FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Return unto the Lord, Your God

Three themes converge on Ash Wednesday: mortality, mourning, and repentance. We "remember that we are dust, and to dust we shall return." We might mourn for our dead, or even for Christ Jesus who soon goes to the scaffold, except that He has told us to "weep for ourselves." Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Lenten fast, which is not a health directive for self-improvement but a decidedly penitential act. While our Lord after His Baptism wrestled against the devil and the world, we after our baptisms also must wrestle against our own sinful flesh. With all of these in mind, the forty days of Lent begin with the fitting prophetic call: "Return unto the Lord, Your God." "Who knows whether He will not turn and relent?" We know. "He is the Lord gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love." Christ's words require all hearts to believe.

The Lord's Supper is a confession that we are united in holding to all the doctrines of God's Word. Those who do not know and hold to the doctrinal commitment of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod are requested to attend the Adult Instruction Class for membership before communing at Faith Lutheran Church.

Due to the solemn character of the day, pre-service music and a hymn of invocation are omitted. All enter in silence.

Ash Wednesday

March 5, 2025

For you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

Genesis 3:19b



Stand

P Dear brothers and sisters of our Lord Jesus Christ, on this day the Church begins a holy season of prayerful and penitential reflection. Our attention is especially directed to the holy sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

From ancient times the season of Lent has been kept as a time of special devotion, self-denial, and humble repentance born of a faithful heart that dwells confidently on His Word and draws from it life and hope.

Let us pray that our dear Father in heaven, for the sake of His beloved Son and in the power of His Holy Spirit, might richly bless this Lententide for us so that we may come to Easter with glad hearts and keep the feast in sincerity and truth.

Silence for reflection.

The Litany

- P O Lord,
- C have mercy.
- P O Christ,
- C have mercy.
- P O Lord,
- C have mercy.

- P O Christ.
- C hear us.
- **P** God the Father in heaven,
- C have mercy.
- **P** God the Son, Redeemer of the world,
- **C** have mercy.
- **P** God the Holy Spirit,
- C have mercy.
- **P** Be gracious to us.
- C Spare us, good Lord.
- P Be gracious to us.
- C Help us, good Lord.
- **P** From all sin, from all error, from all evil;

From the crafts and assaults of the devil; from sudden and evil death;

From pestilence and famine; from war and bloodshed; from sedition and from rebellion;

From lightning and tempest; from all calamity by fire and water; and from everlasting death:

- **C** Good Lord, deliver us.
- **P** By the mystery of Your holy incarnation;
 - by Your holy nativity;
 - by Your baptism, fasting, and temptation;
 - by Your agony and bloody sweat;
 - by Your cross and passion;
 - by Your precious death and burial;
 - by Your glorious resurrection and ascension;

and by the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter:

- C Help us, good Lord.
- **P** In all time of our tribulation;

in all time of our prosperity;

in the hour of death;

and in the day of judgment:

- C Help us, good Lord.
- **P** We poor sinners implore You
- C to hear us, O Lord.
- L To rule and govern Your holy Christian Church; to preserve all pastors and ministers of Your Church in the true knowledge and understanding of Your wholesome Word and to sustain them in holy living;

To put an end to all schisms and causes of offense; to bring into the way of truth all who have erred and are deceived;

To beat down Satan under our feet; to send faithful laborers into Your harvest; and to accompany Your Word with Your grace and Spirit:

- **C** We implore You to hear us, good Lord.
- **P** To draw all to Yourself;

to bless those who are instructed in the faith;

to watch over and console the poor, the sick, the distressed, the lonely, the forsaken, the abandoned, and all who stand in need of our prayers;

to give abundant blessing to all works of mercy;

and to have mercy on us all:

- **©** We implore You to hear us, good Lord.
- **P** To turn our hearts to You;

to turn the hearts of our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers;

and graciously to hear our prayers:

- **©** We implore You to hear us, good Lord.
- P Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,
- **C** we implore You to hear us.
- P Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,
- **C** have mercy.
- P Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,
- C have mercy.

- P Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,
- **C** grant us Your peace.
- P O Christ.
- C hear us.
- P O Lord,
- **C** have mercy.
- P O Christ,
- **C** have mercy.
- **P** O Lord,
- C have mercy. Amen.
- P O God, You desire not the death of sinners, but rather that they turn from their wickedness and live. We implore You to have compassion on the frailty of our mortal nature, for we acknowledge that we are dust and to dust we shall return. Bless these ashes that they may serve as a reminder of the frailty of our flesh and our need for Your mercy. Mercifully pardon our sins that we may obtain the promises You have laid up for those who are repentant; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C Amen.

Sit

Imposition of Ashes

(Ashes are a sign of mortality and death. If you do not wish to receive ashes, then cross yourself with your arms or remain in the pew.)

Stand

Corporate Confession and Absolution

LSB pg 290

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

- **P** In the name of the Father and of the

 → Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C Amen.
- **P** I will go to the altar of God,
- **C** to God my exceeding joy.
- **P** Our help is in the name of the Lord,
- **C** who made heaven and earth.

(Confessional Address) LSB pg 290

- P Beloved in the Lord,...May the almighty and merciful God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by His Holy Spirit, accomplish this in us.
- C Amen.
- P O Almighty God, merciful Father,
- I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.
- **P** God be merciful to you and strengthen your faith.
- C Amen.
- **P** Do you believe that the forgiveness I speak is not my forgiveness but God's?
- C Yes.
- **P** Let it be done for you as you believe.

- **P** In the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ⅓ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C Amen.

Introit

Psalm 57:1–3a, c; antiphon: Liturgical Text



- You have mercy on | all, O Lord,* and abhor nothing | you have made.
- You look past the sins of men that they | may repent.*
 You spare them all because you are our | Lord, our God.
- P Be merciful to me, O God, be merci- | ful to me,* for in you my soul takes | refuge;
- in the shadow of your wings I will take | refuge,* till the storms of destruction | pass by.
- P I cry out to | God Most High,*
 to God who fulfills his pur- | pose for me.
- He will send from heaven and | save me.*

 God will send out his steadfast love and his | faithfulness!
- Glory be to the Father and | to the Son* and to the Holy | Spirit; as it was in the be- | ginning,* is now, and will be forever. | Amen.
- P You have mercy on | all, O Lord,* and abhor nothing | you have made.
- You look past the sins of men that they | may repent.*
 You spare them all because you are our | Lord, our God.

Salutation and Collect of the Day

- **P** The Lord be with you.
- **C** And with thy spirit.
- **P** Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, You despise nothing You have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and contrite hearts that lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness we may receive from You full pardon and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Sit

Old Testament Reading

Joel 2:12-19

¹²"Yet even now," declares the LORD,

"return to me with all your heart,

with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;

¹³and rend your hearts and not your garments."

Return to the LORD, your God,

for he is gracious and merciful,

slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love;

and he relents over disaster.

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; consecrate a fast; call a solemn assembly; ¹⁶gather the people. Consecrate the congregation; assemble the elders; gather the children, even nursing infants. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her chamber. ¹⁷Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep and say, "Spare your people, O LORD, and make not your heritage a reproach, a byword among the nations. Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'"

¹⁸Then the LORD became jealous for his land and had pity on his people.

¹⁹The LORD answered and said to his people, "Behold, I am sending to you grain, wine, and oil, and you will be satisfied; and I will no more make you a reproach among the nations."

- **A** This is the Word of the Lord.
- C Thanks be to God.

Gradual Psalm 57:1a, 3a

- P Be merciful to me, O God, be merci- | ful to me,* for in you my soul takes | refuge.
- He will send from heaven and | save me;*
 he will put to shame him who tramples | on me.

Epistle 2 *Peter 1:2–11*

²May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

³His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, ⁴by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. ⁵For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, ⁶and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, ⁷and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. ⁸For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. ¹⁰Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. ¹¹For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

- **A** This is the Word of the Lord.
- **C** Thanks be to God.

Tract Psalm 103:10; 79:8a, 9a

He does not deal with us according | to our sins,*
nor repay us according to our in- | iquities.

Do not remember against us our former in- | iquities;*
let your compassion come speedily to | meet us.

Help us, O God of our sal- | vation,*
for the glory | of your name.

Stand

Holy Gospel *Matthew 6:1–6, 16–21*

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the sixth chapter.

C Glory be to Thee, O Lord.

¹[Jesus said:] "Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

²"Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ³But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

5"And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ⁶But when 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 when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ¹⁷But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, ¹⁸that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

¹⁹"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

- **P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.
- C Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

Nicene Creed

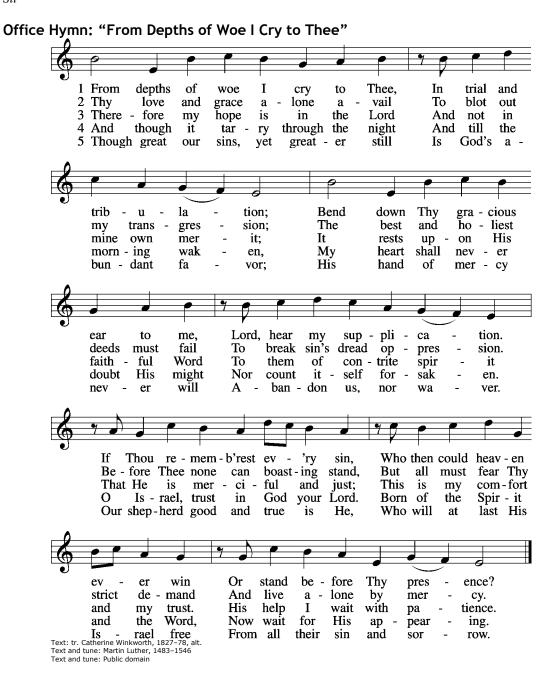
I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man: and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

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And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life + of the world to come. Amen.
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LSB 607

Sit



Sermon

Stand



and up - hold me with

Sit

Offering

Stand

Prayer of the Church

(after each portion of the prayer)

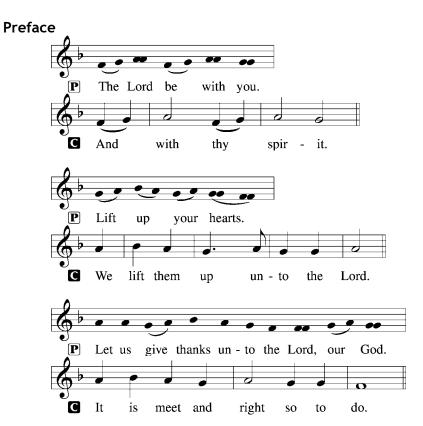
- **P** Lord, in Your mercy,
- **C** hear our prayer.

tion,

Service of the Sacrament

Thy free spir-it.

A - men.



LSB pg 192

It is truly meet, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who overcame the assaults of the devil and gave His life as a ransom for many that with cleansed hearts we might be prepared joyfully to celebrate the paschal feast in sincerity and truth. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

LSB pg 195

heav'n and earth are full of Thy glo - ry. Ho - san - na,
ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Bless-ed is He,
bless - ed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

LSB pg 241

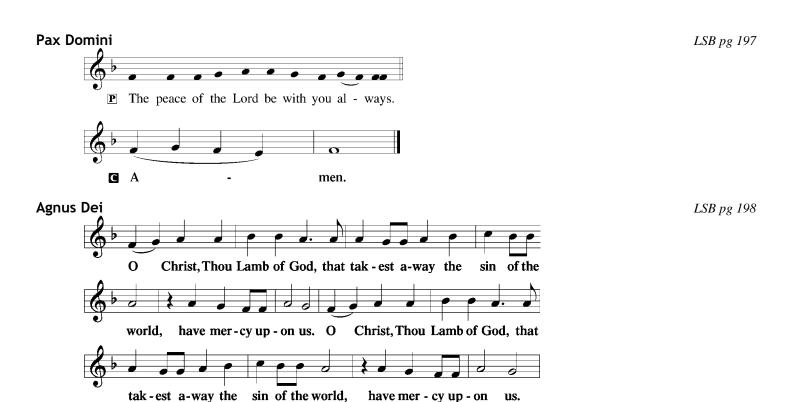
C Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

The Words of Our Lord LSB 197

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My + body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My + blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."



Sit

Suggested silent prayer for right reception of the Lord's Supper: O Lord, my God, in Holy Baptism You have called me to be a Christian and granted to me the remission of sins. Make me ready to receive the most holy body and blood of Christ for the forgiveness of all my sins, and grant me a grateful heart that I may give thanks to You, O Father, to Your Son, and to the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever, Amen.

of the

men.

Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the

peace.

A

world, grant us Thy

Suggested silent prayer in thanksgiving after receiving the Sacrament: Blessed Savior, Jesus Christ, You have given Yourself to me in this holy Sacrament. Keep me in Your faith and favor that I may live in You even as You live in me. May Your body and blood preserve me in the true faith to life everlasting. Hear me for the sake of Your name. Amen.

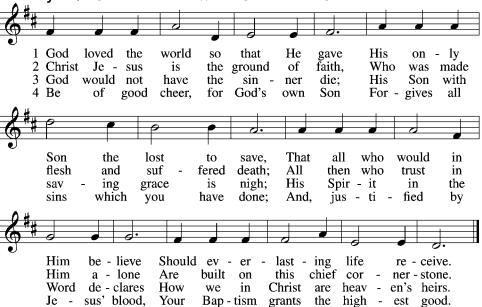
Distribution



Text: Friedrich Christian Heyder, 1677–1754; tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, abr.
Tune: Emskirchner Choral-Buch, 1756, Leipzig
Text: © 1941 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110342550 Tune: Public domain

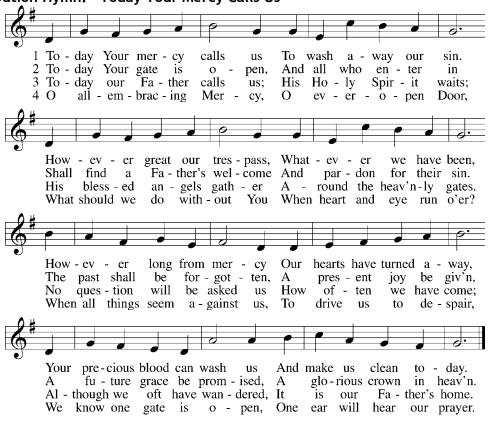
Distribution Hymn: "God Loved the World So That He Gave"

LSB 571



- 5 If you are sick, if death is near, This truth your troubled heart can cheer: Christ Jesus saves your soul from death; That is the firmest ground of faith.
- △ 6 Glory to God the Father, Son, And Holy Spirit, Three in One! To You, O blessèd Trinity, Be praise now and eternally!

Text: Heiliges Lippen- und Hertzens-Opffer, c. 1778, Stettin; tr. August Crull, 1845–1923, alt. Tune: George J. Elvey, 1816–93 Text and tune: Public domain



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Stand



LSB pg 199



LSB pg 199





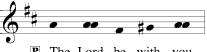
- and His mercy endureth for ev er.
- **A** Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



Salutation and Benedicamus

LSB 201



P The Lord be with you.

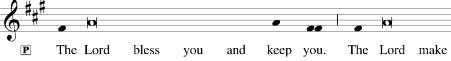




A Bless we the Lord.



Benediction LSB pg 202



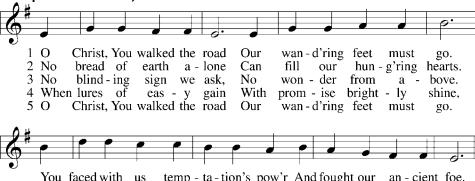


His face shine upon you and be gra-cious un - to you



The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and + give you peace.





You faced with us temp - ta-tion's pow'r And fought our an - cient foe. Lord, help us seek Lord, help us place our trust a - lone In Your un-swerv-ing love. Lord, help us seek Your king-dom first; Our wills with Yours a - lign. Stay with us through temp - ta - tion's hour To fight our an - cient foe.

Text: Herman G. Stuempfle, Jr., 1923–2007 Tune: William Daman, c. 1540–1591

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Divine Service, Setting Three from Lutheran Service Book

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