

ASH WEDNESDAY



ASH WEDNESDAY ~ FEBRUARY 17, 2021

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 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. Welcome to all who worship on-line with us this evening!

PRELUDE

"Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted"

Kevin Hildebrand
Organist, Bill Doehring

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Tom

- 1 Christ, the life of all the living,
Christ, the death of death, our foe,
Who, Thyself for me once giving
To the darkest depths of woe:
Through Thy suff'rings, death, and merit
I eternal life inherit.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.**
- 2 Thou, ah! Thou, hast taken on Thee
Bonds and stripes, a cruel rod;
Pain and scorn were heaped upon Thee,
O Thou sinless Son of God!
Thus didst Thou my soul deliver
From the bonds of sin forever.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.**
- 3 Thou hast borne the smiting only
That my wounds might all be whole;
Thou hast suffered, sad and lonely,
Rest to give my weary soul;
Yea, the curse of God enduring,
Blessing unto me securing.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.**
- 4 Heartless scoffers did surround Thee,
Treating Thee with shameful scorn
And with piercing thorns they crowned Thee.
All disgrace Thou, Lord, hast borne,
That as Thine Thou mightest own me
And with heav'nly glory crown me.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.**

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INVITATION TO LENT THROUGH THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES

P For I eat ashes as my food and mingle my drink with tears because of Your great wrath, for You have taken me up and thrown me aside. My days are like the evening shadow; I wither away like grass. But You, O LORD, sit enthroned forever; Your renown endures through all generations. You will arise and have compassion on Zion, for it is time to show favor to her.

C The appointed time has come. (Psalm 102:9-13)

P Gracious Lord, ashes remind us of our human frailty and mortality. You are eternal, but we are limited in our days. Someday we will return to dust and ashes. You remind us of this in Your Word:

C Dust we are and to dust we shall return. (Genesis 3:19; Psalm 90:3)

P Ashes speak of condemnation for sin. When Adam fell into sin, judgment and death came to all. Since we all are born into sin, we are marked for death and ashes.

C Dust we are and to dust we shall return.

P Ashes speak of our total dependence upon You, O God. We are but frail human beings who must rely upon You, dear Father. We think we are capable of taking care of ourselves and make our own plans for greatness. However, so often these plans fail and crumble into ashes.

C Dust we are and to dust we shall return.

P Ashes speak of our humiliation and repentance. As people in the Bible humbled themselves and expressed their repentance and mourning in the signs of sackcloth and ashes, we also humble ourselves before You, O God, as we ask You to forgive our sins through Jesus Christ, our Lord. As we repent we put on dust and ashes.

C Dust we are and to dust we shall return.

P People of God, as we see the meaning of ashes and dust for us as Christians, we now make our earnest confession unto the Lord.

C Almighty God, You have always warned Your people against trusting in false gods. We are sinful and this nature has given birth to sinful deeds: things we have done and things we have left undone. We are but dust and ash of the ground and we deserve nothing more than to return to the dust. Though we deserve Your stern judgment, but for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, forgive and renew us. Amen.

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

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

After applying the ashes, contemplate the awesome work of Christ on our behalf.

P The ashes upon our foreheads declare what is true. Without the forgiveness of our God, we are hopeless. The shape of the ashes upon our foreheads also declares what is true. God sent His only Son to die in our place. Because of His death and resurrection, we have the forgiveness of sins and hope. I therefore announce to you the forgiveness of all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Almighty and everlasting God, because You hate nothing You have made and forgive the sins of all who repent; create in us a clean heart and renew a right spirit within us, that worthily repenting of our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, we obtain from You, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

FIRST READING

Return to the Lord

Joel 2:12-19

¹² "Yet even now," declares the LORD, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; ¹³and rend your hearts and not your garments." Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster. ¹⁴ 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? ¹⁵ Blow the trumpet in Zion; consecrate a fast; call a solemn assembly; ¹⁶ gather the people. Consecrate the congregation; assemble the elders; gather the children, even nursing infants. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her chamber. ¹⁷ Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep and say, "Spare your people, O LORD, and make not your heritage a reproach, a byword among the nations. Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'" ¹⁸ Then the LORD became jealous for his land and had pity on his people. ¹⁹ The LORD answered and said to his people, "Behold, I am sending to you grain, wine, and oil, and you will be satisfied and I will no more make you a reproach among the nations.

R This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God!

RESPONSIVE PSALM

Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God

Psalm 51:1-13

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

**C ² Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin!**

R ³ For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.

**C ⁴ Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight,
so that you may be justified in your words
and blameless in your judgment.**

R ⁵ Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
and in sin did my mother conceive me.

**C ⁶ Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being,
and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.**

R ⁷ Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

**C ⁸ Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones that you have broken rejoice.**

R ⁹ Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.

**C ¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right^(b) spirit within me.**

R ¹¹ Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

**C ¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit.**

**ALL ¹³ Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will return to you.**

R This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God!

GOSPEL*Giving to The Needy**Matthew 6:1-6; 16-21*

¹"Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. ²"Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ³ But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴ so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. ⁵"And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ⁶ But when 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 when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ¹⁷ But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, ¹⁸ that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. ¹⁹"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust^{la} destroy and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

R This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God!

LENTEN WORSHIP MUSIC*"The Wonderful Cross"**Mary Sorensen, Jonathan Malone, Mark Heil***MESSAGE***"Return to the Lord"**Luke 13:1-15, Pastor Tom*

There were some present at that very time who told him [Jesus] about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. ² And he answered them, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? ³ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. ⁴ Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? ⁵ No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."

THE LORD'S PRAYER LITANY

P We continue our prayers with a litany based on the prayer Jesus has taught us.

C Our Father in heaven,

P You are holy. You are above us. To You we pray.

C Hallowed be Your name.

P Your name is holy. Keep it holy among us, and throughout this world, this needy world.

C Your kingdom come.

P Come, O Father, with Your holy kingdom--to us, and through us to many others.

C Your will be done on earth as in heaven.

P If it's Your will, it has to be good. Let it be done here on earth, Lord. Please.

C Give us today our daily bread.

P Our bread for today is plenty, but we ask enough for all the needy in this world.

C Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

P We cannot live without Your forgiveness, O Lord, and this world will destroy itself unless we forgive each other. Help us to keep the forgiveness flowing.

C Lead us not into temptation.

P You are strong, and we are weak. When we walk with You, we are strong.

C But deliver us from evil.

P Evil is many-faced and many-sided. Only You are stronger. Be our strong rock.

C For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever.

P You can hear. You can answer. You can prevail. And You let us call You "Our Father."
We thank and praise You.

C Amen!

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

DISTRIBUTION MUSIC

"The Old Rugged Cross"

Mary Sorensen, Jonathan Malone, and Mark Heil

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

P We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

BLESSING

P Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God!

CLOSING HYMN

"Christ, the Life of All the Living"

LSB 420, vv5-7

**5 Thou hast suffered men to bruise Thee,
That from pain I might be free;
Falsely did Thy foes accuse Thee:
Thence I gain security;
Comfortless Thy soul did languish
Me to comfort in my anguish.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.**

**6 Thou hast suffered great affliction
And hast borne it patiently,
Even death by crucifixion,
Fully to atone for me;
Thou didst choose to be tormented
That my doom should be prevented.
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,
Dearest Jesus, unto Thee.**

**Then, for all that wrought my
pardon,
For Thy sorrows deep and
sore,
For Thine anguish in the Garden,
I will thank Thee evermore,
Thank Thee for Thy groaning,
sighing,
For Thy bleeding and Thy dying,
For that last triumphant cry,
And shall praise Thee, Lord,
on high.**

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POSTLUDE

"O Dearest Jesus"

J. Brahms