

# Ash Wednesday

## February 22, 2023

### **Remember that you are Dust, and to Dust you shall return**

*The mood of this service is penitence and reflection upon the quality of one's faith and life; its goal is to enlist participation in the Lenten discipline which, by its focus upon the mystery of our redemption, should strengthen us by bringing us anew to the gift of our Baptism. The Ash Wednesday Service marks the beginning of a penitential discipline of Lent.*

*We gather in silence. There is no Prelude.*

**The service begins in silent mediation.**

**Office of the Acolyte**

**Ringling of the Church Bell**

**Psalm 51**

*(The Psalm is read together)*

<sup>1</sup>Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

<sup>2</sup>Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

<sup>3</sup>For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

<sup>4</sup>Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.

<sup>5</sup>Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me.

<sup>6</sup>You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

<sup>7</sup>Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

<sup>8</sup>Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.

<sup>9</sup>Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities.

<sup>10</sup>Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

<sup>11</sup>Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.

<sup>12</sup>Restore to me the joy of your salvation and sustain in me a willing spirit.

<sup>13</sup>Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

<sup>14</sup>Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.

<sup>15</sup>O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

<sup>16</sup>For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.

<sup>17</sup>The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

<sup>18</sup>Do good to Zion in your good pleasure; rebuild the walls of Jerusalem,

<sup>19</sup>then you will delight in right sacrifices, in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings; then bulls will be offered on your altar.

## **Greeting**

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. **Amen.**

## **Prayer of the Day**

Almighty and ever-living God, we hear you calling us to return to you with all our heart. Guide us in the in between times of our lives, to a renewed and valuable sense of purpose. Renew in us a right spirit. Turn us toward you through Lenten practices that call us from death to life. In the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

## **First Reading: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17**

<sup>1</sup>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—  
<sup>2</sup>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.

<sup>12</sup>Yet even now, says the LORD,  
return to me with all your heart,  
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;  
<sup>13</sup>rend your hearts and not your clothing.  
Return to the LORD, your God,  
for he is gracious and merciful,  
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love,  
and relents from punishing.  
<sup>14</sup>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?  
<sup>15</sup>Blow the trumpet in Zion;  
sanctify a fast;  
call a solemn assembly;  
<sup>16</sup>gather the people.  
Sanctify the congregation;  
assemble the aged;  
gather the children,  
even infants at the breast.  
Let the bridegroom leave his room,  
and the bride her canopy.

<sup>17</sup>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?'"

<sup>20b</sup>We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup>For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

<sup>6:1</sup>As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. <sup>2</sup>For he says,

“At an acceptable time I have listened to you,  
and on a day of salvation I have helped you.”

See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! <sup>3</sup>We are putting no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, <sup>4</sup>but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, <sup>5</sup>beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; <sup>6</sup>by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, <sup>7</sup>truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; <sup>8</sup>in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; <sup>9</sup>as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; <sup>10</sup>as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

## **Gospel Acclamation**

Return to the Lord, your God,  
Who is gracious and merciful, slow to anger,  
And abounding in steadfast love.

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

The Gospel according to Matthew, the sixth chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said to the disciples:] <sup>1</sup>“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.

<sup>2</sup>“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. <sup>3</sup>But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, <sup>4</sup>so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

<sup>5</sup>“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. <sup>6</sup>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.

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

<sup>19</sup>“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; <sup>20</sup>but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup>For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

The Gospel of the Lord.  
Praise to you, O Christ.

## Sermon

### Hymn “Lord Jesus, Think on Me”

No. 599

1 Lord Je - sus, think on me, and purge a - way my sin;  
2 Lord Je - sus, think on me, by anx - ious thoughts op - pressed;  
3 Lord Je - sus, think on me, nor let me go a - stray;  
4 Lord Je - sus, think on me, that, when the flood is past,  
from self - ish pas - sions set me free and make me pure with - in.  
let me your lov - ing ser - vant be and taste your prom - ised rest.  
through dark - ness and per - plex - i - ty point out your cho - sen way.  
I may the e - ter - nal bright - ness see and share your joy at last.

## Invitation to Lent

Brothers and Sisters: God created us to experience joy in communion with him, to love all humanity, and to live in harmony with all of creation. But sin separates us from God, our neighbors, and creation, and so we do not enjoy

the life our Creator intended for us. Also, by our sin we grieve our Father, who does not desire us to come under his judgment, but to turn to him and live.

As disciples of the Lord Jesus we are called to struggle against everything that leads us away from love of God and neighbor. Repentance, fasting, prayer, and services of love – the discipline of Lent – help us to lean into our spiritual practice. I invite you, therefore, to commit yourselves to this struggle and confess your sins, asking God for strength to persevere in your Lenten discipline.

## **Confession and Absolution**

*The congregation remains seated. Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.*

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

God of Renewal,  
**We confess that in this unfinished life,  
we have turned away from you.  
Our practices can be self-serving,  
and our motivations can be self-centered.  
Turn us again to you  
in our being and in our doing  
so that cross-marked and spirit-sealed,  
we may be renewed in your call for our lives,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

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 judgements, 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.**

God who is rich in mercy, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love has come to us in Jesus, who by his holy cross has redeemed the world. Buried with Christ by baptism into death, your sins are forgiven in + Jesus' name.

Cross-marked and Spirit-sealed you are raised to new life. Almighty God strengthen you in faith to live each day renewed in God's call for your life.

**Amen.**

## **Imposition of Ashes**

*Please come forward and kneel or stand to receive the ashes.*

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

*After those who desire ashes have received them, all may remain seated.*

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.**

## **Prayers of Intercession**

Sustained by God's abundant mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

*A brief silence.*

O Lord, our God, you gather your church and call us to return to you. Accompany us throughout our Lenten pilgrimage. Create in us clean hearts and renew all the baptized to declare your praise. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Renew your creation, O God. Bring rains to parched places and heal lands affected by a changing climate (*local ecosystems or other natural places may be named*), that all inhabitants of the earth experience your abundance. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Renew the nations, O God. Give voice to those on the margins and resolve to world leaders who seek to protect those most vulnerable. Loosen the bonds of injustice and bring an end to all violence, oppression, and persecution. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Renew your people, O God. Respond to those who cry out to you in secret or in seclusion. Equip us with compassion to care for those who experience homelessness, food insecurity, economic hardship, and illness (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Renew this congregation, O God. Inspire our faith formation ministries and those who teach and lead (*Sunday school teachers, Christian education directors, or others may be named*). Invigorate us with lifelong curiosity and wonder as we grow as your disciples. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

O Lord, our God, we give thanks for all your faithful ones of every time and place. Renew us by the example of their lives of prayer and service, and at the last, bring us with them into your everlasting presence. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

**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:

Blessed are you, O God of the universe.  
Your mercy is everlasting  
and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth.  
Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood.  
Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea.  
Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness  
to the land of milk and honey.  
Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one.  
Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ.  
Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

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.

With this bread and cup  
we remember our Lord's passover from death to life  
as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

O God of resurrection and new life:  
Pour out your Holy Spirit on us  
and on these gifts of bread and wine.  
Bless this feast.  
Grace our table with your presence.  
**Come, Holy Spirit.**

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread.  
Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world.  
Breathe new life into us.  
Send us forth,  
burning with justice, peace, and love.  
**Come, Holy Spirit.**

With your holy ones of all times and places,  
with the earth and all its creatures,  
with sun and moon and stars,  
we praise you, O God,  
blessed and holy Trinity,  
now and forever.  
**Amen.**

### **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.**

## Invitation to Communion

God's love is poured out in Christ Jesus for you.  
Open yourselves to receive it.

## Holy Communion

### Post Communion Prayer

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, and above all that we may find our treasure in the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## Blessing

Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.  
**Amen.**

## Dismissal

Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; rend to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor all people; love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.  
**Thanks be to God.**

*There is no postlude  
The people leave in silence.*

Liturgy adapted from Sundays and Seasons.com.

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## Serving at 7:00:

Lector:	Joyce Patterson
Usher:	Rich Miller
Acolyte:	Natalie Thompson
Communion Assistant:	Joyce Patterson
Pastor:	Pastor Cathy Schibler

**TONIGHT'S LOOSE CASH OFFERING**, (money not in an envelope or given without other designation) benefits our Current Expenses Fund. **LOOSE CHECKS** will support our Current Expenses Fund unless designated otherwise on the check memo line.

"BY THE SWEAT OF YOUR BROW YOU WILL EAT  
YOUR FOOD UNTIL YOU RETURN TO THE GROUND,  
SINCE FROM IT YOU WERE TAKEN;

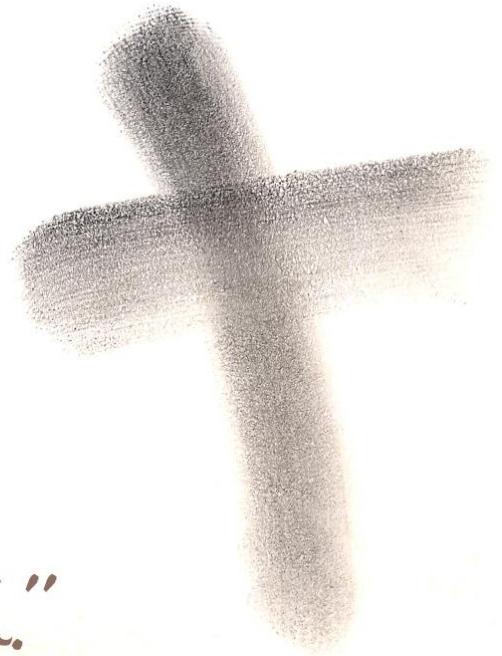
FOR

DUST

YOU ARE AND TO

DUST

YOU WILL RETURN."



GENESIS 3:19, NIV