



***Calvary Lutheran Church  
February 17, 2021***

*On Ash Wednesday we begin our forty-day journey toward Easter with a solemn call to fasting and repentance. In marking our foreheads with ashes, we acknowledge that someday we will all die and return to the earth. At the same time, the ash traces the life-giving cross indelibly marked on our foreheads at baptism, so that 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 journey forth trusting that in Christ, we have already received the promise of new life now and forever.*

**Prayer Before Worship:** God of mercy, you know us better than we know ourselves, and still you love us. Wash us from all our sins, create in us clean hearts, and strengthen us by your Holy Spirit that we may faithfully follow wherever you may lead; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*(In preparation for our worship together, you are invited to take a moment of silence to offer your own prayers of worship and praise.)*

**\*INDICATES PLEASE STAND IF ABLE.**  
Congregational responses are printed in **BOLD** type

**A Warm Welcome** to all as we gather as God's people to worship our Lord. We pray our worship together would strengthen your faith and desire to know and serve the One who loves us with an everlasting love as made known to us in Jesus Christ.

***Visitors,** if you are worshipping with us in person or online today,  
we are glad to have you with us.*

## **Prelude Music**

## **Welcome and Announcements**

### **✠WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS✠**

## **The Greeting and Invitation to Lent**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

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.

### **\*Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray.

**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.**

### **‡GOD'S WORD SPEAKS TO US‡**

#### **Old Testament 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?'"

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **Psalm 51** (*selected verses*)

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

**In your great compassion blot out my offenses.**

Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sin.

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

Against 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.**

Remove my sins with hyssop, and I shall be clean;

**Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.**

Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my wickedness.

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

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

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

**\*Lenten Verse:**

**“Let Your Steadfast Love...”**

**Page 189**

**Let your steadfast love come to us, O Lord.**

**Let your steadfast love come to us, O Lord.**

**Save us as you promised; we will trust your word.**

**Let your steadfast love come to us, O Lord.**

**\*Gospel: Matthew 11:28-30**

*Response after the announcement of the gospel:*

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>28</sup>Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup>Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup>For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

*Response after the gospel reading:*

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Sermon**

**Pastor Chris**

*(silence for reflection and meditation)*

**‡WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD‡**

**\*Hymn:**

**“Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling”**

**ELW # 608**

**vv. 1&2**

**1. Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling,  
calling for you and for me.**

**See, on the portals he's waiting and watching,  
watching for you and for me.**

***Refrain***

**"Come home, (*Come home,*)  
come home! (*come home!*)  
You who are weary, come home."  
Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,  
calling, "O sinner, come home!"**

**2. Why should we tarry when Jesus is pleading,  
pleading for you and for me?  
Why should we linger and heed not his mercies,  
mercies for you and for me?**

***Refrain***

**\*Profession of Faith: The Apostles Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**\*Prayers of the Church:**

*Each petition ends with:*

Lord, in your mercy...**hear our prayer.**

*The prayers conclude with:*

...We entrust ourselves...through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**\*Exchange of Peace**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**\*Offertory Prayer**

Having offered ourselves and our gifts to God, let us pray.

**Faithful God, you walk beside us in desert places, and you meet us in our hunger with bread from heaven. Accompany us in this meal, that we may pass over from death to life with Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

**‡THE LORD'S SUPPER‡**

*Here our Lord gives to us His own Body and Blood for the forgiveness of all our sins.*

**\*Confession of Sin**

Gracious Lord, ashes remind us of our human frailty and mortality. You are eternal, but we are limited in our days. Someday we will return to dust and ashes. You remind us of this in your Word:

**Dust we are and to dust we shall return.**

*(Genesis 3:19; Psalm 90:3)*

Ashes speak of condemnation for sin. When Adam fell into sin, judgment and death came to all. Since we all are born into sin, we are marked for death and ashes.

**Dust we are and to dust we shall return.**

Ashes speak of our total dependence upon you, O God. We are but frail human beings who must rely upon you, dear Father. We think we are capable of taking care of ourselves and make our own plans for greatness. However, so often these plans fail and crumble into ashes.

**Dust we are and to dust we shall return.**

Ashes speak of our humiliation and repentance. As people in the Bible humbled themselves and expressed their repentance and mourning in the signs of sackcloth and ashes, we also humble ourselves before you, O God, as we ask you to forgive our sins through Jesus Christ, our Lord. As we repent we put on dust and ashes.

**Dust we are and to dust we shall return.**

People of God, as we see the meaning of ashes and dust for us as Christians, we now make our earnest confession unto the Lord.

**Almighty God, you have always warned your people against trusting in false gods. We are sinful and this nature has given birth to sinful deeds: things we have done and things we have left undone. We are but dust and ash of the ground and we deserve nothing more than to return to the dust. Though we deserve your stern judgment, but for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, forgive and renew us. Amen.**

Hear the Word of the Lord, "Repent, and believe the gospel." With these words, Jesus began his ministry and now directs us to make repentance and hear his good news. Therefore, as you have made repentance, now hear the gospel. I, as a called and ordained servant of Christ, announce to you the grace of God. Your sins are forgiven, in the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

**\*Words of Institution**

**The Lord's Prayer**

**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.**

## **Imposition of Ashes & Distribution of Communion**

*During the Imposition of Ashes, the worship leaders mark the forehead of each person with a cross of ashes, saying: "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." You will then proceed to the communion servers to receive assurance of God's love and forgiveness through the gift of Holy Communion.*

**All are invited to participate in the Imposition of the Ashes and the Lord's Supper.**  
*(WHITE GRAPE JUICE and GLUTEN FREE wafers are available. Just ask the server.)*

**"At the Table of the Lord"**

**Choir**

### **\*Post-Communion Blessing**

#### **\*Post-Communion Prayer**

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.**

**✠WE DEPART TO SERVE✠**

### **\*Benediction**

You are what God made you to be: created in Christ Jesus for good works, chosen as holy and beloved, freed to serve your neighbor.

God bless you ✠ that you may be a blessing,  
in the name of the holy and life-giving Trinity. **Amen.**

**\*Hymn:**

**"O Lord, Throughout These Forty Days"**

**ELW #319  
vv. 1&4**

**1. O Lord, throughout these forty days  
you prayed and kept the fast;  
inspire repentance for our sin,  
and free us from our past.**

**4. Be with us through this season, Lord,  
and all our earthly days,  
that when the final Easter dawns,  
we join in heaven's praise.**

**\*Sending**

Marked with the cross of Christ, go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude**

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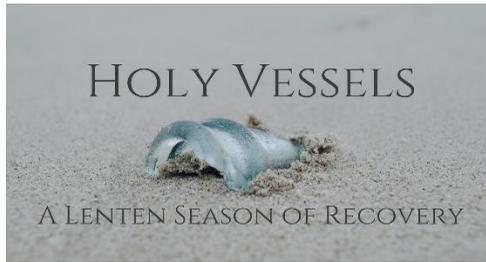
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**✠In Our Thoughts and Prayers✠**

*Prayers for healing:* **Caleb Payne** (health issues), **Bruce** (Cancer treatments—friend of Jean Collins & Cathy Johnson), **Laynette Van Anne** (brain tumor—friend of Dee Brady), **LaDonna Schmidt** (colon cancer), **Bill Steele** (Recovering from COVID-19), **Beth Janecek** (Radiation), **Rich** (COVID-19 recovery—brother of Barb Gorr), **Cathy Rahrs** (rehab @ home), **Nancy & Tracy Steele** (COVID-19 health issues), **Harlan Meyer** (Lonnie Miller's uncle), **Reuben & Gloria Gorr** (health issues), **Alan** (recovery of vision—Kathy Randall's cousin), **Jordan Hein** (cancer treatment—former member of Calvary), **Julie** (cancer treatment—Travis Miller family), **Barb** (cancer—Marlene Downer's sister-in-law), **Joan** (cancer—niece of Marj Nikont), **Patty** (cancer—Jim Dorn's sister-in-law).

*Prayers of comfort and peace:* For the family and friends of **Gary Eskam**, and for the family of friends of **Bonnie** (*cousin of Susan Martin*)

*Prayers for our church, community, nation, and world: in this time of Covid-19 and general unsettledness. For everyone in need!*



*“He took our infirmities and bore our diseases.”*

Matthew 8:17b

Each of us is created a precious and holy vessel of embodied love. We have been through a harrowing time since last Lent that has shattered for many their sense of wholeness—body, mind, and spirit—like a glass vessel fractured into pieces. In this Lenten ‘season of recovery’, we will explore the healing narratives of Jesus that tell of divine solidarity with human suffering and remind us that we can begin a journey toward making something beautiful from that which is seemingly broken.

Join us on Wednesday nights during Lent

@ 6:30 p.m.

as we discover how each of us is a holy vessel despite our brokenness.

**Please note: there will be NO Lenten Dinners this year**

FEBRUARY 17, 2021  
ASH WEDNESDAY



*You are God's and to God you shall return.*

**ASH WEDNESDAY BIBLE READINGS**

Take time to read and reflect on these Bible passages as part of your Ash Wednesday observance.

Wednesday Isaiah 58:1-12

Worship God by showing justice

2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10 Ambassadors for Christ

Psalms 51:1-17 A prayer for cleansing

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 The practice of faith

**SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR ASH WEDNESDAY**

*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Psalm 51:10 (NRSV)*

**PRAYERS AND BLESSING**

**A Prayer for Ash Wednesday:**

merciful God, you love all that you have created; create in me, O Lord, a clean heart through Christ Jesus. Amen.

**Mealtime Prayer:**

Loving God, as you share with us your food from creation, help us to share bread with the hungry. Amen. (Isaiah 58:7)

**A Blessing to Give:**

May your heart be filled with joy and your soul rejoice. (Psalm 51:8)

FEBRUARY 17, 2021

**HYMN FOR ASH WEDNESDAY**

*Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God*



**ASH WEDNESDAY MILESTONES**

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

**CARING CONVERSATIONS**

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What is something that you regret or makes you sad?
- What is something that brings you joy?
- How does knowing that you are loved by God move you from regrets and sadness to joy?

**DEVOTIONS**

*Read: Psalm 51:1-17.*

These words are poetic, beautiful, and have been used frequently in the church. They offer a contemplative mood as words used in the offertory (vv. 10-12) and an expression of confidence during the morning prayer service (v. 15). For Ash Wednesday, the words communicate our desire for repentance and renewal. What can be overlooked is the focus on joy that this psalm desires: "let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice" (v. 8); and, "Restore to me the joy of your salvation" (v. 12). It is hard not to associate Ash Wednesday with the plea of giving something up for the Lenten season. Perhaps this is the year to give up sadness and to focus on the joy God wants for us and the praise we give our merciful God. Remove and confession of sins is an appropriate practice for Lent and throughout the year. However, the outcome of our Christian faith is to be freed from our brokenness that we may be people of joy and gladness. Contemplate your desire and need for forgiveness. How do you experience God's mercy and steadfast love in a way that brings you joy?

*Pray: Loving God, as we begin a new season of Lent, give us new hearts to love you and fill us with joy in your presence through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

**SERVICE**

Lent is a season for serving and giving. Consider doing a "30-Minute Service Challenge" this Lent. Each week, commit to an act of community service for 30 minutes. This may involve contributing time to a community program, doing something kind for a neighbor, visiting a person who is elderly or homebound, or helping someone who has a particular need. Each time you finish your service, think or talk about what it meant to you and those you served.

**RITUALS AND TRADITIONS**

On this Ash Wednesday, do some simple ritual act that keeps your focus on God and God's word. Perhaps you fast by eating simple meals or skipping a meal all together and use the extra time to read the Bible passages for Ash Wednesday. For example, pray Psalm 51:1-17 as a prayer of repentance and close with the words: *You are God's, and to God you shall return.*



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