



*Remember
that you are dust,
and to dust
you shall return.*

Ash Wednesday – March 6, 2019
Saint Andrew Lutheran Church

Serving in Worship Today

Pastors	Gary Brandenburg Jenn Collins
Pianist	Joanne Howard
Ushers	B Team
Altar Guild	Sandra Fischer, Darlene Caillouette, Sheila McCarthy & Lisa Weber

Lent begins with a solemn call to fasting and repentance as we look forward to the promise of the resurrection at Easter.

Critics of Christianity often point out that Christians are hypocrites.

Christians publicly espouse a certain set of rules for living—including care for creation, serving God and neighbors in need, and loving our enemies—and, just as publicly, fail to live up to those rules every day and in every way.

Church is for real people, and real people fail to do and say the right things—real people are hypocrites. The ideal is to know you're a hypocrite and earnestly work at being less hypocritical. All the same, we don't want to be hypocrites or show-offs. We question the motives behind our public and private spiritual practices; we question our neighbors' motives too.

In today's gospel we hear about fasting cheerfully and praying in secret. And yet, as we leave the church building we bear a public and very noticeable sign of faith right on our foreheads.

Lent begins with a bold, visible, unmistakable reminder of who we are: simultaneously mortal dust and baptized children of God. Simultaneously saint and sinner. Simultaneously hypocrites and earnest, hopeful Christians – waiting with eagerness and readiness for the fullness of God's promises to be revealed.

Silence is kept as all gather.

GATHERING

Psalm 51

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;
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 offenses,
and my sin is ever before me.

**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.**

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

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

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

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

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

**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 sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.**

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

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

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

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

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

GREETING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept.

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.

HYMN

“Restore in Us, O God”

vs. 1-3

No. 328

WORD**FIRST READING**

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

A reading from Joel.

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.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION *"Restore in Us, O God"* vs. 4

No. 328

GOSPEL

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

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.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

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

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

Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

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.

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.

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

If you desire to receive ashes ushers will guide you to a station to receive the sign of the cross on your forehead in remembrance that we are but dust and one day we shall return to dust. Psalm 90 may be read during this time for reflection and prayer.

When all have received ashes, a litany is spoken.

Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,
that we may show forth your glory 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

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

OFFERING

MEAL

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.

Words of Institution

Lord's Prayer

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.

Distribution

PRAYER

Let us pray.

Merciful God, accompany our journey through these forty days.
Renew us in the gift of baptism, that we may provide for those who are
poor, pray for those in need, fast from self-indulgence,
and above all that we may find our treasure in the life 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.

SENDING

BLESSING

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

Amen.

HYMN

"Lamb of God"

No. 336

DISMISSAL

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

Thanks be to God.

Life in the Wilderness

Worship Wednesdays in Lent - 12:15 and 6:15 pm

WEEKLY THEMES

- March 13** *Accepting a Wilderness*
Psalm 23; Matthew 26:36-42
- March 20** *Loss of Financial Security*
1 Thessalonians 3:10-12; Philippians 4:10-13;
1 Timothy 6:6-10; 2 Corinthians 8:9
- March 27** *Loss of Possessions*
Luke 15:8-10; Matthew 24:43; Luke 13; 1-5
Philippians 3:7-8
- April 3** *Loss of Health*
Proverbs 3; Mark 1:30-31; Philippians 2:25-30
- April 10** *Loss of Faith*
Acts 15:36-41; 1 Timothy 1:18-20; 2 Timothy 2:16-18

HOLY WEEK:

April 18, Maundy Thursday – *Loss of Relationship*

Exodus 12:1-14; Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26;
John 13:1-17, 31b-35

April 19, Good Friday – *Loss of Physical Life*

Isaiah 52:13- -53:12; Psalm 22; Hebrews 10:16-25; John 18:1- -19:42

April 21, Easter Sunday – *Eternal Life-No More Losses*



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A congregation of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

MARCH 6, 2019
ASH WEDNESDAY



Practicing the presence of God.

ASH WEDNESDAY BIBLE READINGS

Take time to read and reflect on these Bible passages as part of your Ash Wednesday observance.

Wednesday	Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21	The practice of faith
	Joel 2:1-2, 12-17	Call to repentance
	Psalms 51:1-17	Have mercy on me
	2 Corinthians 5:20b–6:10	Messengers of Christ

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR ASH WEDNESDAY

“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.” **Matthew 6:19-20 (NRSV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for Ash Wednesday:

Dear loving and merciful God, we thank you for your presence in our lives that brings forgiveness and new life. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, help us enjoy a simple meal, filled with love that’s kind and real. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the God who is full of steadfast love grant you mercy and grace. (Joel 2:13)



MARCH 6, 2019

HYMN FOR ASH

WEDNESDAY

Return to God



CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What is something that is very important to you? How do others see that it is important to you?
- Jesus states that all the things we might gain in life can be taken away or destroyed. How is faith in God the one treasure that really matters?
- Ash Wednesday is about practicing God's treasured presence in our lives. How is God part of your daily life?

DEVOTIONS



Read: Psalm 51:1-17 and Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21.

Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent, and Lent helps us to focus on what matters. Psalm 51 expresses how important forgiveness is. Forgiveness matters. In Matthew 6, Jesus points out that things we typically value, that we treasure, can easily be taken away or destroyed over time. This is true of health, fame, or material possessions. What really matters—is to be treasured—is God's living presence in our lives. Instead of practicing our faith to get the attention of others—to gain a kind of approval—simply enjoy the intimacy of God's presence in our lives that gives us a new heart and a new beginning daily. Enjoying God's presence through faith practices like prayer, fasting, and service to others, helps us to experience the true treasure of life. This Lent, how could you enjoy the treasure of God's presence in your life?

Pray: **Merciful God, as we enter this Lenten season, guide our thoughts, words, and deeds to humbly receive your mercy and grace, the true treasure of life. In Jesus name, amen.**

SERVICE



Historically, almsgiving (Matthew 6:2-4) is a way to help those in need by giving food, clothing, or money to the poor. This Lent consider putting together some small care packages for the homeless that could include things like socks, snack foods, toothbrush, toothpaste, and soap. You could then deliver them to a service organization that helps those in need.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent. Lent traditionally has been a time of repentance and forgiveness. Christians around the world recognize Ash Wednesday with worship services held at varying times throughout the day. During the service, Christians are reminded of the words from Genesis 3:19, "you are dust and to dust you shall return" as ashes are placed in the sign of the cross on people's foreheads. Attend a local worship service on Ash Wednesday and when you go home, look in the mirror at the visible reminder of the cross on your forehead and say this blessing: **May God create in me a new heart and a right spirit** (Psalm 51:10).



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org