

February 14, 2024

Ash Wednesday



Christ's Lutheran Church
700 East Pennsylvania Avenue
Oreland, Pennsylvania

*Christ's Evangelical Lutheran Church
connects individuals to God, each other, and the community.*

Welcome to Worship at Christ's Lutheran Church!

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.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

Prelude

The Welcome and Announcements

Please stand in body or spirit.

The Greeting

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

The Prayer of the Day

Almighty and ever-living God, you hate nothing you have made, and you forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and honest hearts, so that, truly repenting of our sins, we may receive from you, the God of all mercy, full pardon 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.

Amen.

Please be seated.

THE WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song

First Reading

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

A reading from Joel, chapter 2.

¹Blow 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—
²a 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.

¹²Yet even now, says the Lord,
 return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
 ¹³rend 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.
¹⁴Who 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?

¹⁵Blow the trumpet in Zion;
 sanctify a fast;
call a solemn assembly;
 ¹⁶gather 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.

17 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.

Psalm 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.

Text: Charlotte Elliott, 1789–1871
 Music: WOODWORTH, William B. Bradbury, 1816–1868

A reading from Second Corinthians, chapters 5 and 6.

^{20b}We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

^{6:1}As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. ²For 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! ³We are putting no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, ⁴but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, ⁵beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; ⁶by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, ⁷truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; ⁸in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; ⁹as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; ¹⁰as 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.

Please stand in body or spirit.

Gospel Acclamation

Return to the Lord



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.

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹“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.

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

⁵“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. ⁶But 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.

¹⁶“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. ¹⁷But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸so 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.

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

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

The Message

Pastor Axel Kaegler

Please stand in body or spirit.

Hymn of the Day

Restore in Us, O God ELW # 328



- 1 Re - store in us, O God, the splen - dor of your love; re -
- 2 O Spir - it, wake in us the won - der of your pow'r; from
- 3 Bring us, O Christ, to share the full - ness of your joy; bap -
- 4 Three - per - soned God, ful - fill the prom - ise of your grace, that



new your im - age in our hearts, and all our sins re - move.
fruit - less fear un - furl our lives like spring - time bud and flow'r.
tize us in the ris - en life that death can - not de - stroy.
we, when all our search - ing ends, may see you face to face.

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.

Please be seated.

The Offering

Musical Offering “Cast Thy Burden Upon the Lord” Mendelssohn

Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee:
He never will suffer the righteous to fall; he is at thy right hand.
Thy mercy, Lord is great and far above the heav'ns.
Let none be made ashamed that wait upon Thee.

Response to the Choir: During Lent, many of our musical pieces are going to be meditative and contemplative - and we think applause might detract from that feeling, or be received as a “thank you,” to the choir as opposed to sharing their praise and prayers to God. As you feel inspired by the choir’s music, we’re encouraging you to respond this season with “Amen, amen!” After the song has ended.

Offertory

Create in Me a Clean Heart WOV # 732



Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right



spir-it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your pres-ence, and



take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store un - to me the



joy of your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

Confession of Sin

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

Please sit or kneel.

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

*Those who desire to receive the imposition of ashes
May come forward by the center aisle
and return to their seat by the side aisle.*

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

Musical Interlude

When everyone has returned to their seats.

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.**

Prayers of Intercession

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. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You redeem us from death, faithful God. We give thanks for those who served you in the church. 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.

Offering Prayer

Let us pray.

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.

Great Thanksgiving

Dialogue

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.

Preface and Thanksgiving

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.

Words of Institution

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 testament in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

O God of resurrection and new life: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us
and on these gifts of bread and wine. Bless this feast.
Grace our table with your presence.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

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.

Invitation to Communion

Bread for the journey.
A feast for hungry hearts. Come!

*All baptized Christians are welcome at the table of our Lord.
Lutherans believe that Christ is truly present in,
with, and under the bread and wine.*

*Those who do not wish to receive communion
may come forward for a blessing.*

*Please come forward using the center aisle and
returning by the side aisle.*

*Communion will be continuous.
We invite you to receive first the bread and then the wine.*

Please stand.

Post Communion Blessing

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

Amen.

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray.

Generous God,
at this table we have tasted your immeasurable grace.
As grains of wheat are gathered into one bread,
now make us one loaf to feed the world;
in the name of Jesus, the Bread of life.

Amen.

Blessing

we are God's own people, holy, washed, renewed.
God bless you and keep you, shower you with mercy,
fill you with courage, and † give you peace.

Amen.

The Sending Song

Bless Now, O God the Journey

ELW # 326



1 Bless now, O God, the jour - ney that all your peo - ple make,
2 Bless so - journ-ers and pil - grims who share this wind-ing way;
3 Di - vine e - ter - nal lov - er, you meet us on the road.



the path through noise and si - lence, the way of give and take.
your hope burns through the ter - rors, your love sus-tains the day.
We wait for lands of prom - ise where milk and hon-ey flow,



The trail is found in des - ert and winds the moun-tain round,
We yearn for ho - ly free - dom while of - ten we are bound;
but wait-ing not for plac - es, you meet us all a - round.



then leads be-side still wa - ters, the road where faith is found.
to - geth-er we are seek - ing the road where faith is found.
Our cov - e - nant is writ - ten on roads, as faith is found.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Share your bread.

Thanks be to God.

Mid-week Lenten Services

Please join us every Wednesday during Lent at 7:00 pm in the chapel for the Holden Evening Prayer.

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Communion Assistant	Kathy Steen
Soundboard	Diane Polis
Livestream	Rick Daniels, Don Hallman, John Melnick, Paul Zieger