

# Trinity Lutheran Church

A Stephen Ministry Congregation

2700 East Fulton, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506

*Mission: Trinity Lutheran Church is a dynamic family called by God to nurture each other in our daily journeys of faith and to joyfully increase our response to all people in need, sharing God's gifts of love and grace.*



## Ash Wednesday Worship Resources

February 17, 2021

*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.*

## PSALM

Psalm 51:1-17

- <sup>1</sup>Have mercy on me, O God, according to your <sup>1</sup> steadfast love;  
in your great compassion blot out <sup>1</sup> my offenses.
- <sup>2</sup>**Wash me through and through <sup>1</sup> from my wickedness,  
and cleanse me <sup>1</sup> from my sin.**
- <sup>3</sup>For I know <sup>1</sup> my offenses,  
and my sin is ev- <sup>1</sup> er before me.
- <sup>4</sup>**Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil <sup>1</sup> in your sight;  
so you are justified when you speak and right <sup>1</sup> in your judgment.**
- <sup>5</sup>Indeed, I was born <sup>1</sup> steeped in wickedness,  
a sinner from my <sup>1</sup> mother's womb.
- <sup>6</sup>**Indeed, you delight in truth <sup>1</sup> deep within me,  
and would have me know wisdom <sup>1</sup> deep within.**
- <sup>7</sup>Remove my sins with hyssop, and I <sup>1</sup> shall be clean;  
wash me, and I shall be pur- <sup>1</sup> er than snow.
- <sup>8</sup>**Let me hear <sup>1</sup> joy and gladness;  
that the body you have broken <sup>1</sup> may rejoice.**
- <sup>9</sup>Hide your face <sup>1</sup> from my sins,  
and blot out <sup>1</sup> all my wickedness.
- <sup>10</sup>**Create in me a clean <sup>1</sup> heart, O God,  
and renew a right spir- <sup>1</sup> it within me.**
- <sup>11</sup>Cast me not away <sup>1</sup> from your presence,  
and take not your Holy Spir- <sup>1</sup> it from me.
- <sup>12</sup>**Restore to me the joy of <sup>1</sup> your salvation  
and sustain me with your boun- <sup>1</sup> tiful Spirit.**
- <sup>13</sup>Let me teach your ways <sup>1</sup> to offenders,  
and sinners shall be re- <sup>1</sup> stored to you.
- <sup>14</sup>**Rescue me from bloodshed, O God of <sup>1</sup> my salvation,  
and my tongue shall sing <sup>1</sup> of your righteousness.**
- <sup>15</sup>O Lord, o- <sup>1</sup> pen my lips,  
and my mouth shall pro- <sup>1</sup> claim your praise.
- <sup>16</sup>**For you take no delight in sacrifice, or <sup>1</sup> I would give it.  
You are not pleased <sup>1</sup> with burnt offering.**
- <sup>17</sup>The sacrifice of God is a <sup>1</sup> troubled spirit;  
a troubled and broken heart, O God, you will <sup>1</sup> not despise.

## GREETING AND PRAYER OF THE DAY

Behold, now is the acceptable time;  
**now is the day of salvation.**

The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**

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.**

## FIRST READING

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

<sup>1</sup>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—  
<sup>2</sup>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.

<sup>12</sup>Yet even now, says the LORD,  
    return to me with all your heart,  
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;  
<sup>13</sup>    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.  
<sup>14</sup>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?

<sup>15</sup>Blow the trumpet in Zion;  
    sanctify a fast;  
call a solemn assembly;  
<sup>16</sup>    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.

<sup>17</sup>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?'"

## SECOND READING

2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

<sup>20b</sup>We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup>For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.  
<sup>6:1</sup>As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. <sup>2</sup>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! <sup>3</sup>We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, <sup>4</sup>but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, <sup>5</sup>beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; <sup>6</sup>by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, <sup>7</sup>truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; <sup>8</sup>in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; <sup>9</sup>as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; <sup>10</sup>as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

## GOSPEL

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

[Jesus said to the disciples:] <sup>1</sup>"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.

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

<sup>5</sup>"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. <sup>6</sup>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.

<sup>16</sup>"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. <sup>17</sup>But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup>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.

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

## 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.

## THE CONFESSION

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

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

Let us pray.

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.**

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

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, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life.

**Amen.**

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Relying on the promises of God, we pray boldly for the church, the world, and all in need.

*A brief silence.*

O God, you call your church to be ministers of reconciliation throughout the world. Inspire your church in its proclamation of the gospel and guide its ministries to build up the body of Christ. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

O God, you created the earth and all its inhabitants and you declared that it is good. Protect mountains and valleys, animals and plants, and direct us to be good stewards of all you have made. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

O God, you desire peace. Direct governments and leaders to work for the well-being of all people and raise up advocates to speak and serve on behalf of the downtrodden. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

O God, you are our hope in the midst of despair, our help in the midst of sorrow, and our consolation in the midst of affliction. Grant comfort to all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit, including those we name now in our hearts (*a brief silence*), and support caregivers who attend to all in need. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

O God, you are love, and you call us to love one another. Accompany with your grace those journeying toward baptism and call us all to repentance as we prepare to celebrate Christ's death and resurrection. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

O God, you are our life and our salvation. We give you thanks for the righteous who have died in faith. Inspire us by their example to proclaim your steadfast love. Lord, in your mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

We entrust ourselves and all our prayers to you, O faithful God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**