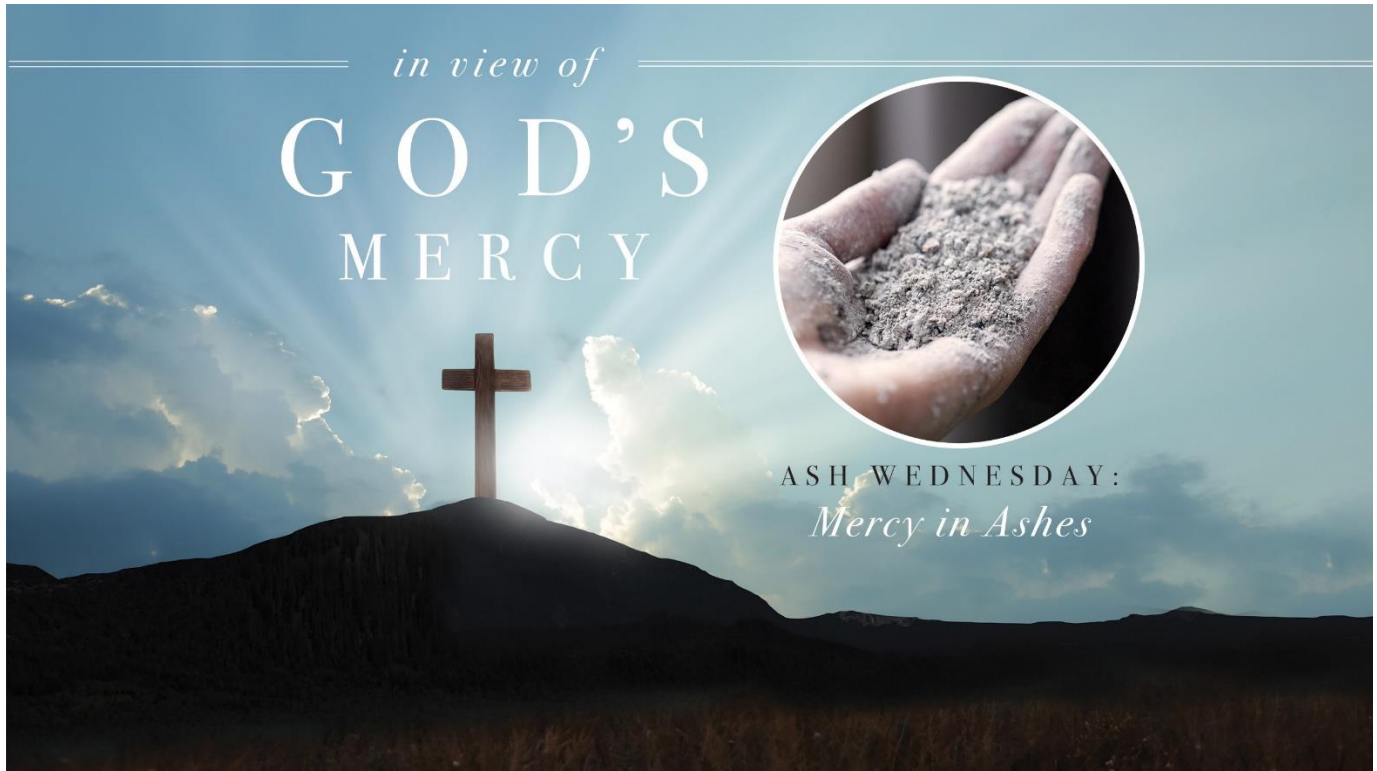


Ash Wednesday
February 22, 2023



Lord of Love Lutheran Church (ELCA)

10405 Fort St., Omaha, NE 68134

"Celebrating and sharing God's Love in a welcoming community of faith, while serving others"

Worship 7:00 p.m.

Bold type indicates Congregational responses

Introduction

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

Announcements

***Greeting**

P: The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

***Prayer of the Day**

P: Let us pray.

**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.**

Please be seated.

Chancel Choir "For a Moment" Craig Courtney

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

L: 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?'"

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

L: 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.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

***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.

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

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 6th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] “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.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon Rev. Becky Sells

Invitation to Lent

P: 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 communication 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

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

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.
Amen.**

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

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

Amen.

Those who desire, may come forward and have the sign of the cross placed upon your forehead in ashes as the following words are proclaimed to you: "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return."

Hymn: "Once We Sang and Danced" ELW 701

P: 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, assure us of your unending grace, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, keep us in eternal life.

Amen.

****Prayers of Intercession***

L: 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. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Renew your creation, O God. Bring rains to parched places, healing to places affected by natural disasters, and new life to grow upon the earth and in our lives. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

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, oppression, and persecution. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Renew your people, O God. Respond to those who cry out to you in secret or in seclusion. Equip us with compassion to care for those who experience homelessness, food insecurity, economic hardship, and illness, we especially pray for those on our prayer list and those we lift up to you in our hearts now.... Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Renew this congregation, O God. Inspire our faith formation ministries and those who teach and lead, especially Lori Vandeventer, Shelby Lamoureux, Brian and Deb Lund, Pastor Becky, Rex Quadhamer, and Brian Vandeventer. Invigorate us with lifelong curiosity and wonder as we grow as your disciples. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

O Lord, our God, we give thanks for all your faithful ones of every time and place. Renew us by the example of their lives of prayer and service, and at the last, bring us with them into your everlasting presence. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

Please be seated.

Offering

L: Our Lenten offerings are a way in which we give back to God out of what we've been given by God to love and care for our neighbors. As you consider giving in this way during Lent, you may drop a check in the offering plate or send to the church office with "Lenten offering" in the memo, or by give online at lord-of-love. Our Lenten offerings will go to support Lutheran Disaster Response and Heartland Family Service.

Hymn: "Just As I Am, without One Plea" ELW 592

***Offertory Prayer**

P: God of good gifts receive these and all our offerings as we present them in faithful service for the sake of your gospel. Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal as you pour out your presence through Christ Jesus the wellspring of eternal life.
Amen.

***The Great Thanksgiving**

P: The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

***Words of Institution**

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**

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Please be seated.

Communion Invitation

P: Come. Receive Jesus, our ever-present strength along the journey.

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, grant us peace.

Communion

*Post-Communion Prayer

P: 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.

Amen.

*Benediction

P: God the giver of love +Christ, the resurrection and the life, and the Holy Spirit of rebirth bless you in this Lenten journey.

Amen.

***Hymn: "My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less" ELW 597**

****Dismissal***

L: 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

Once We Sang and Danced

Text: Susan R. Briehl, b. 1952, based on Psalm 137

Music: KAS DZIEDĀJA, Latvian folk tune

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2023 Midweek Lenten Theme:

“In View of God’s Mercy”

Lent is a season when we take a look at our lives in view of God’s mercy toward us in the sacrifice of his Son for us on the cross. We, in turn, are called by God, especially during this time of repentance and reflection, to be living sacrifices for him, displaying our devotion to him in word and deed. Jesus helps us to see the richness of God’s mercy in his life, death and resurrection. Our midweek worship series for Lent by theology professor David Peter focus our eyes of faith on the meaning behind God’s mercy made manifest in Christ.

Ash Wednesday, February 22*: “Mercy in Ashes”

Wednesday, March 1*: “Mercy in Temptation”

Wednesday, March 8*: “Mercy in Suffering”

Wednesday, March 15*: “Mercy in Betrayal”

Wednesday, March 22*: “Mercy in Relationships”

Wednesday, March 29*: “Mercy in Service”

**All midweek services will be held at 7:00p.m.*

Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday, April 2nd at 9am, with palms available for waving

Maundy Thursday, April 6th at 7pm with Holy Communion

Good Friday, April 7th at 7pm

Easter, April 9: at 9am with a Youth Breakfast offered before and after

This is the poem sung by the choir, offered for your own contemplation:

For a Moment

by Pamela Martin and Isaac Watts

Like the ever widening circles of a pebble in a stream;
like the sound of fading footsteps, like the fragment of a dream;
like a raindrop in the desert, like the snowflake in the hand,
we are here but for a moment like the foam upon the sand.

Like the morning mist we vanish, like the closing of a door,
here today and gone tomorrow for a moment, nothing more.
All our searching for true meaning and our quest for happiness,
reach one final destination, nothing more and nothing less.

Like a frozen breath in winter for a moment in the air,
all we see is temporary, look away and nothing's there.
Like the blinking of an eyelash, like a half-remembered song,
dust to dust and ash to ashes, life on earth will soon be gone.

Time, like an ever rolling stream, bears all who breathe away,
they fly, forgotten, as a dream dies at the opening day.
O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
be Thou our guide while life shall last, and our eternal home.