



**Ash Wednesday**  
**February 14, 2024**  
**7:00pm Worship**

**Our Mission is to share the life, love and joy of Jesus Christ with others**

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## Introduction

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 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.

### Prelude & Welcome:

#### Gathering Hymn:

### *“Be Thou My Vision”*



1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;  
2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;  
3 Rich - es I heed not, nor vain, emp - ty praise,  
4 Light of my soul, af - ter vic - to - ry won,



naught be all else to me, save that thou art:  
I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord.  
thou mine in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways:  
may I reach heav - en's joys, O heav - en's Sun!



thou my best thought both by day and by night,  
Thou my soul's shel - ter, and thou my high tow'r,  
thou and thou on - ly, the first in my heart,  
Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,



wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.  
raise thou me heav'n - ward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.  
great God of heav - en, my trea - sure thou art.  
still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

Text: Irish, 8th cent.; vers. Eleanor H. Hull, 1860–1935, alt.; tr. Mary E. Byrne, 1880–1931  
Music: SLANT, Irish traditional

**Call to Worship:**

**Psalm 51**

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

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

*Pastor:* For I know my offenses,  
and my sin is ever before me.

*Assembly:* **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.**

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

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

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

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

*Pastor:* Hide your face from my sins,  
and blot out all my wickedness.

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

*Pastor:* Cast me not away from your presence,  
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

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

*Pastor:* Let me teach your ways to offenders,  
and sinners shall be restored to you.

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

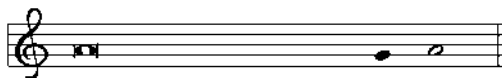
*Pastor:* O Lord, open my lips,  
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

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

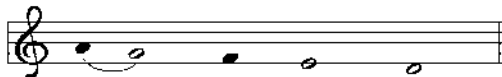
*Pastor:* The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit;  
a troubled and broken heart, O God, you will not despise.



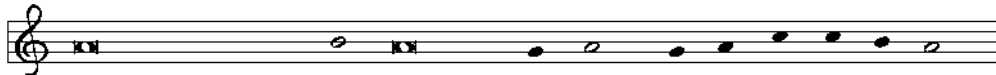
## Kyrie:



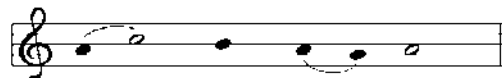
In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



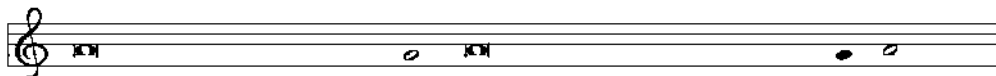
Lord, have mer - cy.



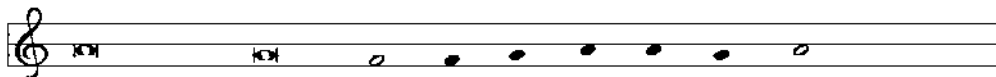
For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



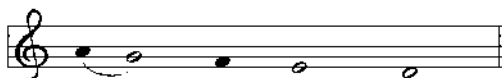
Lord, have mer - cy.



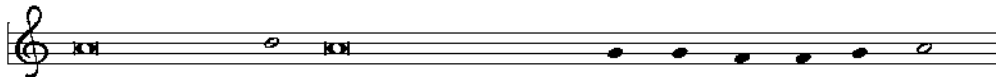
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



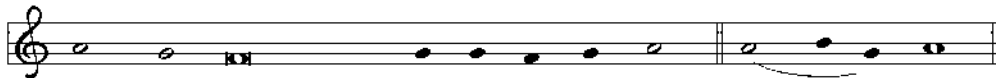
Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. Lord have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de-fend us, gra-cious Lord. A - men.

**Hymn of Praise:**

**“Restore in Us, O God”**



1 Re - store in us, O God, the splen - dor of your love; re -  
2 O Spir - it, wake in us the won - der of your pow'r; from  
3 Bring us, O Christ, to share the full - ness of your joy; bap -  
4 Three-per - soned God, ful - fill the prom - ise of your grace, that



new your im - age in our hearts, and all our sins re - move.  
fruit - less fear un - furl our lives like spring - time bud and flow'r.  
tize us in the ris - en life that death can - not de - stroy.  
we, when all our search - ing ends, may see you face to face.

**Prayer of the Day:**

*Pastor:* 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.

*Assembly:* **Amen.**

*Please be seated*

**1st 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.*

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—  
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.  
Yet even now, says the Lord,  
return to me with all your heart,  
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;  
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.  
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?  
Blow the trumpet in Zion;  
sanctify a fast;  
call a solemn assembly;  
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.  
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?'"

*Pastor:* The word of the Lord.

*People:* **Thanks be to God.**

**2nd 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.*

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

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

*Pastor:* The word of the Lord.

*People:* **Thanks be to God.**

*Please Stand*

**The Holy Gospel: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21**

*Pastor:* The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the sixth chapter.

*People:* **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.

“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. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

“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. 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.

“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. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 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.

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where

your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

*Pastor:* The Gospel of the Lord.

*People:* Praise to you, O Christ.

*Please be Seated*

**Message:**

Pastor Suloff

*Please stand*

**Hymn of the Day:** “*Oh Lord, throughout These Forty Days*”

1 O Lord, through - out these for - ty days you  
2 You strove with Sa - tan, and you won; your  
3 Though parched and hun - gry, yet you prayed and  
4 Be with us through this sea - son, Lord, and

prayed and kept the fast; in - spire re - pen - tance  
faith - ful - ness en - dured; lend us your nerve, your  
fixed your mind a - bove; so teach us to de -  
all our earth - ly days, that when the fi - nal

for our sin, and free us from our past.  
skill and trust in God's e - ter - nal word.  
ny our - selves that we may know God's love.  
Eas - ter dawns, we join in heav - en's praise.

Text: based on Claudia E. Hermann, 1838–1898; para. Gilbert E. Doan Jr., b. 1930.  
Music: CONSOLATION, A. Davison, *Scottish Harmony*, 1816; arr. Theodore A. Beck, 1929–2003.  
Text © 1978 *Luthera Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.  
Arr. © 1969 Concordia Publishing House.



## INVITATION TO LENT

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 OF SIN

*Please kneel or be seated*

*Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.*

*Pastor:* Most holy and merciful God,  
*Assembly:* **we confess to you and to one another,  
and before the whole company of heaven,  
that we have sinned by our fault,  
by our own fault,  
by our own most grievous fault,  
in thought, word, and deed,  
by what we have done and by what we have left undone.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and  
strength.  
We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.  
We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven.  
Have mercy on us, O God.**

*Pastor:* We have shut our ears to your call to serve as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

*Assembly:* **Have mercy on us, O God.**

*Pastor:* Our past unfaithfulness, the pride, envy, hypocrisy, and apathy that have infected our lives, we confess to you.

*Assembly:* **Have mercy on us, O God.**

*Pastor:* Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people, we confess to you.

*Assembly:* **Have mercy on us, O God.**

*Pastor:* Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to share the faith that is in us, we confess to you.

*Assembly:* **Have mercy on us, O God.**

*Pastor:* Our neglect of human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty, we confess to you.

*Assembly:* **Have mercy on us, O God.**

*Pastor:* Our false judgments, our uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us, we confess to you.

*Assembly:* **Have mercy on us, O God.**

*Pastor:* Our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us, we confess to you.

*Assembly:* **Have mercy on us, O God.**

*Pastor:* Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us.

*Assembly:* **Hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.**

### **IMPOSITION OF ASHES**

*Pastor:* 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.

*Assembly:* **Amen.**

*People may come forward down the center aisle to receive the ashes from the pastor. Please return to your seat down the side aisles. If you are unable to come forward please notify an usher and the pastor will come to your seat.*

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

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

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

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

*Pastor:* 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.

*Assembly:* **Amen.**

**The Apostles' Creed:**

**I believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord.**

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried.**

**He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again.**

**He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**The Prayers of the Church:**

*Pastor:* Trusting in God's promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need.

*Please kneel or be seated*

*(The Prayers of the Church are said)*

*Pastor:* Hear us, O God:

***People:* Your mercy is great.**

*Pastor:* Accompany us on our journey, God of grace, and receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

***People:* Amen.**

**Offering:**

**Offering Prayer:**

*Pastor:* Jesus, you are the bread of life  
and the host of this meal.  
Bless these gifts that we have gathered  
that all people may know your goodness.  
Feed us not only with this holy food  
but with hunger for justice and peace.  
We pray this in your name.

***People:* Amen.**

## The Sacrament of Holy Communion

*Pastor:* The Lord be with you.

*People:* **And also with you**

*Pastor:* Lift up your hearts.

*People:* **We lift them to the Lord.**

*Pastor:* Let us give thanks to the Lord  
our God.

*People:* **It is right to give God  
thanks and praise.**

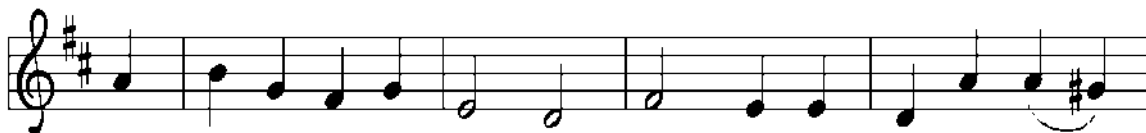
*Pastor:* It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that, renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. And so, with all the choirs of angels, 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, Lord God of pow'r 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.

## The Words of Institution:

*Pastor:* In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and 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 for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

*Pastor:* Let us pray in confidence with the words our Savior gave us:

*People:* **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, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the



sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

### **The Distribution:**

*All those who believe in the presence of the Lord at the table, are invited to share in the sacrament. If you would like to receive Communion or a blessing from the pastor please join the line in the middle aisle of the sanctuary, receive the bread, and then move to the Communion assistant to take your cup of either wine or juice. If you prefer to remain in your pew for Communion or are joining us for worship online please take the individual Communion Cup or the elements of your choosing and share them with one another and with the community. If young children are present who have not yet received their First Communion please bring them forward or take a moment and share a blessing with them. Be the community of Christ with all those gathered near and far. All are welcome at the table of the Lord.*

*Pastor: The body of Christ, given for you.*

*(At this time receive the bread, cracker, or that which you are using as the body of Christ)*

*Pastor: The blood of Christ, shed for you.*

*(At this time receive the wine, juice, water, or that which you using as the blood of Christ)*

### **Please Stand**

*Pastor:* May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

*Assembly:* **Amen.**

### **The Post-Communion Prayer:**

*Pastor:* Generous God,  
at this table we have tasted your immeasurable grace.  
As grains of wheat are gathered into one bread,  
now make us one loaf to feed the world;  
in the name of Jesus, the Bread of life.

*Assembly:* **Amen.**

### **The Benediction:**

*Pastor:* 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.  
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, † and of the Holy Spirit.

*Assembly:* **Amen**

**Closing Hymn:**

***“Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling”***

1 Soft - ly and ten - der - ly Je - sus is call - ing, call - ing for  
2 Why should we tar - ry when Je - sus is plead - ing, plead - ing for  
3 Oh, for the won - der - ful love he has prom - ised, prom - ised for

you and for me. See, on the por - tals he's wait - ing and watch - ing,  
you and for me? Why should we lin - ger and heed not his mer - cies,  
you and for me! Though we have sinned, he has mer - cy and par - don,

*Refrain*  
watch - ing for you and for me.  
mer - cies for you and for me? "Come home, come home!  
par - don for you and for me. Come home, come home!

You who are wea - ry, come home." Ear - nest - ly, ten - der - ly,

Je - sus is call - ing, call - ing, "O sin - ner, come home!"

### **The Dismissal:**

*Pastor:* Go in peace to share the life, love, and joy Jesus Christ with all.

*Assembly:* **Thanks be to God.**

**Worship has ended, let the  
service begin!**



### **St. Peter's Statement of Welcome**

All people are created by God. We affirm with the apostle Paul, that in Christ “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female” (Galatians 3:28). Christ has made us one. In keeping with our mission statement “to share the life, love and joy of Jesus Christ with others”, we welcome all people regardless of characteristics which might cause exclusion or discrimination outside of St. Peter's.

We affirm that all people share the worth that comes from being unique individuals created by God. All people are welcome within the membership of this congregation upon making the same affirmation of faith as all other members make. Members of this congregation are expected and encouraged to share in the sacramental and general life of this congregation.