



Encouraging and strengthening faith in Jesus, and sharing the joy of God's love.

February 26, 2020

Ash Wednesday

12:15pm & 7:00pm

The Rev. Robert G. Schaefer, Pastor

Ash Wednesday Liturgy

INTRODUCTION to Ash Wednesday and Lent

Lent begins with a solemn call to fasting and repentance as we begin our journey to the baptismal waters of Easter. The vestments and paraments are purple—the color of penitence. As we hear in today's readings, now is the acceptable time to return to the Lord. During Lent the people of God will reflect on the meaning of their baptism into Christ's death and resurrection. The sign of ashes suggests our human mortality and frailty. This day the ashes can be understood as a penitential substitute for water as a sign of baptism. The ashes suggest our human morality and how fragile life can be. What seems like an ending is really an invitation to make each day a new beginning, in which we are washed in God's mercy and forgiveness. With the cross on our brow, we long for the spiritual renewal that flows from the springtime Easter feast to come.



Gathering

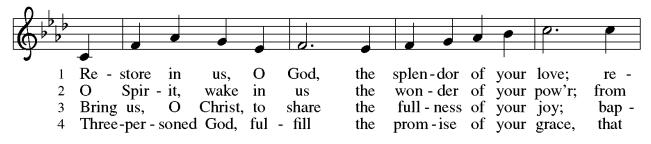
The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

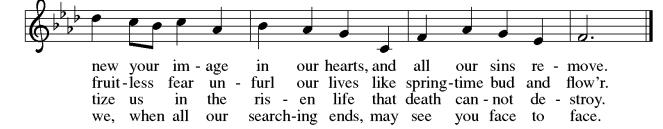
The assembly stands to sing, turning to the altar as the cross passes by.

(7:00 only) GATHERING SONG:

Restore in Us, O God

ELW #328





Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944

Music: BAYLOR, Hal H. Hopson, b. 1933

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GREETING:

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept, then the presiding minister leads the prayer.

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.

C: Amen.

The assembly sits.



Word

God speaks to us in scripture reading and song.

FIRST READING: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

A reading from Joel.

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?

 15 Blow 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.

17Between 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?'"

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 51:1-17

¹Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; in your great compassion blot out my offenses.

²Wash me through and through from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sin.

³For I know my offenses, and my sin is ever before me.

⁴Against 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.

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

⁶Indeed, 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 purer than snow.

⁸Let me hear joy and gladness;

that the body you have broken may rejoice.

 $^9\mbox{Hide}$ your face from my sins, and blot out all my wickedness.

¹⁰Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

¹¹Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

¹²Restore to me the joy of your salvation and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.

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

¹⁴Rescue me from bloodshed, O God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness.

 $^{\rm 15}{\rm O}$ Lord, o- pen my lips, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

 $^{16}\mbox{For you take no delight in sacrifice, or I would give it.}$

You are not pleased with burnt offering.

¹⁷The 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

A reading from second Corinthians

 20b We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21 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. 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,

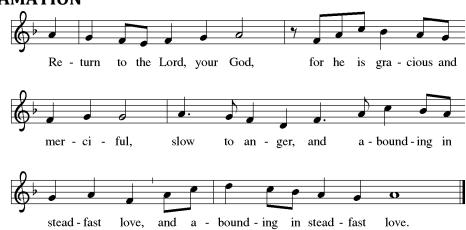
L: The word of the Lord.

and yet possessing everything.

C: Thanks be to God.

After a brief silence, the assembly stands to welcome the gospel.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



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

P: The Holy Gospel, according to Matthew.

C: 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 vou.

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."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

The Rev. Robert G. Schaefer

(7:00pm only) HYMN OF THE DAY Great God, Your Love Has Called Us **ELW #358**



Text: Brian A. Wren, b. 1936

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INVITATION TO LENT

The assembly is seated. The presiding minister invites the assembly into the discipline of Lent.

CONFESSION OF SIN

P: 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

The presiding minister says prayer to bless the ashes.

Almighty God, ...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.

Silence may be kept. After those who desire ashes have received them, all may kneel or sit, and the minister continues.

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.

The presiding minister addresses the assembly.

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.

The assembly stands for The Prayers.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A: Renewed in the promises of baptism, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

After each petition of the prayer is said:

A: Hear us O God,

C: Your mercy is great.

P: Reveal your will as you receive our prayers, and conform our ways to your ways; through the saving work of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PEACE

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

After all have greeted each other the assembly is seated.

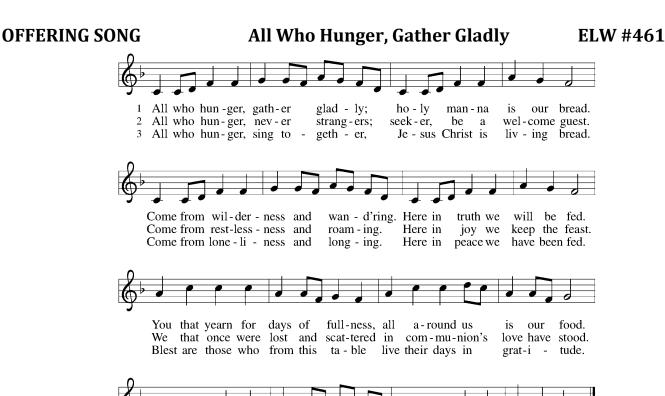


MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

The assembly stands.



grace e - ter - nal.

grace e - ter - nal.

grace e - ter - nal.

Taste and see that God is good.

Taste and see that God is good.

Taste and see that God is good.

Text: Sylvia G. Dunstan, 1955-1993

Taste and

Taste and

see the

see the

Music: HOLY MANNA, W. Moore, Columbian Harmony, 1825
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Taste and see the

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OFFERING PRAYER

A: Let us pray. God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Iesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

The presiding minister continues to give thanks:

Blessed are you, O God of the universe....With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's passover from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

O God of resurrection and new life...Bless this feast. Grace our table with your presence.

Come, Holy Spirit.

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread....Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.

Come, Holy Spirit.

... we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever.

Amen

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

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.

Communion

P: Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Christ has prepared the feast. Come to the table where all are welcomed home.

The bread is broken for the communion. The assembly is seated.

All baptized Christians are invited to participate in the celebration of holy communion. If you desire baptism, the pastor would love to speak with you! Those who are not baptized and children not yet communing may come forward for a blessing, please cross your arms on your chest if you desire a blessing.

At St. Stephen we receive Holy Communion by receiving the bread and then **either drinking directly from the cup or by intinction**: That means that you may receive the bread in your hand and then dip bread in the wine.)

Gluten free bread is available on the right side. (please ask)

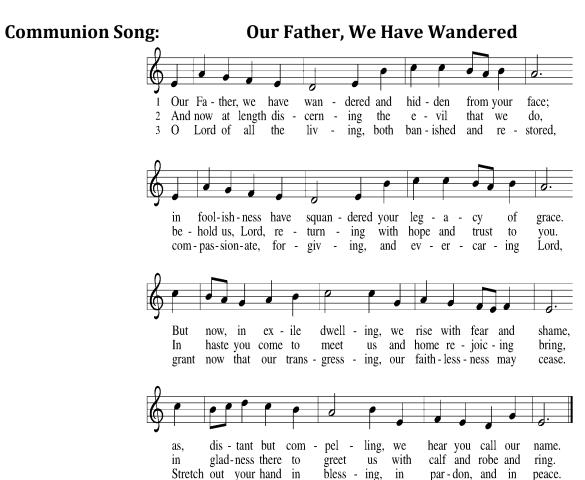
Alcohol free wine is available on the right side. (please ask)

The body of Christ, given for you. *Response:* **Amen.** The blood of Christ, shed for you. *Response:* **Amen.**

Lamb of God



ELW #606



Text: Kevin Nichols, 1929-2006

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Additional Communion songs are sung as needed

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A: Let us pray.

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. **Amen.**



God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

P: Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.



Text: David Haas, b. 1957
Music: YOU ARE MINE, David Haas
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DISMISSAL

A: 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.

C: Thanks be to God.