



# Ash Wednesday

*February 17, 2021*

Reprinted from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.  
All rights reserved. Used by permission of Augsburg Fortress License #14040-ELW  
Portions also from *Sundays & Seasons 2021*

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.

Silent Prayer

Hymn

*Beneath the Cross of Jesus*

ELW 338

Psalm 51

read responsively

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your <sup>1</sup> steadfast love;  
in your great compassion blot out <sup>1</sup> my offenses.

**Wash me through and through <sup>1</sup> from  
my wickedness, and cleanse me <sup>1</sup> from my sin.**

For I know <sup>1</sup> my offenses,  
and my sin is ev- <sup>1</sup> er before me.

**Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil <sup>1</sup> in your sight;  
so you are justified when you speak and right <sup>1</sup> in your judgment.**

Indeed, I was born <sup>1</sup> steeped in wickedness,  
a sinner from my <sup>1</sup> mother's womb.

**Indeed, you delight in truth <sup>1</sup> deep within me,  
and would have me know wisdom <sup>1</sup> deep within.**

Remove my sins with hyssop, and I <sup>1</sup> shall be clean;  
wash me, and I shall be pur- <sup>1</sup> er than snow.

**Let me hear <sup>1</sup> joy and gladness;  
that the body you have broken <sup>1</sup> may rejoice.**

Hide your face <sup>1</sup> from my sins,  
and blot out <sup>1</sup> all my wickedness.

**Create in me a clean <sup>1</sup> heart, O God,  
and renew a right spir- <sup>1</sup> it within me.**

Cast me not away <sup>1</sup> from your presence,  
and take not your Holy Spir- <sup>1</sup> it from me.

**Restore to me the joy of <sup>1</sup> your salvation  
and sustain me with your boun- <sup>1</sup> tiful Spirit.**

Let me teach your ways <sup>1</sup> to offenders,  
and sinners shall be re- <sup>1</sup> stored to you.

**Rescue me from bloodshed, O God of <sup>1</sup> my salvation,  
and my tongue shall sing <sup>1</sup> of your righteousness.**

O Lord, o- <sup>1</sup> pen my lips,  
and my mouth shall de- <sup>1</sup> clare your praise.

**For you take no delight in sacrifice, or <sup>1</sup> I would  
give it. You are not pleased <sup>1</sup> with burnt offering.**

The sacrifice of God is a <sup>1</sup> troubled spirit;  
a troubled and broken heart, O God, you will <sup>1</sup> not despise.

**Favor Zion with <sup>l</sup> your good pleasure;  
build up the walls <sup>l</sup> of Jerusalem.**

Then you will delight in the appointed sacrifices, in burnt <sup>l</sup> and whole offerings;  
then young bulls shall be offered up- <sup>l</sup> on your altar.

## **Confession of Sin**

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

*The assembly kneels or sits. Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.*

**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

*People may come forward to pick up the ashes.*



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

## Conclusion of Confession

- 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 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.  
C. **Amen.**

## Prayer of the Day

- P. Let us pray  
C. **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**

## First Lesson

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

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?'"

P. Word of God. Word of Life.

C. **Thanks be to God.**

## Second Lesson

2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

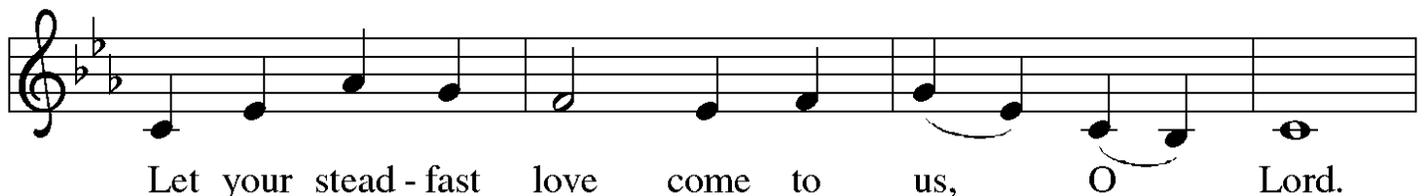
So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

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.

## The Lenten Verse (sing 3 times)



The Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew, the sixth chapter.

**Matthew 6:1-6,16-21**

Jesus said, "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."

**C. Glory to you, O Lord.**

**P.** The Gospel of the Lord

**C. Praise to you, O Christ**

**Hymn**

*Just As I Am, Without One Plea*

ELW 592

**The Sermon**

"Practicing Piety"

Pastor Wayne Dubnansky

**The Prayers**

**P.** Relying on the promises of God, we pray boldly for the church, the world, and all in need.

*A brief silence*

O God, you call your church to be ministers of reconciliation throughout the world. Inspire your church in its proclamation of the gospel and guide its ministries to build up the body of Christ. Lord, in you mercy,

**C. hear our prayer.**

**P.** We entrust ourselves and all our prayers to you, O faithful God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C. Amen**

## The Peace

- P. Jesus said: Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled. May His peace be with you always.
- C. **And also with you.**

## 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*

## The Blessing

- P. You are what God made you to be: created in Christ Jesus for good works, chosen as holy and beloved, freed to serve your neighbor.
- God bless you † that you may be a blessing, in the name of the holy and life-giving Trinity.
- C. **Amen.**
- P. Following the dismissal, please feel free to use time in the sanctuary after worship for meditation or prayer at the altar or in the pew, before leaving quietly.

## The Dismissal

- P. Marked with the cross of Christ, go forth to love and serve the Lord.
- C. **Thanks be to God.**

## Silent Prayer