

# ***ASH WEDNESDAY***

***A Service of Word & Sacrament with Imposition of Ashes  
March 5, 2025***



## **ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**85 E. Brandt Boulevard  
Landisville, PA**

**The Rev. Timothy Seitz-Brown, Pastor  
John Landis, Music Director**

***Connecting with God; Connecting with others; Connecting others with God***

# A LITURGY FOR ASH WEDNESDAY

*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.*

## PRELUDE

## GATHERING

P: The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

*Please stand if you are able.*

## SONG

### *Be Thou My Vision*

**ELW 793**

1. Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;  
Naught be all else to me, save that thou art:  
Thou my best thought both by day and by night,  
Waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.
2. Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word;  
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord.  
Thou my soul's shelter, and thou my high tow'r,  
Raise thou me heav'nward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.
3. Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise,  
Thou mine inheritance, now and always:  
Thou and thou only, the first in my heart,  
Great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.
4. Light of my soul, after victory won,  
May I reach heaven's joys, O heaven's Sun!  
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,  
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

Text: Irish, 8th cent.; vers. Eleanor H. Hull, 1860-1935,  
alt.; tr. Mary E. Byrne, 1880-1931

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism.*

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

C: **Amen.**

P: Let us return to God, confessing our sin in the assurance of God's abiding love.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P: Compassionate One,

C: **You are patient and full of unfailing love, but our lives don't always reflect who you are or the love you have for the world. We fail to show others the same kindness and mercy you have shown us. We do not welcome people with the same openhearted hospitality you offer to everyone. Instead, we harm others, even though you have freed us time and time again. We waste the many blessings of the earth. Change our hearts and lead us once more in the way of the cross. Amen.**

P: Beloved in Christ, God's arms are always stretched open wide to welcome the wandering ones home. In ✠ Christ your sins are forgiven. You have a place in God's house forever.

C: **Amen.**

## GREETING

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray. Almighty and eternal God, you love everything you have created and forgive all who turn to you with sincere hearts. Create in us new and honest hearts so that, truly repenting of our sins, we may receive your full mercy 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.**

*Please be seated.*

## † THE WORD †

### FIRST LESSON: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

*The fast that God chooses.*

A: <sup>1</sup> 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— <sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>12</sup> Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; <sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> 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?

<sup>15</sup> Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; <sup>16</sup> 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.

<sup>17</sup> 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?’”

### PSALM: Psalm 51:1-17

*Please read responsively.*

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

C: <sup>2</sup> **Wash me through and through from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sin.**

<sup>3</sup> For I know my offenses, and my sin is ever before me.

<sup>4</sup> **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.**

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

**<sup>6</sup>Indeed, you delight in truth deep within me, and would have me know wisdom deep within.**

<sup>7</sup>Remove my sins with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be purer than snow.

**<sup>8</sup>Let me hear joy and gladness; that the body you have broken may rejoice.**

<sup>9</sup>Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my wickedness.

**<sup>10</sup>Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.**

<sup>11</sup>Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

**<sup>12</sup>Restore to me the joy of your salvation and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.**

<sup>13</sup>Let me teach your ways to offenders, and sinners shall be restored to you.

**<sup>14</sup>Rescue me from bloodshed, O God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness.**

<sup>15</sup>O Lord, open my lips and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

**<sup>16</sup>For you take no delight in sacrifice, or I would give it. You are not pleased with burnt offering.**

<sup>17</sup>The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; a troubled and broken heart, O God, you will not despise.

## **SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 5:20b--6:10**

*Now is the day of salvation.*

A: <sup>20b</sup>We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup>For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. <sup>6:1</sup>As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. <sup>2</sup>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! <sup>3</sup>We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, <sup>4</sup>but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, <sup>5</sup>beatings, imprisonments, riots,

labors, sleepless nights, hunger; <sup>6</sup>by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, <sup>7</sup>truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; <sup>8</sup>in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; <sup>9</sup>as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; <sup>10</sup>as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

A: Word of God, word of life.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand if you are able.*

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**     *Change My Heart, Oh God*

**BB 59**

Change my heart, oh God. Make it ever true.

Change my heart, oh 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, oh God. Make it ever true.

Change my heart, oh God. May I be like You.

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

*The practice of faith.*

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter.

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

[Jesus said to the disciples:] <sup>1</sup>“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.

<sup>2</sup>“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. <sup>3</sup>But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, <sup>4</sup>so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

<sup>5</sup>“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. <sup>6</sup>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.

<sup>16</sup>“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. <sup>17</sup>But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup>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.

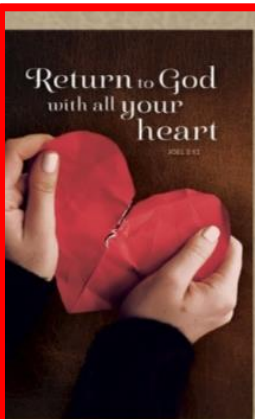
<sup>19</sup>“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; <sup>20</sup>but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup>For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

*Please be seated.*

## SERMON



**All people think about eating while fasting because hunger pains are present.**

**But fewer people think about fasting while eating.**

**--Scot McKnight**

*Please stand if you are able.*

1. Just as I am, without one plea,  
But that thy blood was shed for me,  
And that thou bid'st me come to thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.
2. Just as I am, though tossed about  
With many a conflict, many a doubt,  
Fightings and fears within, without,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.
3. Just as I am, thou wilt receive,  
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;  
Because thy promise I believe,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come,
4. Just as I am; thy love unknown  
Has broken ev'ry barrier down;  
Now to be thine, yea, thine alone,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

**INVITATION TO LENT**

P: Dear friends in Christ, today we join the whole church in beginning a season of remembering Jesus' journey from death to life. During this time, our life in Christ is renewed. We start this holy season by admitting our need for repentance and God's mercy.

God created us to experience joy in a relationship with him, to love one another, and to live in harmony with creation. But our sin separates us from God, our neighbors, and the world around us. Because of this, we do not fully experience the life God intended for us.

As followers of Jesus, we are called to a way of life that resists evil and turns us toward loving God and our neighbors. I invite you, therefore, to take on the discipline of Lent—examining your heart, turning away from sin, praying and fasting, giving generously, and doing acts of love. These practices are strengthened by God's word and the sacraments.

Let us walk together through these forty days, leading us to the great three days of Jesus' death and resurrection.



P: Almighty God, you created us from the dust of the earth. May these ashes remind us of our mortality and our need for repentance. We remember that only through the cross of Jesus Christ do we receive eternal life. Through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: **Amen.**

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

P: Complete in us, O God, the work of your salvation,

C: **so that we may reflect your glory in the world.**

P: By the cross and suffering of your Son, our Savior,

C: **bring us, along with all your saints, into the joy of his resurrection.**

P: Almighty God, have mercy on us. Forgive us all our sins through Jesus Christ our Lord. Strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, keep us in eternal life.

C: **Amen.**

*Please be seated.*

## **IMPOSITION OF ASHES**

*Those who wish to receive ashes are invited to come to the front of the sanctuary. The Pastor will apply ashes to your forehead or to the back of your hand if you prefer.*

## **SONG**

### ***Ashes***

#### ***Refrain***

I got ashes on my forehead,  
And I'm tryin' hard to learn.  
This dust that I have started from  
Is where I shall return,  
And I will follow out of love,  
'Cause there is nothing I can earn.  
I got ashes on my forehead,  
and I'm tryin' hard to learn.

1. Sometime in the dead of winter  
This Wednesday rolls around.  
We got purple on the altar;



We got snow upon the ground,  
And this world starts spinning slower,  
And we sing some quiet songs –  
Facing our mortality,  
and all that we done wrong. *Refrain*

2. Forty days in the wilderness,  
Forty days on the ark –  
Driving home this evening,  
I can still trace the mark.  
Everybody sees the big sun setting,  
Everybody rides the hearse.  
Yeah, but you can't build up nothin'  
'Til you knock down somethin' first. *Refrain*

*Please stand if you are able.*

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

A: Guided by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and all those in need.

*A moment of silence.*

God of our journey, as the season of Lent begins, we pray for the church. Lead your people in spiritual practices and prepare those who will be baptized. Strengthen faith communities in discipleship and witness so they may share the gospel with the world. God, in your mercy,

**C: receive our prayer.**

God of creation, we pray for the earth. Just as you once formed life from dust, bring healing and renewal to places where the environment is struggling. Sustain the natural cycles of life, death, and rebirth. God, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

God of the nations, bring an end to wars and occupations that leave communities in ruins. Turn leaders away from fear-based decisions and lead all people toward justice and compassion. God, in your mercy,  
**receive our prayer.**

God of the suffering, we lift up those who are in pain (especially...). Comfort those living with chronic or terminal illnesses, addictions, or anxiety. Be present with all who grieve and remind them that they are not alone. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God of community, we pray for those who care for the dying—first responders, health care workers, hospice staff, chaplains, and those who provide burial services. Give them strength as they serve others with dignity and compassion. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

*Additional prayers may be lifted up by the congregation and/or pastor.*

**P:** God of the cross, we give thanks for those who have completed their lives on earth and now rest in you. Strengthen us with the promise that even in the ashes of death, the seeds of resurrection life are growing. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Receive the prayers of your people and bring all things together in your love. We pray in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life.

**C:** **Amen.**

## **THE SHARING OF THE PEACE**

**P:** The peace of Christ be with you.

**C:** **And also with you.**

## **† THE MEAL †**

## **OFFERING PRAYER**

**A:** Let us pray. Gracious Provider, you set your immense treasures among us, opening your heart to the world. As we prepare to feast on your bountiful love, deepen our commitment to sharing those treasures with others, through our Savior, Jesus Christ.

**C:** **Amen.**

## **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

### *The Dialogue*

**P:** The Lord be with you.

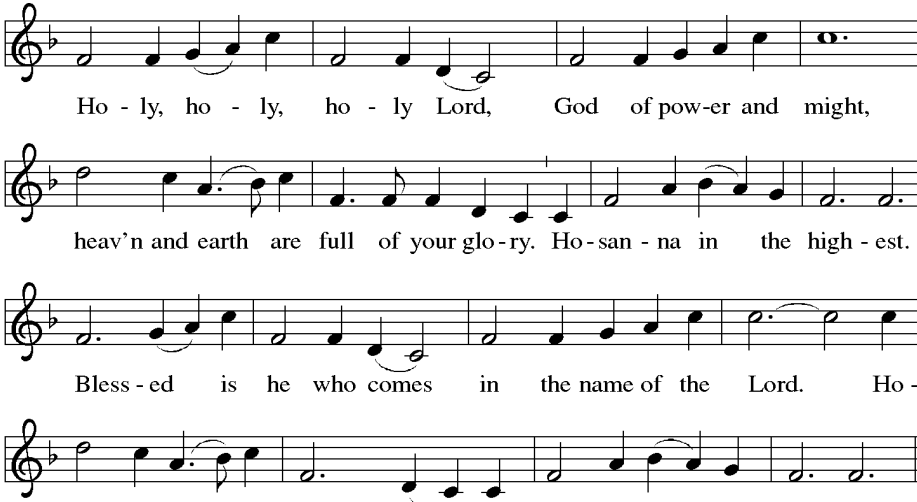
**C:** **And also with you.**

- 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.**

### *The Preface*

- P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that, renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

C:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,  
heav'n and earth are full of your glo-ry. 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, ho - san - na in the high - est.

### **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

- P: Holy God, mighty and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who on the cross opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: *Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this in 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 in remembrance of me.*

P: Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

P: We pray together.

C: **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: All who are hungry, come! The feast of grace is spread.

C: **Amen.**

*Please be seated.*

### PARTAKING IN THE BREAD AND CUP OF SALVATION

*All baptized Christians are welcome to partake of the Holy Sacrament by coming forward to receive the elements. Those who do not or choose not to partake of the sacrament may come forward and receive a blessing. If you are unable to come forward, please let one of the ushers know and the pastor will come to you.*

*For those not able to have red wine, there is grape juice in the outer circle of every tray. Gluten-free wafers are available upon request. When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers will say: "The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you," to which you may respond: "Amen."*

*Please use this time for quiet reflection or join in singing the communion hymn until all worshippers have communed and have returned to their seats.*

1. Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling,  
Calling for you and for me.  
See, on the portals he's waiting and watching,  
Watching for you and for me.

*Refrain*

- "Come home, (Come home,)  
Come home! (come home!)  
You who are weary, come home."  
Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,  
Calling, "O sinner, come home!"
2. Why should we tarry when Jesus is pleading,  
Pleading for you and for me?  
Why should we linger and heed not his mercies,  
Mercies for you and for me? *Refrain*
  3. Oh, for the wonderful love he has promised,  
promised for you and for me!  
Though we have sinned, he has mercy and pardon,  
Pardon for you and for me. *Refrain*

*Please stand if you are able.*

**POST-COMMUNION BLESSING**

- P: The body and blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in his grace.  
C: **Amen.**

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

- A: Let us pray. Generous Host, you have shared your feast with us and made us new. Send us now to set tables of love and grace in our communities, that your liberating love might nourish the world into freedom, in the name of the crucified one, Jesus Christ our Lord.  
C: **Amen.**

## BLESSING

P: God our tender parent, God the crucified one, God the reconciling Spirit, † bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

## MUSICAL BENEDICTION

*Abide with Me*

ELW 629

1. Abide with me, fast falls the eventide.  
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.  
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,  
Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me.
2. Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;  
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;  
Change and decay in all around I see;  
O thou who changest not, abide with me.
3. I need thy presence ev'ry passing hour;  
What but thy grace can foil the tempter's pow'r?  
Who like thyself my guide and stay can be?  
Through cloud and sunshine, oh, abide with me.
4. I fear no foe, with thee at hand to bless;  
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.  
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?  
I triumph still, if thou abide with me!
5. Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes,  
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;  
Heav'n's morning breaks,  
And earth's vain shadows flee;  
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

## DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace. Care for others as God cares for you.

C: Thanks be to God.

## POSTLUDE

# MID-WEEK HEALING SERVICES

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12 – 1:00 P.M.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19 – 6:00 P.M.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26 – 1:00 P.M.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2 – 6:00 P.M.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9 – 1:00 P.M.

## HOLY WEEK SERVICES

MAUNDY THURSDAY: APRIL 17 – 7:00 P.M.

GOOD FRIDAY: APRIL 18 – 7:00 P.M.

## EASTER SUNDAY WORSHIP

APRIL 20 – 9:00 A.M.

*\* Permission to stream the music in this service is obtained from CCLI Streaming License #20759899 and CCLI Copyright License #1932920, Augsburg Fortress Annual License #20570, and St. James Music Press Subscriber ID #17697. All rights reserved.*

*\* Liturgy for this service is reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Annual License #20570 from Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2023 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved*

*\* New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.*