*Nordmeyer*
(*The Choir*)

The Lord’s Prayer

**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**

Benediction

Merciful God, accompany our journey through these forty days. Renew us in the gift of baptism, that we may provide for those who are poor, pray for those in need, fast from self-indulgence,
Amen

Closing Hymn..... **“Bless Now, O God the Journey”** #326

The assembly is invited to stay and pray, or leave in silence.



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