



# Ash Wednesday



Fairbanks Lutheran Church

Wednesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021 @7:00 pm

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## INTRODUCTION

*On Ash Wednesday we begin our forty-day journey toward Easter with a day of fasting and repentance. By the sprinkling of dust or marking our foreheads, 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.*

## GATHERING

### PRELUDE

### PSALM 51

- <sup>1</sup>Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;  
in your great compassion blot out my offenses.
- <sup>2</sup>**Wash me through and through from my wickedness,  
and cleanse me from my sin.**
- <sup>3</sup>For I know my offenses,  
and my sin is ever before me.
- <sup>4</sup>**Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight;  
so you are justified when you speak and right in your judgment.**
- <sup>5</sup>Indeed, I was born steeped in wickedness,  
a sinner from my mother’s womb.
- <sup>6</sup>**Indeed, you delight in truth deep within me,  
and would have me know wisdom deep within.**
- <sup>7</sup>Remove my sins with hyssop, and I shall be clean;  
wash me, and I shall be purer than snow.
- <sup>8</sup>**Let me hear joy and gladness;  
that the body you have broken may rejoice.**
- <sup>9</sup>Hide your face from my sins,  
and blot out all my wickedness.
- <sup>10</sup>**Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and renew a right spirit within me.**
- <sup>11</sup>Cast me not away from your presence,  
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
- <sup>12</sup>**Restore to me the joy of your salvation  
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.**

<sup>13</sup>Let me teach your ways to offenders,  
and sinners shall be restored to you.

<sup>14</sup>**Rescue me from bloodshed, O God of my salvation,  
and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness.**

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

<sup>16</sup>**For you take no delight in sacrifice, or I would give it.  
You are not pleased with burnt offering.**

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

## INVITATION TO LENT

**P** Friends 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 begin this holy season by acknowledging our need for repentance and for God's mercy. We are created to experience joy in communion with God, to love one another, and to live in harmony with creation. But our sinful rebellion separates us from God, our neighbors, and creation, so that we do not enjoy the life our creator intended.

As disciples of Jesus, we are called to a discipline that contends against evil and resists whatever leads us away from love of God and neighbor. I invite you, therefore, to the discipline of Lent—self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love—strengthened 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 SONG

### “CREATE IN ME A CLEAN HEART”

## CONFESSION OF SIN

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

*The assembly sits. Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.*

**P** Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,

**C** **Have mercy on us, O God.**

**P** For self-centered living, and for failing to walk with humility and gentleness;

**C** **Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.**

**P** For longing to have what is not ours, and for hearts that are not at rest with ourselves:

**C** **Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.**

**P** For misuse of human relationships, and for unwillingness to see the image of God in others:

**C** **Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.**

**P** For jealousies that divide families and nations, and for rivalries that create strife and warfare:

**C** **Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.**

**P** For reluctance in sharing the gifts of God, and for carelessness with the fruits of creation:

**C** **Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.**

**P** For hurtful words that condemn, and for angry deeds that harm:

**C** **Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.**

**P** For idleness in witnessing to Jesus Christ, and for squandering the gifts of love and grace:

**C** **Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.**

## **IMPOSITION OF ASHES**

**P** 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.

**C** **Amen.**

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

*Ministers sprinkle ash/mark the forehead of each person with a cross of ashes, saying:*

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

*After all have come forward*

**P** Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,

**C** **that we may show forth your glory in the world.**

**P** By the cross and passion of your Son, our Savior,

**C** **bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.**

**P** 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.

**C** **Amen.**

## **HYMN**

### **“LORD, WHOSE LOVE IN HUMBLE SERVICE”**

## **GREETING AND PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**P** The immeasurable grace of Christ Jesus, the rich mercy of God, and the unity of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C** **And also with you.**

**P** Let us pray. 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.

**C** **Amen.**

## 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.*

A reading from Joel, the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter.

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?'"

📖 The word of the Lord.

🙏 Thanks be to God!

### 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.*

A reading from 2 Corinthians, the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> chapters

<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>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.

📖 The word of the Lord.

🙏 Thanks be to God!

## 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 St. Matthew, the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter.

🙏 Glory to you, O Lord.

[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. <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.

*Silence for Prayer and Reflection*

📖 The gospel of the Lord.

🙏 Praise to you, O Christ.

## SERMON

PASTOR LOU PETERS

## HYMN OF THE DAY

“BEAUTY FOR BROKENNESS”

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

**A** Relying on the promises of God, we pray boldly for the church, the world, and all in need.

*A brief silence.*

**A** O God, you call your church to be ministers of reconciliation throughout the world. Inspire your church in its proclamation of the gospel and guide its ministries to build up the body of Christ. Lord, in your mercy,

**C** **hear our prayer.**

**A** O God, you created the earth and all its inhabitants and you declared that it is good. Protect mountains and valleys, animals and plants, and direct us to be good stewards of all you have made. Lord, in your mercy,

**C** **hear our prayer.**

**A** O God, you desire peace. Direct governments and leaders to work for the well-being of all people and raise up advocates to speak and serve on behalf of the downtrodden. Lord, in our mercy,

**C** **hear our prayer.**

**A** O God, you are our hope in the midst of despair, our help in the midst of sorrow, and our consolation in the midst of affliction. Grant comfort to all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit (*especially*) and support caregivers who attend to all in need. Lord, in your mercy,

**C** **hear our prayer.**

**A** O God, you are love, and you call us to love one another. Accompany with your grace those journeying toward baptism and call us all to repentance as we prepare to celebrate Christ's death and resurrection. Lord, in your mercy,

**C** **hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

**A** O God, you are our life and our salvation. We give you thanks for the righteous who have died in faith. Inspire us by their example to proclaim your steadfast love. Lord, in your mercy,

**C** **hear our prayer.**

**P** We entrust ourselves and all our prayers to you, O faithful God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C** **Amen.**

**OFFERING** *(during Lent we join together with acts of service each week)*

**OFFERING PRAYER**

**A** Let us pray:

**C** Faithful God, you walk beside us in desert places, and you meet us in our hunger with bread from heaven. Accompany us in this meal, that we may pass over from death to life with Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

**COMMUNION**

**LORD'S PRAYER**

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

**INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

*The assembly may be seated.*

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

**A** Let us pray.

*A brief silence is kept.*

**C** God of steadfast love, at this table you gather your people into one body for the sake of the world. Send us in the power of your Spirit, that our lives bear witness to the love that has made us new in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

**SENDING**

**P** You are what God made you to be: created in Christ Jesus for good works, chosen as holy and beloved, freed to serve your neighbor. God bless you **+** that you may be a blessing, in the name of the holy and life-giving Trinity.

**C** Amen.

**DISMISSAL**

**A** Marked with the cross of Christ, go forth to love and serve the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

**Wednesday Lent Services (7:00 pm) and Sunday Worship services (10:00 am)  
are in-person and livestreamed on Facebook.**

[www.facebook.com/FairbanksLutheranELCA/](http://www.facebook.com/FairbanksLutheranELCA/)

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“Like the father of the Prodigal Son, God can see repentance coming a great way off and is there to meet it, the repentance is the reconciliation.”