

Solemn Worship for Ash Wednesday

February 18, 2026 – Noon & 7:00 p.m.

Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes



Today, we begin our Lenten journey. We come before our Creator in prayer, speaking the truth: we are fallen creatures in need of rescue.

This Lenten journey begins with a mark of ashes on our foreheads, a sign of broken and repentant hearts. God does not desire our sacrifices, as if we could atone for or cover our own sin. God rather desires broken and contrite hearts, which He will not despise (Psalm 51:17). Sackcloth and ashes are the signs of mourning and repentance in Scripture. Any efforts to cover up, to pay for, or to atone for our own sin only result in more sackcloth and ashes, even death. Repentance comes as God's Word works upon us. On the cross, the Son of God has washed our foreheads of the ashes of our sins, has removed the sackcloth of our guilt, and has clothed us in His robes of righteousness and garments of salvation. The pure and holy white linen garments that adorn the saints in heaven cover us, too, as we long for the day when we will join them around the throne.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the 40-day Lenten season. The cross of ashes we receive today echoes our baptismal anointing, when we were buried with Christ. The ash is also a chilling reminder of our mortality; but because our death is now in Christ, our endings are beginnings. The Lenten disciplines – acts of love, prayer, and fasting – are tools of discipleship that can lead us to renewal.

Join your heart and voice in praising our Lord in today's worship service. If you would like more information about Immanuel and our life connected to Christ, please speak with one of the elders, deacons, or the pastors.

Please use the time before worship for quiet prayer and meditation. Silence or turn off all mobile devices so that the time of worship is not disturbed.



Entrance of Worship Leaders

Please stand, as you are able

The Psalmody *(spoken responsively)*

Psalm 51:1-17

- P** Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;
- C** **according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.**
- P** Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity
- C** **and cleanse me from my sin!**
- P** For I know my transgressions,

C and my sin is ever before me.

P Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight,

C so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.

P Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,

C and in sin did my mother conceive me.

P Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being,

C and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.

P Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;

C wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

P Let me hear joy and gladness;

C let the bones that you have broken rejoice.

P Hide your face from my sins,

C and blot out all my iniquities.

P Create in me a clean heart, O God,

C and renew a right spirit within me.

P Cast me not away from your presence,

C and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

P Restore to me the joy of your salvation,

C and uphold me with a willing spirit.

P Then I will teach transgressors your ways,

C and sinners will return to you.

P Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, O God of my salvation,

C and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness.

P O Lord, open my lips,

C and my mouth will declare your praise.

P For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it;

C you will not be pleased with a burnt offering.

P The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;

C a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Exhortation

P Brothers and sisters in Christ: God created us to experience joy in communion with him, to love all humanity, and to live in harmony with all of his creation. But sin separates us from God, our neighbors, and creation, and so we do not enjoy the life our Creator intended for us. Also, by our sin we grieve our Father, who does not desire us to come under his judgment, but to turn to him and live.

As disciples of the Lord Jesus we are called to struggle against everything that leads us away from love of God and neighbor. Repentance, fasting, prayer, and works of love – the discipline of Lent – help us to wage our spiritual warfare. I invite you, therefore, to commit

yourselves to this struggle and confess your sins, asking our Father for strength to persevere in your Lenten discipline.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

Confession

- P** Most holy and merciful Father:
- C** **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.**
- P** 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.
- C** **Have mercy on us, O God.**
- P** 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.
- C** **Have mercy on us, O God.**
- P** Our past unfaithfulness, the pride, envy, hypocrisy, and apathy that have infected our lives, we confess to you.
- C** **Have mercy on us, O God.**
- P** Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people, we confess to you.
- C** **Have mercy on us, O God.**
- P** Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to share the faith that is in us, we confess to you.
- C** **Have mercy on us, O God.**
- P** Our neglect of human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty, we confess to you.
- C** **Have mercy on us, O God.**
- P** Our false judgments, our uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us, we confess to you.
- C** **Have mercy on us, O God.**
- P** Our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us, we confess to you.
- C** **Have mercy on us, O God.**
- P** Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us.
- C** **Hear us, O God, for your mercy is great. Amen.**

Liturgy of Ashes

- P** Come to God who creates life out of dust and ashes. Come to God who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, who was crucified, died and buried. Come to God

who promises forgiveness of sins, life and salvation to all who trust in him. Come to God who calls us by name and knows our every need, that he might shape and form us and breathe into us his life-giving Spirit.

C **We come to you, O God, though we are but dust and ashes. We come to you for forgiveness, strength and new life. Breathe into us your life-giving Spirit that we might live in your joy and peace. Amen.**

P I invite you now to come forward and be marked with a cross of ashes. Let this be for us a sign of our repentance, our own mortality, and our hope in Christ who by his death and resurrection has given to us the hope of everlasting life.

Please be seated

Imposition of the Ashes

Worshippers are invited to come forward at the direction of the ushers to receive ashes.

During the imposition of ashes, you are invited to meditate on Psalm 90.

Adult Choir Anthem (7 pm)

“Lamb of God”



When all have received the ashes, the liturgy concludes as follows: (please stand, as able)

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 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.**

Prayer for Ash Wednesday

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

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.**

Please be seated

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."

P This is the Word of the Lord.

G Thanks be to God.

Epistle Reading

2 Corinthians: 5:20b—6:10

²⁰We implore 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.

¹Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. ²For he says, "In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. ³We put no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, ⁴but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, ⁵beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; ⁶by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; ⁷by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; ⁸through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; ⁹as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; ¹⁰as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

G Thanks be to God.

Lenten Verse *(please stand, as able)*



Re - turn to the Lord, your God, re - turn to the Lord, your God, who is
gra-cious and mer-ci-ful, slow to an-ger, and a-bound-ing in stead-fast love.

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

G **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Holy Gospel

St. Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

¹“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 The Gospel of the Lord.

G **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Hymn for Ash Wednesday

“I Lay My Sins on Jesus”



1 I lay my sins on Je - sus, The spot - less Lamb of God;
2 I lay my wants on Je - sus; All full - ness dwells in Him;
3 I rest my soul on Je - sus, This wea - ry soul of mine;



He bears them all and frees us From the ac - curs - ed load.
He heals all my dis - eas - es; My soul He does re - deem.
His right hand me em - brac - es; I on His breast re - cline.



I bring my guilt to Je - sus To wash my crim - son stains
I lay my griefs on Je - sus, My bur - dens and my cares;
I love the name of Je - sus, Im - man - uel, Christ, the Lord;



Clean in His blood most pre - cious Till not a spot re - mains.
He from them all re - leas - es; He all my sor - rows shares.
Like fra - grance on the breez - es His name a - broad is poured.

Text and tune: Public domain

Offering

*Our Lord works through His people in our offerings and tithes. If you choose to give electronically, an **offering card** is available in the pew rack, including a QR code to make an immediate contribution through your smartphone. As an act of worship, you may place the card in the offering plate in lieu of a physical contribution. If you have not yet done so, please add your name to the **fellowship register** found along the center aisle of the pew and pass it along to those seated in your row.*

Please stand

Offertory Prayer

P 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 Jesus Christ our Lord.

G Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

P Returning to the Lord with all our heart, let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs.

During the season of Lent each petition ends with the phrase: “Hear us, O God.”

Please respond by saying: “Your mercy is great.”

The prayers end with the words:

P Hear us according to your steadfast love, O God, and in your great compassion bring us to resurrection and rebirth in Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

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 him thanks and praise.

Preface

P It is truly good, 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:

Sanctus

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

The Words of Our Lord Concerning Holy Communion

Lord's Prayer

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

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.

Distribution *(please be seated)*

Agnus Dei

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

Hymns at the Distribution

“Glory Be to Jesus”



1 Glo - ry be to Je - sus, Who in bit - ter pains
2 Grace and life e - ter - nal In that blood I find;
3 Blest through end - less a - ges Be the pre - cious stream
4 A - bel's blood for ven - geance Plead - ed to the skies;



Poured for me the life - blood From His sa - cred veins!
Blest be His com - pas - sion, In - fi - nite - ly kind!
Which from end - less tor - ment Did the world re - deem!
But the blood of Je - sus For our par - don cries.

5 Oft as earth exulting
Wafts its praise on high,
Angel hosts rejoicing
Make their glad reply.

6 Lift we, then, our voices,
Swell the mighty flood;
Louder still and louder
Praise the precious blood!

“Lord Jesus, Think on Me”



1 Lord Je - sus, think on me And purge a - way my sin;
2 Lord Je - sus, think on me, By anx - ious thoughts op - pressed;
3 Lord Je - sus, think on me A - mid the bat - tle's strife;
4 Lord Je - sus, think on me Nor let me go a - stray;
5 Lord Je - sus, think on me That, when this life is past,

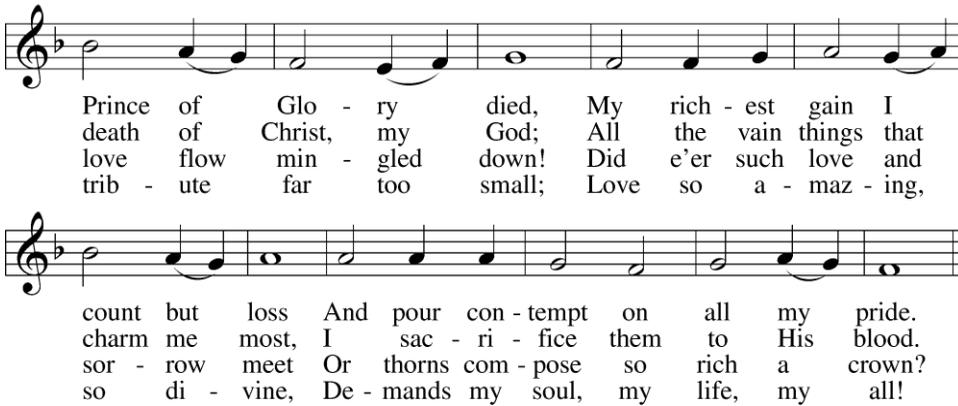


From world - ly pas - sions set me free And make me pure with - in.
Let me Your lov - ing ser - vant be And taste Your prom - ised rest.
In all my pain and mis - er - y, O be my health and life!
Through dark - ness and per - plex - i - ty Point out Your cho - sen way.
I may the e - ter - nal bright - ness see And share Your joy at last.

“When I Survey the Wondrous Cross”



1 When I sur - vey the won - drous cross On which the
2 For - bid it, Lord, that I should boast Save in the
3 See, from His head, His hands, His feet Sor - row and
4 Were the whole realm of na - ture mine, That were a



Prince of Glo - ry died, My rich - est gain I
 death of Christ, my God; All the vain things that
 love flow min - gled down! Did e'er such love and
 trib - ute far too small; Love so a - maz - ing,
 count but loss And pour con - tempt on all my pride.
 charm me most, I sac - ri - fice them to His blood.
 sor - row meet Or thorns com - pose so rich a crown?
 so di - vine, De - mands my soul, my life, my all!

Prayer of Thanksgiving

P Let us pray:
 Merciful God, accompany our journey through these forty days. Renew in us 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.

C Amen.

Blessing

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
 The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
 The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

C Amen.

Sending

P 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.

Ringling of the Chimes

The ministers leave in silence. Please exit quietly.



Those Serving in Worship Today

Officiant:	Pastor Braun Campbell
Preacher:	Pastor Keith Richard
Organists:	Dan Albrecht, Aaron Kortze
Choir:	Adult Choir (7 pm)

Portions of the liturgy are reprinted from:

Lutheran Book of Worship, copyright 1978, by permission of Augsburg Fortress, license #2558-1.

Words for Worship, Year C, 2012, copyright 2009, Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission of Augsburg Fortress.

What is Ash Wednesday?

Originally this day was for the expulsion of penitents from the church, the beginning of a time of temporary excommunication. As early as the third century, Tertullian mentions ashes as a sign of public penitence. In the ninth century, the application of ashes was added to the rite of expulsion of penitents from the church during Lent. The day became known as Ash Wednesday. By the eleventh century, the discipline of public penitence had about disappeared and Lent was accepted by the entire church as a time to receive ashes and undergo penitence.

Ashes for an Ash Wednesday service are often prepared by burning palm or olive branches from the previous Palm Sunday. The ashes are ground into a powder by working them through a wire mesh sieve with a spoon and maybe mixing the ashes with a little oil or water. The mixture is placed in a small, shallow bowl from which the ashes are applied. After the application of the ashes, the minister's hands are cleansed with a damp towel or napkin.

Ashes are an extraordinarily rich symbol rooted in ancient customs and practices. Ashes, in a Jewish and Christian context, suggest judgment and God's condemnation of sin; frailty, our total dependence upon God for life; humiliation; and repentance. We are reminded forcefully of the words of the committal in the burial service, "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust" for one day those words will be said over us.

Moreover, ashes suggest cleansing and renewal. They were once used as a cleansing agent in the absence of soap, and on Ash Wednesday the ashes have sometimes been understood as a penitential substitute for water as a sign of Baptism. (And Baptism is a primary emphasis of Lent.) Water both stifles and refreshes, drowns and makes alive, so the ashes also tell of both death and renewal. A further example of death and renewal shown by ashes is the ancient custom of burning the fields in the spring to destroy the old and to prepare for the new.

During the Lenten season, the altar may be completely draped with a large cloth that covers the front, back and sides of the altar. The history of this covering's use is centuries old. Christian churches have traditionally covered or draped altars, crosses and statuary during Lent to indicate the somberness of the season, and to temporarily cover the beauty of their sanctuaries. The beauty of the sanctuary's altar is cloaked during Lent, and will be unveiled again at the Easter Vigil. The processional cross is also veiled during this Lenten season to remind us that this is a time when our worship is more restrained and subdued.