



ASH WEDNESDAY

...all are from the dust,
and to dust all return.

ecclesiastes 3:20

Ascension Lutheran Church

"A Church for Families, a Family for Everyone"

February 22, 2023

**Ash Wednesday
February 22, 2023**

Welcome to all who are attending our service today. We are glad you are with us! To all guests and visitors, we especially extend our hands of friendship. May God bless the worship time for each one of you. Please come again!

NURSERY AVAILABLE We have an unstaffed nursery for your convenience and privacy. The nursery has audio and video so you may hear and see the worship service while attending to your child.

Holy Communion is celebrated at the 8:30 service on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month, and at the 11:00 service on the 2nd and 4th Sundays.

For those wishing to commune at the Lord's Table with us today: The Lutheran practice of close Communion attempts to prevent a person from eating and drinking judgment on himself (1 Corinthians 11:23–30). Thus, attendance at the Lord's Supper implies a four-level commitment to Christ. We believe that communicants must: (1) be baptized Christians; (2) accept the real presence of Christ's body in the bread and His blood in the wine; (3) confess and repent of one's sins and trust that God offers complete forgiveness of those sins in this Sacrament; and (4) share oneness of faith, doctrine and practice among those who commune. Those wishing to commune with us today who have not done so previously, please see the pastor or an elder before the service begins. *(Grape juice is available for those who do not drink alcohol, and gluten-free wafers are available upon request.)*

Para aquellos que desean participar en la Santa Cena con nosotros hoy: La práctica luterana de la comunión intenta evitar que una persona coma y beba el juicio de Dios sobre sí mismo (1 Corintios 11:23–30). Por lo tanto, la asistencia a la Cena del Señor implica un compromiso de cuatro niveles con Cristo. Creemos que los comulgantes deben: (1) ser bautizados como cristianos; (2) aceptar la presencia real del cuerpo de Cristo en el pan y Su sangre en el vino; (3) confesar y arrepentirse de sus pecados y confiar en que Dios ofrece el perdón completo de esos pecados en este Sacramento; y (4) compartir la unidad de fe, doctrina y práctica entre los que comulgan. Aquellos que desean comulgar con nosotros hoy que no lo han hecho anteriormente, por favor vean al pastor o un anciano antes de que comience el servicio. *(El jugo de uva está disponible para aquellos que no beben alcohol, y hostias libres de gluten están disponibles bajo petición.)*

(P = Pastor, C = Congregation, A = Reader/Assisting)

✠ PREPARATION ✠

THEME: “The Lord’s Mercy Is Great”

AS WE GATHER: We are reminded on Ash Wednesday that we were destroyed by sin and come to the Lord for cleansing and renewal. We come because Jesus has beckoned us by the Holy Spirit and has called us to repentance. We rely on the great mercy of God and cry out to our King for clean hearts. We respond today, throughout Lent, and for the rest of our lives, by coming to our Savior and receiving His forgiveness and love.

PRELUDE

WELCOME

HYMN

“Today Your Mercy Calls Us”

Today Your mercy calls us
To wash away our sin.
However great our trespass,
Whatever we have been,
However long from mercy
Our hearts have turned away,
Your precious blood can wash us
And make us clean today.

Today Your gate is open,
And all who enter in
Shall find a Father’s welcome
And pardon for their sin.
The past shall be forgotten,
A present joy be giv’n,
A future grace be promised,
A glorious crown in Heav’n.

Today our Father calls us;
His Holy Spirit waits;
His blessed angels gather
Around the Heav’nly gates.

No question will be asked us,
How often we have come;
Although we oft have wandered,
It is our Father's home.

INVOCATION

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Psalm 51:1–9

P Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your steadfast love;
C **according to Your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.**

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

P For I know my transgressions,
C **and my sin is ever before me.**

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

P Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
C **and in sin did my mother conceive me.**

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

P Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
C **wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.**

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

P Hide Your face from my sins,
C and blot out all my iniquities.

P On this day of ashes, we reflect on our sin-filled lives
C and seek God's forgiveness.

Silence is observed.

P Most merciful Father in heaven,
C I am a sinner. I have no one to blame. The fault is my own. I deserve to be punished. I am truly sorry for my sins. Yet, for the sake of the loving sacrifice of Your only Son, Jesus Christ, I dare to beg for Your forgiveness. Remove from me the guilt of my sin and wash me that I may be whole again. Help me to be faithful today, tomorrow, and each day, by the power of Your Holy Spirit.

P Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy on us and has given His only Son to die for us and for His sake forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

ADDRESS FOR IMPOSITION OF ASHES

P Dear brothers and sisters of our Lord Jesus Christ, on this day the Church begins a holy season of prayerful and penitential reflection. Our attention is especially directed to the holy sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

From ancient times, the season of Lent has been kept as a time of special devotion, self-denial, and humble repentance borne of a faithful heart that dwells confidently on His Word and draws from it life and hope.

Let us pray that our dear Father in heaven, for the sake of His beloved Son and in the power of His Holy Spirit, might richly bless this Lententide for us so that we may come to Easter with glad hearts and keep the feast in sincerity and truth.

¹² “Yet even now,” declares the LORD, “return to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; ¹³ and 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; 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.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

(As the ashes are imposed on the forehead of each person in the sign of the cross, the pastor says, “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”)

HYMN

“Savior, When In Dust To You”

Savior, when in dust to You
 Low we bow in homage due;
 When, repentant, to the skies
 Scarce we lift our weeping eyes;
 Oh, by all Your pains and woe
 Suffered once for us below,
 Bending from Your throne on high,
 Hear our penitential cry!

By Your helpless infant years,
By Your life of want and tears,
By Your days of deep distress
In the savage wilderness,
By the dread mysterious hour
Of th' insulting tempter's pow'r,
Turn, oh, turn a fav'ring eye;
Hear our penitential cry!

By Your hour of dire despair,
By Your agony of prayer,
By the cross the nail the thorn,
Piercing spear, and torturing scorn,
By the gloom that veiled the skies
O'er the dreadful sacrifice,
Listen to our humble sigh;
Hear our penitential cry!

By Your deep expiring groan,
By the sad sepulchral stone,
By the vault whose dark abode
Held in vain the rising God,
Oh, from earth to Heav'n restored,
Mighty, reascended Lord,
Bending from Your throne on high,
Hear our penitential cry!

“Jesus, Sinners Will Receive”

Jesus, sinners will receive;
May they all this saying ponder
Who in sin's delusions live
And from God and Heaven wander!
Here is hope for all who grieve;
Jesus sinners will receive.

We deserve but grief and shame,
Yet His words, rich grace revealing,
Pardon, peace, and life proclaim.
Here our ills have perfect healing;
We with humble hearts believe
Jesus sinners will receive.

When their sheep have lost their way,
Faithful shepherds go to seek them;
Jesus watches all who stray,
Faithfully to find and take them
In His arms that they may live –
Jesus sinners will receive.

Come, o sinners, one and all,
Come, accept His invitation;
Come, obey His gracious call,
Come and take His free salvation!
Firmly in these words believe:
Jesus sinners will receive.

We deserve but grief and shame,
Yet His words, rich grace revealing,
Pardon, peace, and life proclaim.
Here our ills have perfect healing;
Firmly in these words believe:
Jesus sinners will receive.

COLLECT OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, You despise nothing You have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and contrite hearts that lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness we may, like David before us, receive from You full pardon 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.

SALUTATION

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

EPISTLE

2 Corinthians 5:20b–6:10 (ESV)

²⁰ Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making His appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

²¹ For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

¹ Working together with Him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. ² For He says, “In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you.” Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. ³ We put no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, ⁴ but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, ⁵ beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; ⁶ by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; ⁷ by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; ⁸ through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; ⁹ as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; ¹⁰ as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 6:1–6, 16–21(ESV)

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew the sixth chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

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 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.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

HYMN

“I Lay My Sins On Jesus”

I lay my sins on Jesus, The spotless Lamb of God;
He bears them all and frees us From the accursed load.

I bring my guilt to Jesus, To wash my crimson stains,
While in His blood most precious Till not a spot remains.

I lay my wants on Jesus, All fullness dwells in Him;
He heals all my diseases, He doth my soul redeem.
I lay my griefs on Jesus, My burdens and my cares,
He from them all releases, He all my sorrows shares.

I rest my soul on Jesus, this weary soul of mine;
his right hand me embraces, I in his arms recline.
I love the name of Jesus, Immanuel, Christ, the Lord;
like fragrance on the breezes his name abroad is poured.

SERMON “A FAVORABLE TIME” 2 Corinthians 5:20b–6:10
Pr. Jim Sprenkle

“Create In Me A Clean Heart, O God”

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from Thy presence,
and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.
Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation,
and uphold me with Thy free Spirit. Amen.

TITHES AND OFFERINGS

(Our offerings are made as an act of worship, given in loving response to all that God has graciously given us, both materially and spiritually.)

(7:00pm)

“I Take the Cross”

words by R. G. Huff, music by Jay Rouse
Ascension Choir

*I take the cross of Jesus Christ in ashes on my face.
This ancient symbol made in dust reminds me of His grace.
I beg for mercy from my Lord, to cleanse me deep within.
I know myself, my faulty life, my tendency toward sin.*

*O cross of ashes, speak again in ways I understand;
Speak forth repentance, let me know forgiveness from Your hand.
Have mercy on us Lord, we pray;
Look deep within and find our hearts made whole,
Our thoughts make pure, our eyes no longer blind.*

*This cross of ashes on my brow reminds me life is brief.
From dust I came, to dust I go through sorrow, pain and grief.
These forty days are set aside for those who share the call
To take the cross, deny themselves and give to Christ their all.*

I take my cross, deny myself and give to Christ my all.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P Let us pray.

O Lord, our God, we acknowledge Your great goodness toward us and praise You for the mercy and grace that our eyes have seen, our ears have heard, and our hearts have known. We sincerely repent of the sins of this day and those in the past. Pardon our offenses, correct and reform what is lacking in us, and help us to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Inscribe Your law upon our hearts and equip us to serve You with holy and blameless lives. Grant that each day reminds us of the coming of the night when no one can work. In the emptiness of this present age, keep us united by a living faith through the power of Your Holy Spirit with Him who is the resurrection and the life, that we may escape the eternal bitter pains of condemnation. By Your Holy Spirit, bless the preaching of Your Word and the administration of Your Sacraments. Preserve these gifts to us and to all Christians. Guard and protect us from all dangers to body and soul. Grant that we may with faithful perseverance receive from You our sorrows as well as our joys, knowing that health and sickness, riches and poverty, and all things come by permission of Your fatherly hand. Keep this day under Your protective care all the sick and those who suffer, and preserve them with us, securely trusting in Your everlasting goodness and love, for the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:
C **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

Numbers 6:24-26

- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.
- C** Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HYMN

“Abide With Me”

Abide with me, fast falls the eventide
The darkness deepens; Lord with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me.

Come not in terrors, as the King of kings,
But kind and good, with healing in Thy wings;
Tears for all woes, a heart for ev'ry plea.
Come, Friend of sinners, thus abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
Change and decay in all around I see;
O Thou Who changest not, abide with me.

Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes,
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;
Heav'n's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

DISMISSAL

- P** Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
- C** Thanks be to God!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Ascension Lutheran Church

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Church: 503-665-8821 • Web Site: www.alcportland.org

Church Office Hours: Monday–Friday 9am to 3pm

Our Mission Statement:

~Go and Share Jesus Christ~

Our Vision Statement:

“Take part...Join Jesus on His mission.”

The members of Ascension Lutheran Church are committed to being God’s witnesses in Gresham, and in all of Portland and the Northwest, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8):

With the universal Christian Church, we believe, teach and respond to the love of the Triune God— the Father, Creator of all that exists; the Son Jesus Christ, Who left His home in Heaven to become flesh and blood, to suffer and die for the sins of all peoples of the world, and Who rose from the grave, victorious over sin, death and the devil, that we too might live with Him in Heaven; and the Holy Spirit, Who creates faith in our hearts in Christ Jesus through God’s Word and Sacrament. The three Persons of the Holy Trinity are one God, co-equal and co-eternal. The core teachings of our faith from the Lutheran perspective can be summarized in three short phrases: Grace alone, Scripture alone, Faith alone.

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