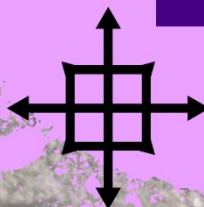


Ash Wednesday

February 14, 2024

REVO  **LUTIONARY**
LENT



MUHLENBERG
LUTHERAN CHURCH



WELCOME!

We welcome you who are visiting with us and we pray God's blessings upon your worship here tonight. Guests are encouraged to complete one of the blue cards in the pew rack and put it in the offering plate or give it to an usher, or **scan this QR Code** with your smart phone to complete the visitor card digitally.



IMPOSITION OF ASHES

The practice of using ashes made from the burning of palm branches dates back to at least the 3rd century A.D. The practice is an example of death and renewal as shown forth in the ancient custom of burning the fields in the spring to destroy the old and prepare for the new. Ashes also suggest both God's judgment of sin and our human frailty, reminding us that the words "... earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust" will one day be spoken over us.

People may come forward and kneel or stand to receive the ashes. The ministers mark the forehead of each person with a cross of ashes, saying, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

Ash Wednesday Liturgy

February 14, 2024 ~ 7:00 pm

We gather in silence.

PSALM ~ Psalm 51:1-15 *We sing responsively between choir & congregation. All sing Refrain.*

Refrain

Have mer - cy on me, O

God, ac - cord - ing to your stead - fast love.

¹Have 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.**

³For 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. REFRAIN**

⁵Indeed, 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.**

⁷Remove 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.**

⁹Hide 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. REFRAIN**
- ¹¹Cast 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.**
- ¹³Let 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.**
- ¹⁵O Lord, o- | pen my lips,
and my mouth shall pro- | claim your praise. REFRAIN

(We stand)

GREETING

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

Holy God, on this Ash Wednesday we reflect upon our sin, our failings, and the harms we have caused. Remind us that, although we are dust, we are also your children, and your love never fails. **Amen.**

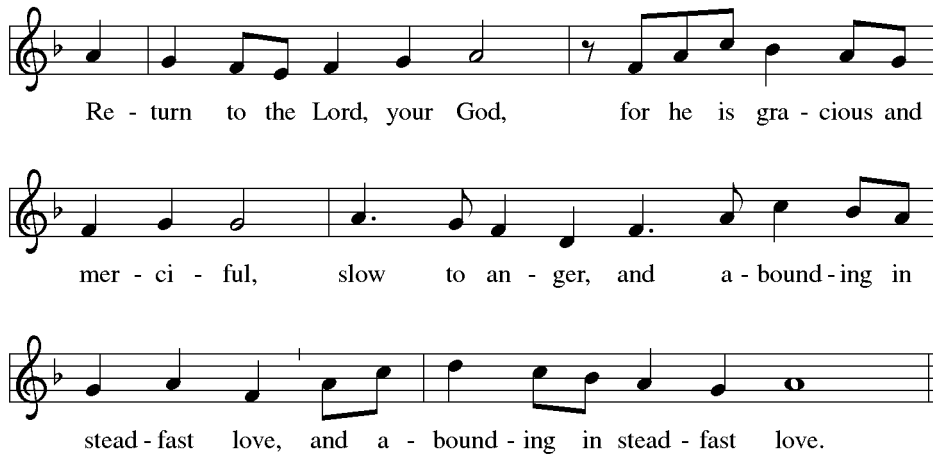
(We sit)

FIRST READING ~ Psalm 32

Pew Bible page 559

(We stand)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and

mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in

stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

GOSPEL ~ Mark 9:30-37

Pew Bible N.T. page 46

The Holy Gospel according to ... **Glory to you, O Lord.**

³⁰They went on from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it; ³¹for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, “The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again.” ³²But they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him.

³³Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, “What were you arguing about on the way?” ³⁴But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest. ³⁵He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, “Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.” ³⁶Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them, ³⁷Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.

After the reading:

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

(We sit)

SERMON

Pastor Alex Zuber

(We stand)

HYMN OF THE DAY

Death Be Never Last

1 We walk in light of count - less fac - es
2 When sor - row's heav - y hand has weight - ed
3 When joy re - turns with laugh - ter sing - ing

bright as beams of ris - ing sun, cer - tain as the
loss a - gainst the great - er gain, pin - ning down that
thanks to God for life's sweet song, let us fol - low

morn - ing chas - es night in end - less a - ges' run.
grief sore fat - ed lad - en on the bed of pain.
af - ter bring - ing thanks to God for those now gone.

Refrain

Turn - ing eyes now to their shin - ing mem - 'ry, to their faith - ful past,
saints be now the truth di - vin - ing: death be now but nev - er last.

(We sit)

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.

The assembly kneels or sits. 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.

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Almighty God, you have created us out of the earth. May these ashes be a sign of our mortality and penitence, reminding us that only through 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 and kneel or stand to receive the ashes. Ministers mark the forehead of each person with a cross of ashes, saying:

“Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

Music during the Imposition of Ashes

All Things of Dust to Dust Return

see next page

ELW 629 Abide with Me

see page 8

All Things of Dust to Dust Return



1 All things of dust to dust re - turn on earth and in the sky.
2 Lord, mark with dust and ash my brow so I may com-pre-hend
3 Lord, mark up - on my brow this sign: a stark and bar-ren cross



The hot - test, bright - est suns that burn in time grow dim and die.
that ev - 'ry mo - ment here and now links me to that same end
re - mind-ing me that though di - vine you know my pain and loss,



The fish that leap, the birds that soar, the new-born young that play,
I share with all that breathe and burn, that flare and fade and tire
and at the touch of dust and ash a - wake my heart to view



the leaves that fill the for - est floor re - vert to dust and clay.
yet by their wan - ing light dis-cern your own un - dy - ing fire.
how death it - self is but a flash that dies a - way in you.

Abide with Me



1 A - bidē with me, fast falls the e - ven - tide.
 2 Swift to its close ebbs out life's lit - tle day;
 3 I need thy pres - ence ev - 'ry pass - ing hour;
 4 I fear no foe, with thee at hand to bless;
 5 Hold thou thy cross be - fore my clos - ing eyes,



The dark - ness deep - ens; Lord, with me a - bidē.
 earth's joys grow dim, its glo - ries pass a - way;
 what but thy grace can foil the tempt - er's pow'r?
 ills have no weight, and tears no bit - ter - ness.
 shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;



When oth - er help - ers fail and com - forts flee,
 change and de - cay in all a - round I see;
 Who like thy - self my guide and stay can be?
 Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy vic - to - ry?
 heav'n's morn - ing breaks, and earth's vain shad - ows flee;



help of the help - less, oh, a - bidē with me.
 O thou who chang - est not, a - bidē with me.
 Through cloud and sun - shine, oh, a - bidē with me.
 I tri - umph still, if thou a - bidē with me!
 in life, in death, O Lord, a - bidē with me.

~ continue on page 9 ~

After all who desire ashes have received them:

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.**

(We stand)

PRAYERS

After each petition:

... Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

PEACE

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

The congregation may greet one another with a gesture of peace, using these or similar words:

"Peace be with you."

(We sit)

OFFERING

A Lenten Walk (arr. Hal H. Hopson)

Combined Choir

(We stand)

OFFERING PRAYER

Blessed are you, **O Lord our God, maker of all things.** Through your goodness you **have blessed us with these gifts.** With them we offer ourselves to your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake of him who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

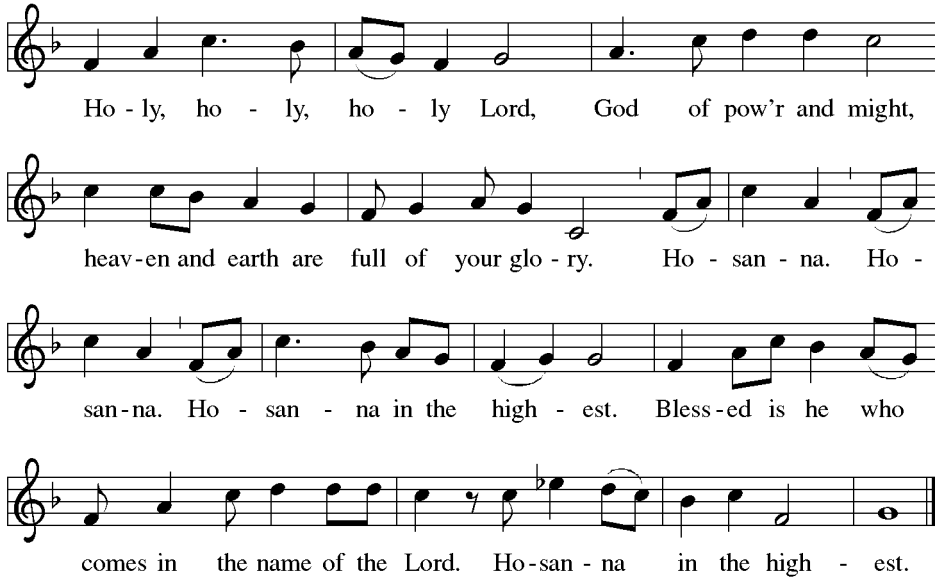
THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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 . . . we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below each staff. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: 'Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,'. The second staff continues: 'heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -'. The third staff continues: 'san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who'. The fourth staff concludes: 'comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.' The score ends with a double bar line.

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
san-na. 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.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

O God triune, how majestic
is your name in all the earth.
Over the eons your merciful might
evolved our home, a fragile tree of life.
Here by your wisdom
are both life and death,
growth and decay,
the nest and the hunt,
sunshine and storm,
darkness and light.
Sustained by these wonders,
we creatures of dust join in the ancient song:
The earth is full of your glory.
The earth is full of your glory.

O God triune, you took on our flesh in Jesus our healer.
In Christ you bring life from death;
we remember his cross,
we laud his resurrection.
Broken like bread, he enlivens our body.
Outpoured like wine, he fills the earth with goodness.
Receiving this mystery,
we mortals sing our song:
The earth is full of your glory.
The earth is full of your glory.

We praise you for the heart of Jesus,
so filled with your love for this earth.

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.

Gathered around this table,
we your children unite in this song:
The earth is full of your glory.

The earth is full of your glory.

O God triune, you create the worlds,
you uphold the living,
you embrace the dead.
Send forth your Spirit
and renew the face of the earth.
Strengthen us for our journey with this meal,
the body and blood of Christ.
Give us a future that trusts in you
and cares for your earth.
Empowered by your promises,
we rise from our deaths
to praise you again:
The earth is full of your glory.
The earth is full of your glory.

Amen, and amen.

Amen, and amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Let us pray with confidence in the words our Savior gave us:



Our Fa - ther in heav - en, hal - lowed be your name,
your king - dom come, your will be done, on earth as in heav - en.
Give us to - day our dai - ly bread. For - give us our sins as we
for-give those who sin a - gainst us. Save us from the time of tri - al
and de - liv - er us from e - vil. For the king - dom, the pow'r,
and the glo - ry are yours, now and for - ev - er. A - men.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to Christ's table, not because you are strong but because you are weak.
Come, not because of any goodness of your own but because you need mercy and help.

Come, not because you have all the answers but because you desire to ask the questions.

Come, because you love the Lord a little and would like to love him more.

Come, because he loves you and gave himself for you.

(We sit)

COMMUNION

All are welcome at the Lord's Table! After the invitation to communion, the ushers will direct each row to come forward. If, for any reason, you prefer not to receive communion, you are welcome to come forward to receive a blessing. If you are unable to come forward, signal an usher or raise your hand, and an assisting minister will bring the elements to you.

As you come forward, pick up a small cup from the table at the front and then receive the bread (wafer) from the minister. Gluten-free wafers are located on the table. If you require gluten-free, please take one and present it to the pastor for blessing.

Next, proceed to one of the two communion assistants. The first chalice has wine, and the second chalice has grape juice.

As the ministers give the bread and cup to you, they say these words:

"The body of Christ, given for you . . . The blood of Christ, shed for you."

You may say: "Amen."

After consuming the wine/juice, please put your cup on the tray along the side wall, and return to your seat via the side aisle. **If you don't wish to remove your mask up front**, you may choose to bring the elements back to your pew to eat/drink there.

DISTRIBUTION MUSIC ~ Lamb of God

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have

mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the

world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the

sin of the world; grant us peace.

(We stand)

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

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

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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 HYMN ~ *Chief of Sinners Though I Be*

~see next page~

Chief of Sinners Though I Be

1 Chief of sin - ners though I be, Je - sus shed his blood for me,
 2 Oh, the height of Je - sus' love! High - er than the heav'ns a - bove,
 3 On - ly Je - sus can im - part balm to heal the wound - ed heart,
 4 Chief of sin - ners though I be, Christ is all in all to me;
 5 O my Sav - ior, help af - ford by your Spir - it and your word!

died that I might live on high, lives that I might nev - er die.
 deep - er than the depths of sea, last - ing as e - ter - ni - ty.
 peace that flows from sin for - giv'n, joy that lifts the soul to heav'n,
 all my wants to him are known, all my sor - rows are his own.
 When my way - ward heart would stray, keep me in the nar - row way;

As the branch is to the vine, I am his, and he is mine.
 Love that found me—won - drous thought—found me when I sought him not.
 faith and hope to walk with God in the way that E - noch trod.
 He sus - tains the hid - den life safe with him from earth - ly strife.
 grace in time of need sup - ply while I live and when I die.

BLESSING

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

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

PARTICIPANTS IN THIS EVENING'S SERVICE

PREACHING MINISTER ~ Pastor Alex Zuber

PRESIDING MINISTER ~ Pastor Lauren Eanes

CRUCIFER ~ Bill Whitmire

LAY ASSISTING MINISTER ~ Mary Elizabeth Skinner

LECTOR ~ Mark Warner

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS ~ Mark Warner, Robert & Linda Alley, Bill Whitmire

USHERS/GREETERS ~ Susan Gallaher, Pam Bergey

SOUND TECH ~ Mark Byerly

INTERIM MUSIC MINISTER ~ Linlin Uta

ORGANIST ~ Judith Ofcarcik

MUSICIANS ~ Members of Sanctuary Choir & Celebration Singers

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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After worship, Pastor Lauren and Pastor Alex invite you to greet them and each other in the Gathering Area. You may take this worship booklet home or leave it in the basket at the sanctuary entrance for recycling.