

# *Ash Wednesday*

*February 14, 2024*



*Inspired by "Lent in Plain Sight," by Jill J. Duffield*

## **Ashes**

*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.**

### ***\*Call to Worship (Adapted from Psalm 51 by Laura Brekke via LiturgyLink)***

P: This is the season of Lent, a time when we recognize the ways we have moved away from God, a time when we look deeply into our lives and see the ways we have not lived faithfully. Lent is also a time of reorientation and renewal; a time of turning our hearts and minds back to God.

**Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love.**

God is a God of abundant mercy, who seeks reconciliation with wayward Creation.

**Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.**

God is a God who constantly reaches out to us, inviting us into love, inviting us into life.

**Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.**

The sacrifice which is pleasing to God is a contrite heart and a spirit of brokenness; let us turn to God humility and faith.

**God, you are merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. Wash away our guilt, heal our brokenness, and draw us ever closer to 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.*

Gathering Hymn: "Savior, When in Dust to You".....#601

1 Sav-ior, when in dust to you low we bow in hom-age due;  
 2 By your help-less in-fant years, by your life of want and tears,  
 3 By your hour of dire de-spair, by your ag-o-ny of prayer,  
 4 By your deep ex-pir-ing groan, by the sad se-pul-chral stone,

when, re-pen-tant, to the skies scarce we lift our weep-ing eyes;  
 by your days of deep dis-tress in the sav-age wil-der-ness,  
 by the cross, the nail, the thorn, pierc-ing spear, and tor-tur-ing scorn,  
 by the vault whose dark a-bode held in vain the ris-ing God,

oh, by all your pains and woe suf-fered once for us be-low,  
 by the dread, mys-te-rious hour of the in-sult-ing tempt-er's pow'r,  
 by the gloom that veiled the skies o'er the dread-ful sac-ri-fice,  
 oh, from earth to heav'n re-stored, might-y, re-as-cend-ed Lord,

bend-ing from your throne on high, hear our pen-i-ten-tial cry!  
 turn, oh, turn a fa-v'ring eye; hear our pen-i-ten-tial cry!  
 lis-ten to our hum-ble sigh; hear our pen-i-ten-tial cry!  
 bend-ing from your throne on high, hear our pen-i-ten-tial cry!

**First Reading: Isaiah 58: 1-12**

L: Shout out, do not hold back!

Lift up your voice like a trumpet!  
Announce to my people their rebellion,  
to the house of Jacob their sins.  
Yet day after day they seek me  
and delight to know my ways,  
as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness  
and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;  
they ask of me righteous judgments,  
they delight to draw near to God.

“Why do we fast, but you do not see?

Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?”  
Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day,  
and oppress all your workers.

Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight  
and to strike with a wicked fist.

Such fasting as you do today  
will not make your voice heard on high.

Is such the fast that I choose,  
a day to humble oneself?

Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush,  
and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?

Will you call this a fast,  
a day acceptable to the Lord?

Is not this the fast that I choose:  
to loose the bonds of injustice,  
to undo the thongs of the yoke,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
and to break every yoke?

Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,  
and bring the homeless poor into your house;  
when you see the naked, to cover them,  
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,  
and your healing shall spring up quickly;  
your vindicator shall go before you,  
the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.

Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;  
you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

If you remove the yoke from among you,  
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,  
if you offer your food to the hungry  
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,  
then your light shall rise in the darkness  
and your gloom be like the noonday.  
The Lord will guide you continually,  
and satisfy your needs in parched places,  
and make your bones strong;  
and you shall be like a watered garden,  
like a spring of water,  
whose waters never fail.  
Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;  
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;  
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,  
the restorer of streets to live in.

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,

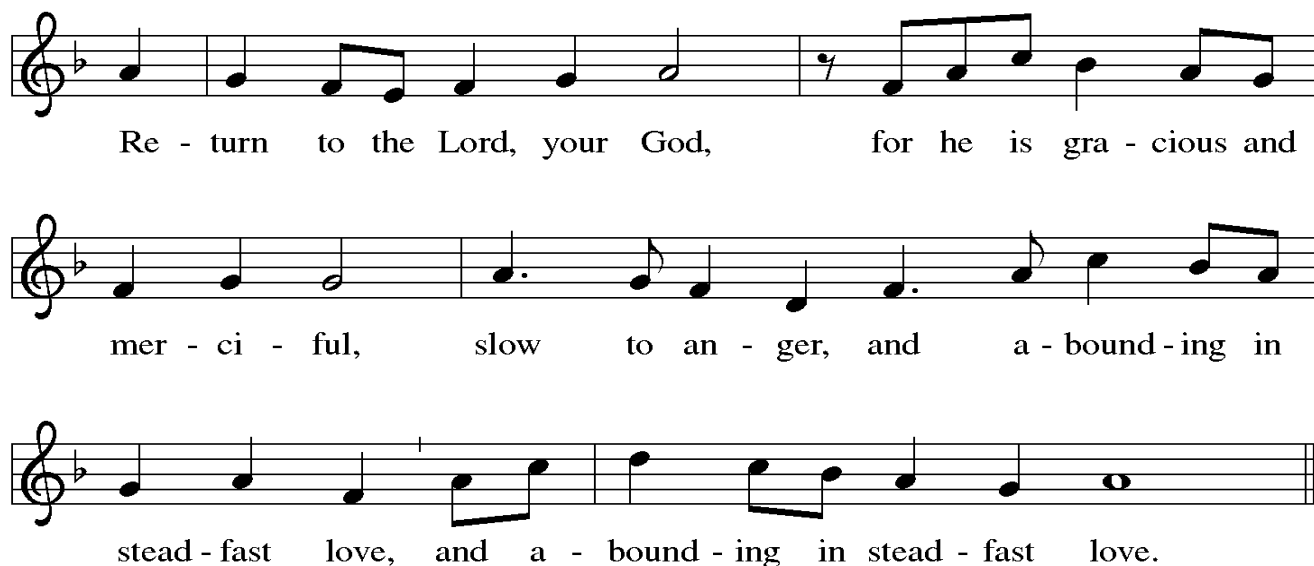
“At an acceptable time I have listened to you,  
and on a day of salvation I have helped you.”

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

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

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

Hymn: "All Things of Dust to Dust Return" ..... ACS 920

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.

## ***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 (Wording by Kathleen Sheets via LiturgyLink)*

P:At the very beginning,

God scooped up the dust of the earth and molded it into human beings,  
breathing divine breath into those creatures of dust.

Over time though, we dust creatures have forgotten who we are and whose we are.

We believed a serpent in the Garden of Eden who said we could become like God.

We believed that the gold calf Aaron made could guide us in the wilderness.

We believed the builders of Babel who thought by our own hands we could be greater than God.

We have covered up with leaves and clothes.

We have stopped taking time to walk with God in the gardens of the world God created.

But God does not stop finding ways to meet us.

God spoke through a burning bush, a whisper, a cloud pillar, the laws given to Moses, and then ultimately through Jesus Christ.

By living a perfect sinless life,

Jesus exposed our lies of self-sufficiency.

Our sinful pride is brought into the light.

Our dusty nature is right there on the surface.

Come forward to reclaim the dust with which you were formed.

Come forward to recognize your need for the God who created you

and for the Savior who desires to wash you clean.

During the hymn, you may come forward and have the sign of the cross placed upon your forehead in ashes reminding you to: **“Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.”**

**Imposition of Ashes Hymn: “Just As I Am, Without One Plea”.....ELW 592**

1 Just as I am, with - out one plea, but that thy blood was  
2 Just as I am, though tossed a - bout with man - y a con - flict,  
3 Just as I am, thou wilt re - ceive, wilt wel - come, par - don,  
4 Just as I am; thy love un - known has bro - ken ev - 'ry

shed for me, and that thou bidd'st me come to thee,  
man - y a doubt, fight - ings and fears with - in, with - out,  
cleanse, re - lieve; be - cause thy prom - ise I be - lieve,  
bar - rier down; now to be thine, yea, thine a - lone,

O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

The musical score is written in G minor (one flat) and 4/4 time. It consists of three systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are aligned with the notes. The first system contains the first four lines of the hymn. The second system contains the next four lines. The third system contains the final line of the hymn and ends with a double bar line.

**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.**

*Please stand*

**\*Prayers of Intercession**

L: Trusting in God's promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need.

*A brief silence.*

You call us to return to you, steadfast God. Renew a right spirit within the church and cleanse the hearts of your people. Strengthen those who proclaim your gospel in word and deed. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You sustain your creation, generous God. Supply all that is needful for life to flourish. Protect endangered species and fragile habitats. Teach us to live lightly upon the earth and to honor it as our home. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You seek justice and peace, righteous God. Rebuild cities and homelands devastated by war. Provide welcome, help, and safety to refugees. Prosper negotiations that lead to lasting peace among the nations. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You care for all people, loving God. Heal any who are scarred by violence, addiction, or trauma of any kind. Comfort those who grieve and bring relief to any in pain. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You gather this assembly, abiding God. Unite us in serving our neighbors and working for justice. We pray for caregivers and people who are hospitalized, in treatment, or recovering from illness, and especially those on our prayer list and the names we lift up to you in our hearts now... Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You redeem us from death, faithful God. We give thanks for those who served you in heart, mind, strength and soul to witness to the gospel. Bring us with all the saints into everlasting joy. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Accompany us on our journey, God of grace, and receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

**Amen.**

*Please be seated.*

## ***Offering***

All our special Lenten offerings will be split 50/50 to support the missions of Foodbank for the Heartland and Lutheran Disaster Response.

***Choir Offertory: "Agnus Dei"***

Mark Hayes

### ***\*Offertory Prayer***

P: Jesus, you are the bread of life and the host of this meal.

Bless these gifts that we have gathered that all people may know your goodness.

Feed us not only with this holy food but with hunger for justice and peace.

We pray this in your name.

**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.

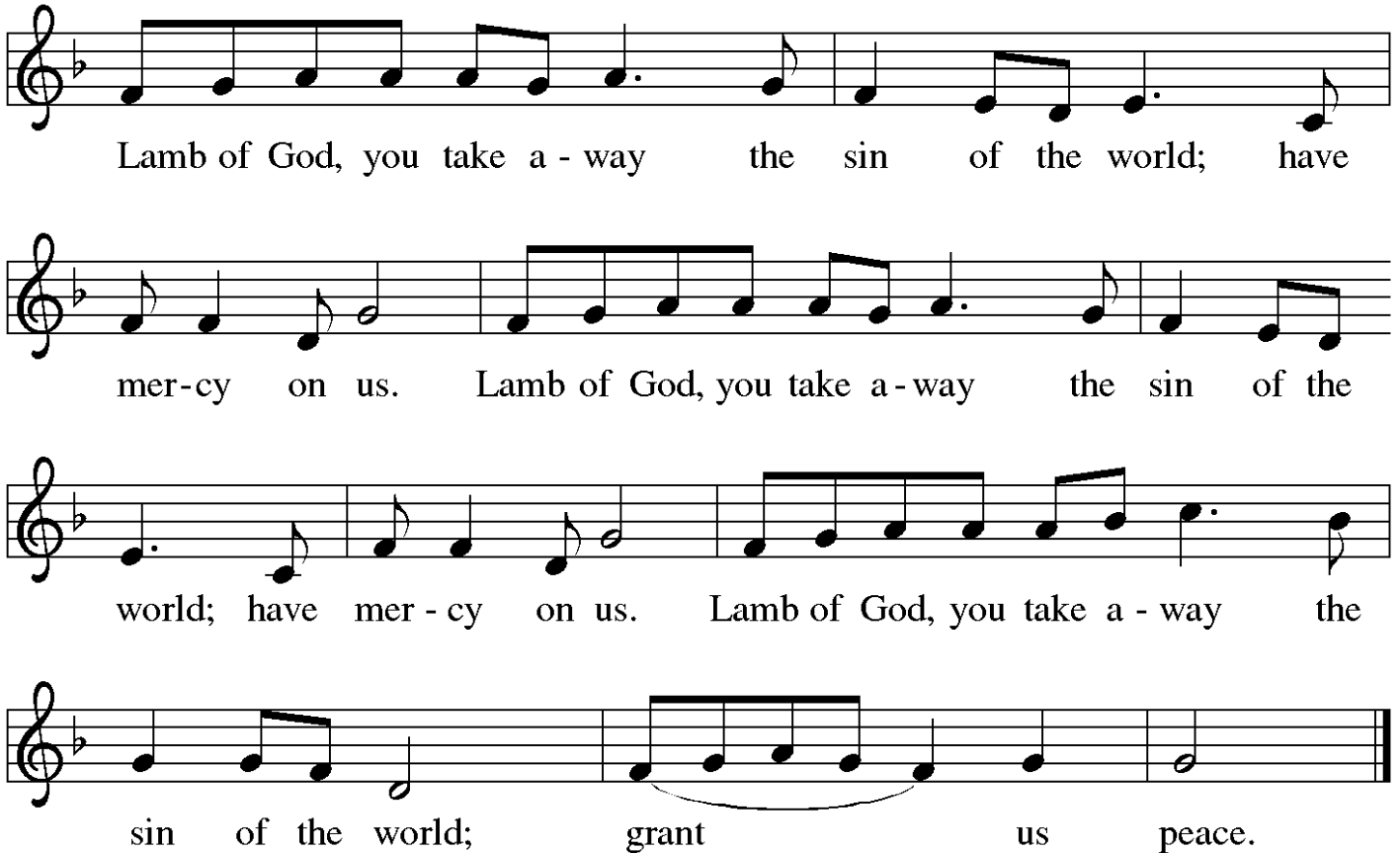
**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are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

*Please be seated.*

## **Communion Invitation**

P: Bread for the journey. A feast for hungry hearts. Come! All are welcome.

## **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.

## **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 on your Lenten journey.

**Amen.**

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

1 My hope is built on nothing less than  
 2 When dark - ness veils his love - ly face, I  
 3 His oath, his cov - e - nant, his blood sus -  
 4 When he shall come with trum - pet sound, oh,

Je - sus' blood and righ - teous - ness; no mer - it of my  
 rest on his un - chang - ing grace; in ev - 'ry high and  
 tain me in the rag - ing flood; when all sup - ports are  
 may I then in him be found, clothed in his righ - teous -

own I claim, but whol - ly lean on Je - sus' name.  
 storm - y gale my an - chor holds with - in the veil.  
 washed a - way, he then is all my hope and stay.  
 ness a - lone, re - deemed to stand be - fore the throne!

*Refrain*

On Christ, the sol - id rock, I stand; all oth - er ground is sink - ing sand.

### ***\*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***

#### **All Things of Dust to Dust Return**

Text: Thomas H. Troeger, b. 1945

Music: THIRD MODE MELODY, Thomas Tallis, 1505–1585

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## 2024 Midweek Lenten Theme: “*Lent in Plain Sight*”

*Each week we will focus on one object through which God’s presence is being made known to us in scripture and daily life and encourage us to be open to recognizing God’s presence with us in both the extraordinary and the mundane and ordinary. And as we uncover God in especially the ordinary, we will contemplate our calling to not only know and see God with us, but be able to proclaim to other that the kingdom of God is not only near, but present all around us.*

*\*Ash Wednesday, February 14: Ashes*

*\*Wednesday, February 21: Bread*

*\*Wednesday, February 28: Cross*

*\*Wednesday, March 6: Coins*

*\*Wednesday, March 13: Shoes*

*\*Wednesday, March 20: Oil*

*\*All Wednesday worship services will begin with a free-will supper from 5:30-6:30pm*

### Holy Week Schedule

*Palm Sunday, March 24th at 9am, with palms available for all, with Holy Communion*

*Maundy Thursday, March 28th at 7pm with Holy Communion*

*Good Friday, March 29th at 7pm*

*Easter, March 31st at 9am with Holy Communion*

*\*A Free-will Youth Continental Breakfast will be provided on Easter before worship from 8:15-8:50am, and after from about 10ish-10:30am*

*During Lent, we encourage you to read along through the book/devotional, “Lent In Plain Sight,” by Jill J Duffield. Pastor Becky has a few of these books available for \$10 a piece if you’d like to get one from the narthex, or you are free to look it up and get your own copy via the library, amazon or your favorite electronic book platform. The adult forums on Sunday will be a time to ponder/reflect together about the object(s) we have been reflecting on each week.*

*During Lent, you are invited to spend some time in prayer stations around the church to connect with God. If the church is open, you are free to visit them, or call ahead, to see if the church is open at 402-492-2946. There will be a labyrinth to walk with a different object to focus each week. There will be a coloring station for you to take home or color at church as a way of slowing down and focusing on God’s presence with you right now. And another prayer station that will invite you to sit bathed in the light of candle to focus and pray.*