



Ash Wednesday
February 18, 2026
7:00 p.m.

St. John Lutheran Church

Powellsville
5600 Junior Furnace-Powellsville Road
Franklin Furnace, Ohio 45629-8937
Church: 740-574-8028, or email: stjohn1875@gmail.com



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PRELUDE

ASH WEDNESDAY LITURGY

INTRODUCTION

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent with ash on our foreheads. This cross echoes our baptismal anointing, when we were buried with Christ. The ash is a chilling reminder of our mortality, but because our death is now in Christ, our endings are beginnings. The Lenten disciplines of acts of kindness, prayer, and fasting are tools of discipleship that can lead us to renewal as we bury all that is holding us back from being truly alive.

stand

PSALM: 51:1-18

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your lovingkindness. (Ps. 51:1)

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

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

³For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ev-er before me.

⁴**Against you only have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight.**

⁵And so you are justified when you speak
and upright in your judgment.

⁶**Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth,
a sinner from my mother's womb.**

⁷For behold, you look for truth deep within me,
and will make me understand wisdom secretly.

⁸**Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure;
wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.**

⁹Make me hear of joy and gladness,
that the body you have broken may rejoice.

**¹⁰Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.**

**¹¹Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spir- it within me.**

**¹²Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.**

**¹³Give me the joy of your saving help again
and sustain me with your boun- tiful Spirit.**

**¹⁴I shall teach your ways to the wicked,
and sinners shall re- turn to you.**

**¹⁵Deliver me from death, O God,
and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness, O God of my salvation.**

**¹⁶Open my lips, O Lord,
and my mouth shall pro-claim your praise.**

**¹⁷Had you desired it, I would have offered sacrifice,
but you take no delight in burnt-offerings.**

**¹⁸The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.**

HYMN

Just as I Am, Without One Plea

#296



- 1 Just as I am, with - out one plea, but that thy blood was shed for me,
- 2 Just as I am, and wait - ing not to rid my soul of one dark blot,
- 3 Just as I am, though tossed a - bout with man - y a con - flict, man - y a doubt,
- 4 Just as I am, poor, wretch - ed, blind; sight, rich - es, heal - ing of the mind,



and that thou bidd'st me come to thee,
to thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
fight-ings and fears with - in, with-out, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.
yea, all I need in thee to find,

- 5 Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
because thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

- 6 Just as I am; thy love unknown
has broken ev'ry barrier down;
now to be thine, yea, thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Text: Charlotte Elliott, 1789-1871

Music: WOODWORTH. William B. Bradbury, 1816-1868

CONFESSION

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.

C Amen.

Let us confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt
and blots out all offenses.

P Gracious God,

C have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you:
Gracious God,

C have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word:
Gracious God,

C have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P For failing to recognize your coming reign,
and for hindering the work of the Spirit: Gracious God,

C have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition,
and for disdaining the living water Christ offers: Gracious God ,

C have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P For disregarding voices from the margin ,
and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world:
Gracious God,

C have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent,
and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life:
Gracious God,

C have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P God's steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness abound.

Through faith, the free gift of God,

you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.

The Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead
dwells in you,

pours God's love into your hearts,

and gives you life and peace.

C Amen

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

When ashes are to be imposed, those who desire to receive ashes come forward and kneel before the altar. The ministers apply ashes to the forehead of each person with the words:

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

After all who desire ashes have received them, the minister leads the congregation in the conclusion of the confession.

P Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,

C **that we may show forth your glory in the world.**

P By the cross and Passion of your Son, our Lord,

C **bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.**

P *(standing and addressing the congregation:)*

Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

does not desire the death of sinners,

but rather that they may turn from their wickedness and live.

Therefore we implore him to grant us true repentance and his Holy Spirit,

that those things may please him which we do on this day,

that the rest of our life may be pure and holy,

and that at the last we may come to his eternal joy;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C **Amen**

After a period of silence, the Holy Communion is begun at the Prayer of the Day.

stand

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

All: **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 obtain from you, the God of all mercy, full pardon and forgiveness; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen**

sit

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

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.
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?'"

SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10

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.

stand

LENTEN VERSE

Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord.

Save us as you prom-ised; we will trust your word.

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

P The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 6th chapter.

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 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."

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ**

SERMON

Pastor Kruse

SILENCE FOR REFLECTION

HYMN OF THE DAY

Down to the River to Pray

The musical score is written for a piano and voice. It consists of three systems of music. The first system starts with a treble and bass clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a common time signature. The melody is in the treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is in the bass clef. The lyrics are: "As I went down to the ri-ver to pray, stu-dy-ing ab-out that good ol' way. And who shall". The second system begins with a measure rest in the treble clef, followed by the melody. The lyrics are: "wear the star-ry crown? Good Lord, show me the way! Oh, sis-ters, let's go down,". The third system continues the melody and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "let's go down, come on down. Oh, sis-ters, let's go down, down to the riv-er to pray." The score ends with a double bar line.

As I went down to the ri-ver to pray, stu-dy-ing ab-out that good ol' way. And who shall

6 wear the star-ry crown? Good Lord, show me the way! Oh, sis-ters, let's go down,

12 let's go down, come on down. Oh, sis-ters, let's go down, down to the riv-er to pray.

As I went down to the river to pray,
studying about that good ol' way
And who shall wear the robe and crown?
Good Lord, show me the way.

Oh, brothers, let's go down,
let's go down, come on down.
Come on, brothers, let's go down,
down to the river to pray.

As I went down to the river to pray,
studying about that good ol' way.
And who shall wear the starry crown?
Good Lord, show me the way.

Oh, fathers, let's go down,
let's go down. Don't you wanna go down?
Oh, fathers, let's go down,
down to the river to pray.

As I went down to the river to pray,
studying about that good ol' way.
And who shall wear the robe and crown?
Good Lord, show me the way.

Oh, mothers, let's go down,
let's go down, come on down.
Come on, mothers, let's go down,
down to the river to pray.

As I went down to the river to pray,
studying about that good ol' way.
And who shall wear the starry crown?
Good Lord, show me the way.

Oh, sinners, let's go down,
let's go down, come on down.
Oh, sinners, let's go down,
down to the river to pray.

As I went down to the river to pray,
studying about that good ol' way.
And who shall wear the starry crown?
Good Lord, show me the way.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

- P Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs.

A brief silence.

- P Guide your church, O God. Accompany all Christians in this season of repentance, and renew our faith in the riches of grace you give to us in baptism. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

- P Heal this earth, O God. Satisfy the needs of every parched place, every diverse ecosystem, every suffering creature. Though all return to dust, grant beauty and purpose to each living thing. Hear us, O God

C Your mercy is great.

- P Restore the nations, O God. Let your healing spring up quickly across the world (*places may be named*). Give all in authority the will to loose the bonds of injustice and let any who are oppressed go free. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

- P Deliver your people, O God. Comfort any whose hearts are rent by grief, uphold any who are sick, bring food to those who hunger, and give housing to all without shelter. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

- P Bless this assembly, O God. Reconcile us to one another and to you. Strengthen our resolve to fast from evil, open our hands in sharing, and quicken our prayer. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

- P O Holy Spirit, We pray for our next pastor. We know not who you are making ready to come and be with us, but we ask that you speed our meeting with one another, and that you make us ready to seek new adventures with a new shepherd at our side. Grant that we might make ready today to find the new tomorrow you desire for St. John Lutheran Church. Merciful God,

C Your mercy is great.

- P Hold us forever, O God. We thank you for all who now know their treasure in heaven, and for (*Martin Luther and*) all who on earth proclaimed your abounding, steadfast love. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

- P Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation.

C Amen.

INTRODUCTION TO THE PEACE

- P Through Christ, we have been reconciled to God, who has given us the ministry of reconciliation. Let us be reconciled with one another. The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C And also with you.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY PRAYER

P God our Redeemer,

C receive all we offer you this day--these gifts and the sacrifice of our lives. Refresh us with this food and drink, that we may reach the promised land, the Easter feast of victory in Christ our Lord. 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 thanks and praise.

P It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord. You bid your people cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the **pascal** feast. Renew our zeal in faith and life, and bring us to the fullness of grace that belongs to the children of God. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

(Isaiah 6:3 & Matthew 21:9)



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of
pow-er and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

P Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord.
heaven and earth are full of your glory.

In great love you sent to us Jesus,
your Son, who reached out
to heal the sick and suffering,
who preached good news to the poor,
and who, on the cross,
opened his arms to all.

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 covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people
for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore,
his death, resurrection, ascension,
we await his coming glory.

Pour out your Holy Spirit
that by this Holy Communion
we may know the unity
we share with all your people
in the body of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through him with him, in him,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor is yours,
almighty Father, now and forever.

C **Amen**

LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9:13

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

John 1:29



☐ Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world;



grant us peace, grant us peace.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P All who are hungry, come and eat the bread of life.
All who are thirsty, come and drink the cup of salvation.

HOLY COMMUNION

As the ministers give the bread and wine, they say these words to each communicant:

The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you.

The communicant may say: Amen

Stand

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

C Amen

POST COMMUNION CANTICLE

Now, Lord, You Let Your Servant



Lord, now you let your ser- vant go in peace; your word has been ful -

filled. My own eyes have seen the sal - va - tion which you have pre -

pared in the sight of ev - 'ry peo - ple: A light to re - veal you to the

na - tions and the glo - ry of your peo - ple Is - ra - el.

Glo - ry to the Fa - ther, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spir - it,

as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now,

and will be for - ev - er. A - men

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

P Compassionate God, your Son welcomed sinners and ate with them. We give you thanks for the forgiveness and grace we have received in this meal. Make us signs of your love, that all the world may know your mercy and blessing; through Christ our Lord.

C Amen

BENEDICTION

Numbers 6:24-26

P May you who share in Christ's sufferings
also know the power of his resurrection.
The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.

C Amen

DISMISSAL

P Reconciled to God through Christ, go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

CLOSING HYMN

My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less #294



1 My hope is built on noth - ing less than
 2 When dark - ness veils his love - ly face, I
 3 His oath, his cov - e - nant, his blood sus -
 4 When he shall come with trum - pet sound, oh,



Je - sus' blood and righ - teous - ness; no mer - it of my
 rest on his un - chang - ing grace; in ev - 'ry high and
 tain me in the rag - ing flood; when all sup - ports are
 may I then in him be found, clothed in his righ - teous -



own I claim, but whol - ly lean on Je - sus' name.
 storm - y gale my an - chor holds with - in the veil.
 washed a - way, he then is all my hope and stay.
 ness a - lone, re - deemed to stand be - fore the throne!

Refrain



On Christ, the sol - id rock, I stand; all oth - er ground is sink - ing sand.

Text: Edward Mote, 1797–1874, alt.
 Music: MELITA, John B. Dykes, 1823–1876

POSTLUDE

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SERVING TODAY

Organist
Lay Reader
Prayer Leader
Greeter
Altar Committee
Council President

Leigh Ann Henry
Rick Williams
James Hayman
Jerry & Debbie Clevenger
Dené DeGonzague, Kelly Skipworth
Rick Williams

March 5, 2025
ASH WEDNESDAY

Drawn to the Heart of God

In the weeks to come many people in the northern part of North America will watch for the first buds and flowers of spring. As the seasons turn from winter to spring, it seems as if the whole earth comes alive again. During Lent we pray that our hearts will also be made as new as the approaching springtime.

But first, ashes are smeared on our foreheads. These ashes are the dust from which we were created, and the dust to which we will return. This sign of our human condition makes some of us feel heavy-hearted. Ashes are a stark reminder of our sinfulness and mortality, and thus, our dependence on the grace and mercy of God.

Yet from the earth comes the miracle of new life. Surely the same is true for our hearts. We make the yearly spiritual journey to Easter with the promise that the mystery of our baptism into Jesus' death and resurrection will renew our hearts. Lent is the hard work of reflecting, confessing sin, and turning toward the rays of God's healing love. Before we go about the noble works of justice, compassion, and sharing the gospel, God seeks the conversion of our hearts. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also, Jesus says in today's gospel. We sometimes speak of the heart as the center of our affections, yet for the Hebrews the heart represented one's consciousness, identity, and convictions. Lent reminds us that being religious or doing good deeds is missing the mark if our heart is not in it. What we really seek is to be drawn to the heart of God, that divine love and mercy may dwell in our hearts.

The earth will bloom anew with life this spring. Marked with a cross of earth on our foreheads, we hear God's promise that our hearts will also bloom with the hope of resurrection.

