



**ASH WEDNESDAY**  
**FEBRUARY 22, 2023**  
**Welcome/Announcements**

**Confession and  
 Forgiveness**

During the season of Lent we are called to return to the Lord with all our heart. Let us confess our sin and seek reconciliation with God and neighbor. (Silence for reflection) Merciful God,

**you sent Jesus Christ to save the lost.**

**We confess that we have strayed from you  
 and turned aside from your way.**

**We fail in love, neglect justice, and ignore your truth.**

**Have mercy on us and wash away our sin.**

**Create in us clean hearts for the sake of Jesus Christ our Savior and  
 Lord. Amen.**

Behold, now is the acceptable time; now is the day of salvation.

Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins,  
 and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

**Hymn: ELW#319 – O Lord, throughout these Forty Days**

**Distribution of Ashes** – Lent begins with a solemn call to fasting and repentance as we begin our journey to the baptismal waters of Easter. As we hear in today's readings, now is the acceptable time to return to the Lord. During Lent the people of God will reflect on the meaning of their baptism into Christ's death and resurrection. The sign of ashes suggests our human mortality and frailty. What seems like an ending is really an invitation to make each day a new beginning, in which we are washed in God's mercy and forgiveness. With the cross on our foreheads, we long for the spiritual renewal that flows from the springtime Easter feast to come.



## Reception of Ashes

Remember that you were made from dust and again to dust you will return.

**Amen!**

**Prayer of the Day** - 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. **Amen.**

### God's Holy Word - Our Lenten Journey

#### First Reading: Joel 2:1-2, 12-13

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 mountain  
 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.

The Word of the Lord... **Thanks be to 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 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.**

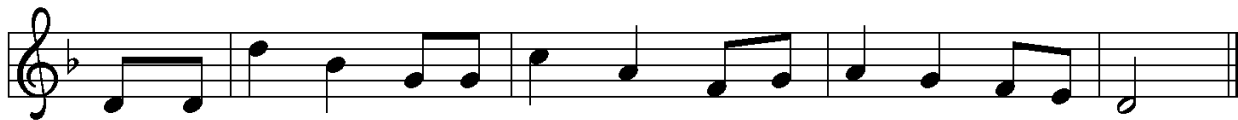
5 Indeed, I was born steeped in wickedness, a sinner from my mother's womb.

**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.



We are turn - ing, Lord, to hear you; you are mer - ci - ful and kind -



slow to an - ger, rich in bless - ing, and with love to us in - clined.

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 – **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

### HYMN OF THE DAY – ELW 512 – Lord Let My Heart Be Good Soil

Sustained by God’s abundant mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

*A brief silence.*

O Lord, our God, you gather your church and call us to return to you. Accompany us throughout our Lenten pilgrimage. **Create in us clean hearts and renew all the baptized to declare your praise.**

Renew the nations, O God. Give voice to those on the margins and resolve to world leaders who seek to protect those most vulnerable. **Loosen the bonds of injustice and bring an end to all violence, especially the war in the Ukraine.**

Renew your people, O God. Help us to respond to those who cry out for help. **Equip us with compassion to care for those who experience homelessness, food insecurity, and economic hardship.**

We remember those who are sick among us. We pray especially for...(Names are read aloud and those spoken out by our congregation.)

Let us take a moment to offer Our Lord the quiet prayers of our hearts...PAUSE in silent prayer.

O God, Our God, we lift our prayers to you trusting always in your steadfast love and your promise to renew us and all of your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

## OFFERING

**Offering Prayer** - Generous God, You set a table where we feast as friends. Prepare us to witness to your goodness with every gift you have given us to share, that all people may know your peace through Jesus Christ, now and forever. **Amen.**

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING 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, the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.**

**Invitation to Communion** - Christ has prepared the feast.  
Come to the table where all are welcomed home.

**+Invitation to Communion** – The Lamb of God has taken away the sins  
of the world! Come now and receive the Bread of Life!

*[Ushers will escort you to the Communion Rail to receive.  
After receiving the wafer, (GLUTEN FREE WAFERS AVAILABLE)  
you will be able to take a small cup of wine (red) or grape  
juice (white) from a tray. Deposit the empty cup in  
the basket. Then return to your seat.]*

OUR TIME OF COMMUNION WITH THE LORD!



### **COMMUNION HYMN**

#### **CHANGE MY HEART, O GOD (ELW 801)**

Change my heart, O God, make it ever true.  
Change my heart, O God, may I be like you.  
You are the potter, I am the clay.  
Mold me and make me; this is what I pray.  
Change my heart, O God, make it ever true.  
Change my heart, O God, may I be like you.

**Prayer after Communion** - Tender and merciful one, at your feast, you fed us who brought nothing, turning our emptiness into joy. Filled with your abundant grace, send us now to be ministers of reconciliation, mending broken hearts, working for justice, and striving for peace among all people, in the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

**Blessing** - May God, who fills creation with abundance, Jesus Christ, who spreads his arms in forgiveness, and the Holy Spirit, who draws ever near to us, ✝ bless you and bring you to life everlasting. **Amen.**

**CLOSING HYMN – #843 – Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness**

**Dismissal** - Go in peace. Let us remember the poor!  
**Thanks be to God.**



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***"God calls us to share our faith in Christ  
 with the community in all seasons."***