

ASH WEDNESDAY EUCHARIST
St. Mark Lutheran Church
142 Market Street, Williamsport, PA, 17701
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February 22, 2023

12:05 pm and 7 pm

On Ash Wednesday we begin our forty-day journey toward Easter with a day of fasting and repentance. Marking our foreheads with dust, we acknowledge that we die and return to 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.

The assembly gathers in silence on this day.



***THE GREETING**

P Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.

C **God's mercy endures forever.**

***PSALM 51** (*Read Responsively*)

1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;
in your great compassion blot out my offenses.

**2 Wash me through and through from my wickedness,
and cleanse me from my sin.**

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

**4 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.**

5 Indeed, I was born steeped in wickedness,
a sinner from my mother's womb.

**6 Indeed, you delight in truth deep within me,
and would have me know wisdom deep within.**

7 Remove my sins with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be purer than snow.

**8 Let me hear joy and gladness;
that the body you have broken may rejoice.**

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

**10 Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.**

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

**12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.**

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

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

15 O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

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

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

***THE PRAYER OF THE DAY**

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.

THE FIRST READING.....Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

1Blow 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—

2a 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.

12Yet even now, says the LORD,
return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
13rend 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.

14Who 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?

15Blow the trumpet in Zion;
sanctify a fast;

call a solemn assembly;

16gather 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.

17Between 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.

C Thanks be to God.

SILENT MEDITATION

THE SECOND READING.....2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

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

6:1As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. 2For 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! 3We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, 4but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, 5beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; 6by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, 7truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; 8in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; 9as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; 10as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

The word of the Lord.
C Thanks be to God.

SILENT MEDITATION

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



We are turn - ing, Lord, to hear you; you are mer - ci - ful and kind -



slow to an - ger, rich in bless - ing, and with love to us in - clined.

*THE HOLY GOSPEL.....Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

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

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said to the disciples:] 1“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, 18so 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.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

THE SERMON

***HYMN** **Savior, When in Dust to You”** **LBW, “Green”, 91**

***INVITATION TO LENT**

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

P Let us confess our sin and seek reconciliation with God and neighbor.

Stand/Kneel.

A brief silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

P Merciful God,

C you sent Jesus Christ to save the lost.

**We confess that we have strayed from you
and turned aside from your way.**

**We fail in love, neglect justice,
and ignore your truth.**

Have mercy on us and wash away our sin.

Create in us clean hearts

for the sake of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

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 forgiveness and eternal life; through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

People may come forward to receive ashes. After ashes are received the liturgy continues:

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 the 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.

***THE PRAYERS**

After each petition: Merciful God/Receive our prayer.

***THE PEACE**

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

Worshippers greet one another with these or similar words and/or gestures of peace, respecting each other's personal space and without physical touch.

***THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Lift up your hearts.

C **We lift them to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

P It is right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father; through Jesus Christ our Lord. You bid your people cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast. Renew our zeal in faith and life, and bring us to the fulness of grace that belongs to children of God. And so, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,



heav'n and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho-san - na in the high - est.



Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -



san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

P In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread, 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 all people for the forgiveness of sins. Do this for the remembrance of me."

***OUR 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.**

***LAMB OF GOD**



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
 2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
 3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.
 you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.
 e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P Come and receive Jesus, our strength in the wilderness.

C **Thanks be to God.**

COMMUNION

***AFTER COMMUNION**

P The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C **Amen.**

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P Let us pray. Embodied God,
at your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus.
With the eyes of our hearts open to your promise,
empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors
and touch the world with your love.

C **Amen.**

***THE BLESSING**

P Father, Son and Holy Spirit: The giver of love,
the resurrection and the life,
the breath of rebirth, bless ✠ you in this
your Lenten journey.

C **Amen.**

***HYMN**

Our Father We Have Wandered

WOV, "Blue" 733

***DISMISSAL**

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

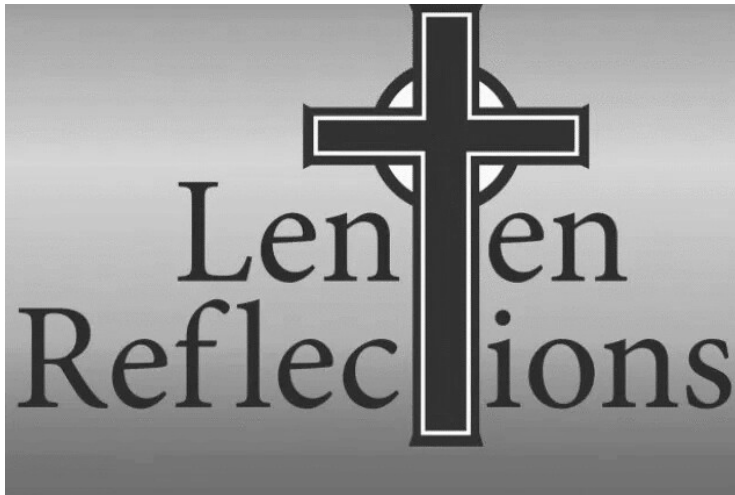
C **Thanks be to God.**

***POSTLUDE** *Fugue in a minor* J.S. Bach

After the postlude, please leave as quietly as possible.

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Today's liturgy comes from "A Liturgy for Ash Wednesday" and "Setting 10 for Holy Communion", Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 2006, Augsburg/Fortress Publishing.

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Midweek Lenten Series: Making Change

***Wednesdays in Lent (March 1-29),
12:15 p.m., Chapel***

Change is a constant in our lives. Some changes mark gradual transitions, as when daytime shifts toward twilight or winter turns to spring. Others happen in the blink of an eye, separating time into "before" and "after". We choose to undergo some changes after carefully considering our options, while others are forced upon us.

In the weeks, days, and hours before Jesus' crucifixion, the disciples also experienced change: a change of venue as the gates of Jerusalem approached; a change of plans as their long-awaited Messiah was arrested and tried; a change of circumstance as the crowds shouted "Crucify!"

Change is hard. We long for the expected and familiar, but all too often find ourselves in the midst of uncertainty and the unknown. We cannot predict how things will turn out. The hymnwriter Joachim Neander proclaimed God's steadfast love in the midst of life's inevitable changes: "All my hope on God is founded who will all my trust renew, who through change and chance will guide me, only good and only true. God unknown, God alone, call my heart to be thine own" (WOV 782).

Each Wednesday in Lent we will explore together how in the midst of change, God in Christ is always with us.

All are welcome!



Lent Begins Ash Wednesday



Leading us in Worship This Day

Preacher/Celebrant	The Reverend Brian D. Vasey, Pastor, St. Mark's	
Lector/Assisting Minister (afternoon)	Lector	Ralph Zeigler
	Communion Assistant	Lou Ann Zeigler
Lector/Assisting Minister (evening)	Lector	Ray Huff
	Communion Assistant	Ray Huff
Accompanist	Carol Waltz	