

Ash Wednesday
March 2nd, 2022

Pastor: David E. Schafer

Organist: Donna Schilling

Acolyte: Aundraya Paulson

Enter and Sit in Silence for Prayer and Self-examination

Opening Song: “Ashes” Will Bartz and Marena Henkle

What is Ash Wednesday about? *Ash Wednesday is the most solemn day of the Church Year, more so even than Good Friday. Ash Wednesday gives the reason for why there was a Good Friday—the reality of our sinfulness and sins, our defiant lostness under the powers of sin, death, and the evil one, from which only Jesus saves us by His suffering, death, and resurrection.*

Jaxon Edwards: Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the penitential season of Lent which climaxes in the absolution and peace of the Maundy Thursday liturgy. Noticeably absent from the Ash Wednesday liturgy with its emphasis upon confession is the Word of Absolution which will not come until Maundy Thursday. All the days of Lent are seen as part of an extended service of worship focusing upon confession, repentance, and the amendment of our lives until Maundy Thursday’s absolution draws us into the mystery of the redemption which unfolds with Christ’s Passion and Resurrection.

Aundraya Paulson: “Lent,” from the Anglo-Saxon word for “springtime,” is understood as the holy springtime of the soul, a time for spiritual preparation, planting, and growth. Lent focuses on the mystery of redemption, bringing us anew to the gift of our Baptism which marks our inclusion in the redemption brought by Christ’s death and resurrection. The forty days of Lent correspond to Jesus’ fast and time of temptation in the wilderness, Moses’ time on Mt. Sinai, the 40 years of Israel’s wilderness wandering, and Elijah’s 40 -day journey to the mountain of God. The forty days are counted from Ash Wednesday to Holy Saturday (Easter Eve)—excluding Sundays which are always seen as celebrations of Jesus’ resurrection. Throughout the Bible, ashes signal repentance and humility: *Genesis 18:37, Esther 4:1, Jonah 3:6, 2 Samuel 13:19, Daniel 9:3, Job 2:8 & 42:6, Matthew 11:21, and Luke 10:13.* Ashes are also a sign of our frailty and dependence upon God for life: *Psalms 90:3, Psalm 104:29, and Ecclesiastes 3:20 and 12:7.*

Landon Hillman: Today, following the confession of our sin, we receive the mark of ashes on our foreheads, accompanied by the echo of God’s word of judgment to Adam in Genesis 3:18, intimating our mortality: “You are dust and to dust you shall return.” These words highlight our own mortality—the consequence of sin—as echoed in the words of committal during the burial service: “...*earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.*” One day these words will be said over us. Yet the ash mark is made in the sign of the cross, at the spot on our foreheads where the pastor traced the sign of the cross following our baptism during which Jesus placed the mark of His cross on us—reminding us that we are sinful mortals owned and redeemed by the One Who hung and died on the cross. Sin and death do not have the last word. Jesus does. We live our earthly lives in the shadow of the cross, led by the Shepherd who will bring us through the valley of the shadow of death to resurrection to eternal life.

Psalms 51 (prayed aloud together by all)

Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your loving-kindness; in Your great compassion blot out my offenses; wash me through and through from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me; against You only have I sinned and done what is evil in Your sight, and so You are justified when You speak and upright in Your judgment.

Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth, a sinner from my mother’s womb; for behold, You look for truth deep within me, and will make me understand wisdom secretly.

Purge me from my sin and I shall be pure; wash me, and I shall be clean indeed; make me hear of joy and gladness, that the body You have broken may rejoice; hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me; cast me not away from Your presence and take not Your Holy Spirit from me; restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me with Your free Spirit.

Deliver me from death, O God, and my tongue shall sing of Your righteousness, O God of my salvation; open my lips, O Lord, and my mouth shall proclaim Your praise.

Had You desired it, I would have offered sacrifice, but You take no delight in burnt-offerings; the sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.

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

THE EXHORTATION

Brothers and sister: God created us to live in communion with Him in joy, love, peace, and obedience, to love all people, and to care for all of His creation. But sin separates us from God, our fellow human beings, and creation. Sin also brings us under bondage to death and the evil one. Therefore we do not enjoy the life our Creator intended for us. Our sin grieves our heavenly Father, Who does not desire us to come under His judgment, but to turn to Him and live. Our Lord Jesus calls us to follow Him, to abide in Him and in His Word, to love God and neighbor, to pray unceasingly, to bear good fruit that lasts, and gather faithfully with one another around His Word and Sacraments. He calls us to acknowledge and confess our sin and sinfulness and ask for the help of the Holy Spirit to turn away from our sins. I invite you therefore to turn to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and confess your sins and entrust yourselves to His gracious love.

SIT. Silence for reflection and self-examination. The Confession follows.

THE CONFESSION

P: Almighty God, merciful Father: **C: I, a troubled and penitent sinner, confess to You all my sins and iniquities with which I have offended You and for which I justly deserve Your punishment. I confess to You and before the whole communion of saints in heaven and on earth, that I have sinned by my own fault in thought, word, and deed; by what I have done, and by what I have left undone.**

P: I have not loved and trusted You with my whole heart, and mind, and strength.

C: Have mercy on me, Lord.

P: I have not loved my neighbors as myself. **C: Have mercy on me, Lord.**

P: I have not forgiven others as I have been forgiven: **C: Have mercy on me, Lord.**

P: I have been deaf to Your call to serve as Christ served us. **C: Have mercy on me, Lord.**

P: I have not been true to the mind of Christ. **C: Have mercy on me, Lord.**

P: I have grieved Your Holy Spirit: **C: Have mercy on me, Lord.**

P: I confess to You, Lord, all my past unfaithfulness. **C: I confess to You, Lord.**

P: My pride, my arrogance, and my hypocrisy: **C: I confess to You, Lord.**

P: My self-indulgent appetites, my self-centered ways, and my selfishness: **C: I confess to You, Lord.**

P: My unrighteous anger, my grudge-bearing, and my failure to forgive: **C: I confess to You, Lord.**

P: My envy and resentment of the good fortune and wellbeing of others: **C: I confess to You, Lord.**

P: My intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts, and my dishonesty in daily life and work:

C: I confess to You, Lord.

P: My negligence in prayer and worship, and my failure to commend the faith that is in me:

C: I confess to You, Lord.

P: Accept my repentance, Lord, for the wrongs I have done. **C: Accept my repentance, Lord.**

P: For my blindness to human need and suffering, and my indifference to injustice and cruelty:

C: Accept my repentance, Lord.

P: For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward my neighbors, and for my prejudice and contempt toward others: **C: Accept my repentance, Lord.**

P: For my ingratitude for and misuse of Your good Creation and my lack of concern for those who come after me: **C: Accept my repentance, Lord.**

P: I am sorry for my sins and I repent of them, and pray for Your boundless mercy. **C: Lord have mercy.**

P: For the sake of the suffering and death of Your Son, Jesus Christ, be merciful to me, a poor sinful being: **C: Christ have mercy.**

P: Forgive my sins, give me Your Holy Spirit for the amendment of my sinful life, and bring me to life everlasting. **C: Lord have mercy.**

P: Restore us, good Lord, and let Your anger depart from us:

C: Hear us Lord, for Your mercy is great.

THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES.

The applying of ashes will be continuous— Those who desire to receive ashes are invited to come forward in single file and receive the mark of the cross. Ashes will be applied to your forehead with the words, “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” After receiving the ashes, return in silence to your seat via the outside aisles. You may find Psalm 90 (p. 258 in the LBW) a helpful guide to reflection.

CONCLUSION OF CONFESSION AND ADDRESS

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 Lord:

C: Bring us with all Your saints to the joy of His resurrection.

P: Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, does not desire the death of sinners, but rather that they may turn from their wickedness and live. Therefore we implore Him to grant us true repentance and His Holy Spirit, that those things may please Him which we do on this day, that the rest of our life may be pure and holy, and that at the last we may come to His eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord: **C: Amen**

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

L: The Lord be with you. **C: And also with you.**

L: 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 obtain from You, the God of all mercy, full pardon and forgiveness; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **C: Amen**

Choir Anthem: *“Salvation is Created”*

FIRST LESSON: Micah 6:6-8

⁶With what shall I come before the LORD and bow down before the exalted God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? ⁷Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of olive oil? Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? ⁸He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

SECOND LESSON: Ephesians 2:1-10

¹As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ²in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. ⁴But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Please stand for the reading of the Holy Gospel and say:

C: Christ has humbled Himself and become obedient unto death, even death on the Cross.

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the second chapter: **C: Praise to You O Lord!**

The READING OF THE GOSPEL: Mark 2:13-17

¹³ Once again Jesus went out beside the lake. A large crowd came to him, and he began to teach them. ¹⁴ As he walked along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him. ¹⁵ While Jesus was having dinner at Levi's house, many tax collectors and sinners were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. ¹⁶ When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" ¹⁷ On hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

P: The Gospel of the Lord! C: **Glory to You O Christ!**

HYMN: "Be Thou My Vision".....WOV # 776

THE SERMON: "Mercy in Ashes"

Choir Anthem: *"Come Find Forgiveness and Love"*

Collection of the Offering: *"Bel Canto"* by Clair W. Johnson

The Offering Response: *Create in Me.....LBW p. 96*

THE HOLY COMMUNION—EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

P: We give You thanks, Father, through Jesus Christ, Your beloved Son, Whom You sent in this end of the ages to save and redeem us and to proclaim to us Your will. He is Your Word, inseparable from You. Through Him You created all things, and in Him You take delight. He is Your Word, sent from heaven to a virgin's womb. He there took on our nature and our lot and was shown forth as Your Son, born of the Holy Spirit and of the virgin Mary.

It is He, our Lord Jesus, Who fulfilled all Your will and won for You a holy people; He stretched out His hands in suffering in order to free from suffering those who trust You. It is He Who, handed over to a death He freely accepted, in order to destroy death, to break the bonds of the evil one, to crush hell underfoot, to give light to the righteous, to establish His covenant, and to show forth the resurrection, taking bread and giving thanks to You, said: "Take and eat; this is My Body, broken for you. Do this for the remembrance of Me."

In the same way He took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: "This is My Blood poured out for You for the forgiveness of sins. Do this for the remembrance of Me." Remembering, then, His death and resurrection, we lift this bread and cup before You, giving You thanks that You have made us worthy to stand before You and to serve You as Your priestly people. And we ask you: Send Your Spirit upon these gifts of Your Church; gather into one all who share this bread and wine; fill us with Your Holy Spirit to establish our faith in truth, that we may praise and glorify You through Your Son Jesus Christ. Through Him all glory and honor are Yours, Almighty Father with the Holy Spirit, in Your holy Church both now and forever. **C: Amen**

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

P: The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

P: In a spirit of solemn reverence let us offer one another a sign of the Lord's peace.

Receiving of COMMUNION will be by intinction and continuous, like we did for the imposition of ashes. After receiving the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus, return to your seat via the outside aisles. In keeping with the solemnity of this day, instead of the singing of hymns, communicants—before and after they commune—are encouraged to read and reflect upon the words of the Psalms as they are printed in the front part of the green LBW pages 215-289. Particularly recommended for Ash Wednesday are Psalms 25, 31, 32, 34, 42, 46, 53, 62, 63, & 90.

POST-COMMUNION

P: May the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace unto life everlasting. **C: Amen**

P: Almighty God, You gave Your Son both as a sacrifice for sin and a model of the godly life. Enable us to receive him always with thanksgiving, and to conform our lives to His; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. **C: Amen**

P: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face to shine on you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace. In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **C: Amen**

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

HYMN:

"Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus"

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus, Look full in His wonderful face;
And the things of earth will go strangely dim In the light of His glory and grace.*

*Oh soul, are you weary and troubled? No light in the darkness you see?
There's light for a look at the Savior And life more abundant and free.*

*Though death into life everlasting He passed, and we follow Him there
O'er us sin no more hath dominion For more than conquerors we are. (Refrain)*

*Refrain: Oh, Turn your eyes upon Jesus, Look full in His wonderful face;
And the things of earth will go strangely dim In the light of His glory and grace.*

*His Word shall not fail you, He promised Believe Him and all will be well.
Then go to a world that is dying His perfect salvation to tell. (Refrain)
(Congregation leaves in silence)*

Thank you for joining us in worship this evening. Our Lenten journey will continue next Wednesday, March 9th at 7 p.m. Our service will focus on **Mercy in Temptation**. Tonight's offering will go towards Benevolence. Other Wednesday Lenten service offering will be kept at Emmanuel.