

Ash Wednesday: February 17, 2021

Gathering

Prelude: "Jesus, I Will Ponder Now"

(Tune: *Jesu Kreuz, Leiden und Pein*)

Johann Gottfried Walther

Opening Hymn: "O Lord, throughout These Forty Days"

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| 1 | O Lord, throughout these forty days you prayed and kept the fast; inspire repentance for our sin, and free us from our past. | 3 | Though parched and hungry, yet you prayed and fixed your mind above; so teach us to deny ourselves that we may know God's love. |
| 2 | You strove with Satan, and you won; your faithfulness endured; lend us your nerve, your skill and trust in God's eternal word. | 4 | Be with us through this season, Lord, and all our earthly days, that when the final Easter dawns, we join in heaven's praise. |

Exhortation

P: Brothers and sisters: As disciples of the Lord Jesus we are called to struggle against everything that leads us away from love of God and neighbor. Let us commit ourselves to this struggle and confess our sins, asking our Father for strength to persevere in our Lenten discipline.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who brings us safely through the sea, who gives us water from the rock, who leads us into the land of milk and honey.

C: Amen.

Confession

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,

C: have mercy on us.

P: For self-centered living, and for failing to walk with humility and gentleness:

C: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

P: For longing to have what is not ours, and for hearts that are not at rest with ourselves:

C: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

P: For misuse of human relationships, and for unwillingness to see the image of God in others:

C: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

P: For jealousies that divide families and nations, and for rivalries that create strife and warfare:

C: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

P: For reluctance in sharing the gifts of God, and for carelessness with the fruits of creation:

C: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

P: For hurtful words that condemn, and for angry deeds that harm:

C: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

P: For idleness in witnessing to Jesus Christ, and for squandering the gifts of love and grace:

C: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us.

P: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. Through the Holy Spirit God cleanses us and gives us the power to proclaim the mighty acts of the one who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins,

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

C: Amen.

Imposition of Ashes

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

C: Amen.

Make the sign of the cross on your own forehead using the ashes provided in individual bags.

P: Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

After those who desire ashes have received them, the minister 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 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 repentance and his Holy Spirit, that those things may please him which we do on this day, and that at the last we may come to his eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

Prayer of the Day

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

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 Word

Blessing of the Lector

P: Even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart. Return to the Lord, your God, who is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.

Let us pray. Bless John, O God of mercy, and bless us as we listen to the words of the scriptures. May they touch our hearts and lead us to return to you, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

First Lesson: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

¹ 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—

² 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.

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

¹⁴ 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?

¹⁵ Blow the trumpet in Zion;

sanctify a fast;

call a solemn assembly;

¹⁶ 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.

¹⁷ 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?' "

The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalmody: Psalm 51:1-17

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

Second Lesson: 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.

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel: Mark 2:1-12

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the 2nd chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ When Jesus returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. ² So many gathered around that there was no longer room for them, not even in front of the door; and he was speaking the word to them. ³ Then some people came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. ⁴ And when they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and after having dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay. ⁵ When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.” ⁶ Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, ⁷ “Why does this fellow speak in this way? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?” ⁸ At once Jesus perceived in his spirit that they were discussing these questions among themselves; and he said to them, “Why do you raise such questions in your hearts? ⁹ Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Stand up and take your mat and walk?’ ¹⁰ But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins” —he said to the paralytic— ¹¹ I say to you, stand up, take your mat and go to your home. ¹² And he stood up, and immediately took the mat and went out before all of them; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this!”

The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Lenten Monologue: *The Paralytic*

Hymn of the Day: “Chief of Sinners Though I Be”

- 1 Chief of sinners though I be,
Jesus shed his blood for me,
died that I might live on high,
lives that I might never die.
As the branch is to the vine,
I am his, and he is mine.
- 2 Oh, the height of Jesus' love!
Higher than the heav'ns above,
deeper than the depths of sea,
lasting as eternity.
Love that found me—wondrous thought—
found me when I sought him not.
- 3 Only Jesus can impart
balm to heal the wounded heart,
peace that flows from sin forgiv'n,
joy that lifts the soul to heav'n,
faith and hope to walk with God
in the way that Enoch trod.
- 4 Chief of sinners though I be,
Christ is all in all to me;
all my wants to him are known,
all my sorrows are his own.
He sustains the hidden life
safe with him from earthly strife.
- 5 O my Savior, help afford
by your Spirit and your word!
When my wayward heart would stray,
keep me in the narrow way;
grace in time of need supply
while I live and when I die.

The Apostles' Creed

- I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**
- I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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.**

Prayers of the People

A: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs.

After each petition:

A: Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

After the last petition:

A: Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Invitation to Offering

Offertory: "Create in Me a Clean Heart"

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 unto me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with your free Spirit.

Offering Prayer

A: Let us pray. God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

The Meal

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: 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.

The 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.**

Invitation to Communion

P: Jesus says to you, "Your sins are forgiven."

The Body of Christ, broken for you.

The Blood of Christ, shed for you.

All eat bread and drink wine or juice at their seat.

Communion Hymn: "Savior, When in Dust to You" (v. 1-3)

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|--|--|
| 1 Savior, when in dust to you low we bow in homage due; when, repentant, to the skies scarce we lift our weeping eyes; oh, by all your pains and woe suffered once for us below, bending from your throne on high, hear our penitential cry! | 2 By your helpless infant years, by your life of want and tears, by your days of deep distress in the savage wilderness, by the dread, mysterious hour of the insulting tempter's pow'r, turn, oh, turn a fav'ring eye; hear our penitential cry! |
| 3 By your hour of dire despair, by your agony of prayer, by the cross, the nail, the thorn, piercing spear, and torturing scorn, by the gloom that veiled the skies o'er the dreadful sacrifice, listen to our humble sigh; hear our penitential cry! | |

Table Blessing

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

C: **Amen.**

Prayer after Communion

A: Let us pray. Compassionate God, you have fed us with the bread of heaven. Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage: may our fasting be hunger for justice; our alms, a making of peace; and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: **Amen.**

Sending

Blessing

P: Jesus took the form of a servant and was obedient to death, even death on a cross. May you follow his example and share in the resurrection.

C: **Amen.**

P: In faithfulness to God, Jesus gave his life as a ransom for many. May you walk in love as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God.

C: **Amen.**

P: On the cross of Calvary Jesus bore our grief and carried our sorrows. May his Passion bring you healing and peace.

C: **Amen.**

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

C: **Amen.**

Closing Hymn: "On My Heart Imprint Your Image"

On my heart imprint your image,
blessed Jesus, king of grace,
that life's troubles nor its pleasures
ever may your work erase.
Let the clear inscription be:
Jesus, crucified for me,
is my life, my hope's foundation,
all my glory and salvation!

Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude: “Abide with Me! Fast Falls the Eventide”

Sigvart A. Hofland

Worship Leaders

The Rev. Emily Beckering, Pastor

Kris Keith, Music Director

Kate Wollenburg, Organist

Terry McDowell, Assisting Minister

John Cathcart, Reader

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, February 17: Ash Wednesday

7 pm Ash Wednesday Worship Service

Sunday, February 21: 1 Lent

10:30 am Worship

4 pm Zoom Sunday School

Monday, February 22

Epistle Articles Deadline

Tuesday, February 23

4 pm Bible Study on Zoom

Wednesday, February 24

6:30 pm Bell Choir

Lenten Midweek Service (online only)

Saturday, February 27

7 pm Youth Group (Zoom)

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Thank you for worshiping with us today.

To give your offering through our website, please visit stpaulreading.org/online-giving/

Our Life Together

For emergency pastoral care, please call the after-hours line at 513-760-5884.

If you have requests for the Prayer Chain, call Penny Huber, 513-931-6420. To remove people from the list, contact the office.

We pray for **Mary and her granddaughter Kyra** (friend of Paul Pieper); **Berkeley** (Carol Curless's great-grandson); **Jeannie Allen** (Faith Pirrmann's friend); **Pr. Lisa Bernheisel**; **Louise Barry**; **Teresa Bell** (former member); **Beth** (Elinor Schieman's daughter); **Stephen Black** (Kim Coulehan's nephew); **Bobby** (Christian Lohmeier's friend); **Nancy Bose** (Kathy Hirt's friend); **Brett** (Kings' step-nephew); **Nicole Bucknam** (friend of Millers); **Jodie Calhoun**; **Christian**; **Frances Clemons** (Portmanns' friend); **Colin** (Millers' grandson); **Sandy Cordes**; **Kathy Curless**; **Katie Demopoulos** (Diana Hawkins's niece); **Dick** (Linda Miller's brother); **Jeremy Doan** (Jean Winkle's grandson); **Jerry Doan** (Jean Winkle's son-in-law); **Lee Erbeck**; **Larry Faulkner** (Freda's son); **Justin Feldman** (Bess Sturgill's father); **Micki Ford** (Fords' niece); **Jeanne Fuller**; **Scarlett Gally** (Beth Wernery's great-niece); **Clara Garcia** (Cindy Mayhugh's sister); **George and Sherry** (Shirley Harbaugh's cousins); **Nathaniel Gibson** (Les Eckerle's step-nephew); **Steve Gollehon** (Elinor Schieman's cousin); **Hannah**; **Matthew Harrison** (Seals' neighbor); **Sandy Hatcher** (Linda Holt's sister); **Elain Heskamp**; **Richard Hoffman** (Cindy Mayhugh's brother); **Andrew Horton**; **Mary Ann Hudecki** (Linda Miller's sister), **Ellen Hunter** (Jeni Cathcart's grandmother); **Jo and her daughter** (Jeanne Fuller's friends); **Joan** (Penny Huber's friend); **Kate** (granddaughter of Dennis King's friend); **Dennis King**; **Jay King** (son of Jamie King); **Loretta Kombrink** (Marilyn Portmann's aunt); **Lewis Laine** (Chet Laine's brother); **Richard Lane** (Elinor Schieman's nephew); **Nelson Langefeld**; **Ruth Lohmeier**; **Yvonne Lowery** (St. Paul Players); **Revea and Jim Mayhew** (Millers' sister & brother-in-law); **Carroll Mayhugh Sr.** (Carroll Mayhugh's father); **Samantha Mersch** (Mayhughs' daughter, Sarah Papin's sister); **Ann Miller** (Millers' niece); **Jessica Mink** (Donald Harris's cousin); **Doris Minton**; **Barbara Moorhouse**; **Jean Nolte**; **Ervin, Carol, Jim, and Jeannie Oerther** (Portmanns' sister and family); **Ann Ohr** (Barbara Moorhouse's cousin); **Richard Osborn** (Betty Pack's brother); **Rosie Osborn** (Betty Pack's sister); **Tom Pack** (Betty Pack's son); **Eric Papin**; **Christian & Suzie Pereira** (Carolyn Koehl's granddaughter & grandson-in-law); **Richard Peterson** (Shirley Harbaugh's brothers); **Don Pflieger** (Kings' brother-in-law); **Ginny Pape**; **Linda Perin** (Moorhouses' cousin); **Paul Pieper**; **Faith Pirrmann**; **Pat Popplewell** (Dennis King's friend); **James Savoy** (Jean Winkle's great-grandson); **Shawn Schnetzer** (Sturgills' cousin); **Sheila Schultz** (Betty Pack's friend); **Shannon and Dane** (friends of Riddle family); **Shear family** (Kings' daughter & son-in-law); **Kate Sheri-**

dan (Kings' family friend); **Keith Shupe** (father of Kelly Shupe); **Jason Simpson** (Freda Faulkner's grand-nephew); **Patricia Smith** (Teresa Bell's mother); **Scott Songer; Judy Songer** (friends of Jean Winkle); **Crosley Spelman** (Spelmans' grandson); **Frank Sturgill** (Jim's dad); **Britney Jean Teems** (Jean Winkle's granddaughter); **Teresa** (friend of Marty Lohmeier); **Randy Thaman** (friend of Marie Calhoun); **Geri Toland** (Carole Replogle's neighbor); **Treasure** (Les Eckerle's cousin); **Ralph Turner** (friend of Dennis King); **Tereasa Vogel** (Freda Faulkner's friend); **Jack Wagner; Jeanne Wagner; Daryl Wesselman** (Betty Pack's granddaughter); **Jean Winkle; Susan Winkle** (Jean Winkle's daughter-in-law).

At the death of: **David Faulkner.**

We pray for those with ongoing health concerns who are unable to come to church every week: **Louise Barry, Barbara Moorhouse, Jean Nolte, Heather Segar.**

We pray for our armed forces members: **Graham Barton** (Fords' neighbor); **Paul Cordes** (Elinor Schieman's grandson); **Victoria Derry** (Elinor Schieman's great-granddaughter); **Jared Forst** (Jim and Loretta's grandson); **Beau Glenn** (Karen Koehl's son-in-law); **Kylie Hahn** (Gretta Hahn's granddaughter); **Donald Hosea** (Karen Koehl's son); **Samuel McLoughlin** (friend of Cindy Sieckman); **Scott Minton** (Doris Minton's son); **Jobeth Ramirez** (friend of Karen Koehl); **Joshua Rodriguez** (friend of Karen Koehl); **Trent Schwegman** (cousin to the Erbecks and Fords); **Dustin Silvey; Mack Thompson** (Freda Faulkner's grandson); **Alex Wisecup** (son of Nadine and Barry Wisecup).