

# ASH WEDNESDAY EUCHARIST

February 14, 2024

**St. Mark's Lutheran Church**

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*Welcome to Saint Mark's!*

**Our Mission: “To know Christ and to make Christ known.”**



*This is Christ's church. There is a place for you here. Join us as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.*

**Please be aware:**

**Hand sanitizer is available for your use.**

**Offerings may be received by way of offering plates as you enter or leave.**

**An Order for Holy Communion (Setting 10, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*)**

*A guide to hymnal use: LBW, Green Book; WOV, Blue Book*

*\*Please stand as you are able.*

## **INTRODUCTION TO TODAY'S WORSHIP**

*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.*

**On this day, we begin our time together in silence. As you enter, please do so as quietly and reverently as possible. If you must speak please do in a whisper. Allow your speech to be that of a prayer.**

## **WELCOME/ANNOUNCING THE DAY/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**\*HYMN                      Out of the Depths I Cry to You                      LBW, “Green”, 295**

## **\*THE PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray. Gracious God, out of your love and mercy you breathed into dust the breath of life, creating us to serve you and our neighbors. Call forth our prayers and acts of kindness, and strengthen us to face our mortality with confidence in the mercy of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

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

<sup>1</sup>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—

<sup>2a</sup> 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.

<sup>12</sup>Yet even now, says the LORD,

    return to me with all your heart,  
    with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;

<sup>13</sup>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.

<sup>14</sup>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?

<sup>15</sup>Blow the trumpet in Zion;

    sanctify a fast;  
    call a solemn assembly;  
    <sup>16</sup>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.

<sup>17</sup>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?’ ”

## PSALM 51

- 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 ev- | er 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 pur- | er 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 spir- | it within me.**
- 11 Cast me not away | from your presence,  
and take not your Holy Spir- | it from me.
- 12 **Restore to me the joy of | your salvation  
and sustain me with your boun- | tiful Spirit.**
- 13 Let me teach your ways | to offenders,  
and sinners shall be re- | stored to you.
- 14 **Rescue me from bloodshed, O God of | my salvation,  
and my tongue shall sing | of your righteousness.**
- 15 O Lord, o- | pen my lips,  
and my mouth shall pro- | claim your praise.
- 16 **For you take no delight in sacrifice, or | I would give it.  
You are not pleased | with burnt offering.**
- 17 The sacrifice of God is a | troubled spirit;  
a troubled and broken heart, O God, you will | not despise.

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

20b We entreat 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.

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

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **\*THE GOSPEL: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21**

[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. 3 But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so 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. 6 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.

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. 17 But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 18 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.

<sup>19</sup>“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; <sup>20</sup>but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup>For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”  
The Gospel of the Lord.

## SILENCE FOR REFLECTION

### THE SERMON

**\*HYMN**                      **Chief of Sinners though I Be**                      **LBW, “Green”, 306**

### **\*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

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Kneel/Stand*

Most holy and merciful God,  
**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.**

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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*The congregation is seated.*

### **IMPOSITION OF ASHES**

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.

**Amen.**

*People may come forward to receive the ashes with the following exchange:*

Remember that you are dust and to dust shall return.

**Amen.**

*After those who desire ashes have received them, the pastor continues.*

Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,

**that we may show forth your love in the world.**

By the cross and passion of your Son, our Savior,

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

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.

**Amen.**

### **\*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

*After each petition: Hear us, O God/Your mercy is great.*

#### **\*THE PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*Words and gestures of peace are shared.*

#### **\*THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

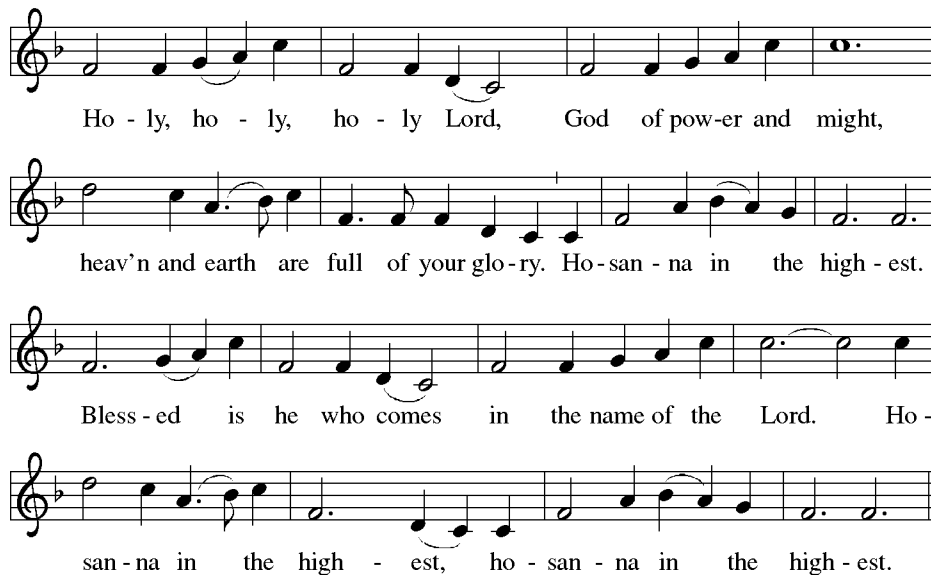


## **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through 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 fullness of grace that belongs to the 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.

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 our Lord Jesus, who born of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, fulfilled your will and won for you a holy people through his suffering and death, a death he freely accepted, in order to destroy death, and bring the gift of life eternal.

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 in 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."

Send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts.  
Gather into one all who share this bread and wine;  
fill us with your same Spirit 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.

**Amen.**

Lord as you have taught us, so now we pray:

**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 COMMUNE

Jesus offers

bread for the journey, and

a feast for hungry hearts. Come!

**Thanks be to God!**

*All are welcome to receive our Lord as he comes to us in this his holy supper.*

## THE COMMUNION

### \*AFTER COMMUNION

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

**Amen.**

### \*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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.

**Amen.**

**\*BLESSING**

Almighty God: Father, Son ✠ and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

**Amen.**

**\*HYMN                    The Glory of These Forty Days                    WOV, “Blue”, 657**

**\*DISMISSAL**

Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness;  
be of good courage;  
hold fast to that which is good;  
render to no one evil for evil;  
strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak;  
help the afflicted; honor all people;  
love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE**

## COMMEMORATIONS

**Cyril, monk, died 869; Methodius, bishop, died 885; missionaries to the Slavs**



*Wednesday, February 14, 2024*

These two brothers from Thessalonika, Greece, were monks and were sent to bring Christianity to the Slavic people. In the course of their work they created a written language, inventing the Cyrillic alphabet for it, and translated the Bible and the liturgy.

**Valentinus, pastor, died in the Third Century**



*Wednesday, February 14, 2024*

The emperor Aurelius imprisoned Valentinus in 272 AD for continuing to marry Christian soldiers, despite royal decree (Aurelius needed them to fight his wars). In prison, Valentinus cured his jailer's daughter of blindness and the pair fell head over heels in love (quite literally 'love at first sight'.) Ultimately, their desires were frustrated as Valentinus was executed on February 14 the following year. On the eve of his death, the condemned man sent a passionate letter to his beloved, signed simply 'your Valentine'.

**Martin Luther, renewer of the church, died 1546**



*Sunday, February 18, 2024*

Though he began his adult church life as a simple Augustinian monk, Luther challenged the abuses he saw in the church, and his work eventually led to the Reformation of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. Luther's accomplishments included liturgical reform, translation of the Bible, and creation of Small and Large Catechisms.

## **Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, martyr, died 156**



*Friday, February 23, 2024*

Because he is said to have been known by John, the author of Revelation, as well as the important early church fathers Irenaeus and Ignatius, Polycarp serves as a vital link in church history. He was burned at the stake at age 86 for refusing to renounce his faith.