



Holy Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes

February 26, 2020 ♦ 12:00 p.m.

Ash Wednesday

Please silence your audible devices.

We welcome visitors to Ascension. Please introduce yourself to the clergy and fill out a welcome card, found at each end of the pews.

The people stand as the priests and choir enter in silence.

THE COLLECT

Celebrant The Lord be with you.
People **And also with you.**
Celebrant Let us pray.

Celebrant and People **Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

The people sit.

THE WORD OF GOD

THE FIRST READING

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

A reading from the book of Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy hill. Let all who live in the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming. It is close at hand - a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and blackness. Like dawn spreading across the mountains a large and mighty army comes, such as never was in ancient times nor ever will be in ages to come. "Even now," declares the Lord, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning." Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity. Who knows? He may turn and relent and leave behind a blessing— grain offerings and drink offerings for the Lord your God. Blow the trumpet in Zion, declare a holy fast, call a sacred assembly. Gather the people, consecrate the assembly; bring together the elders, gather the children, those nursing at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room and the bride her chamber. Let the priests, who minister before the Lord, weep between the portico and the altar. Let them say, "Spare your people, Lord. Do not make your inheritance an object of scorn, a byword among the nations. Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'"

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.
People: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 103:8-14 *Benedic, anima mea*

The Reader and People pray responsively

The Lord is full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and of great kindness.

He will not always accuse us,
nor will he keep his anger for ever.

He has not dealt with us according to our sins,
nor rewarded us according to our wickedness.

For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so is his mercy great upon those who fear him.

As far as the east is from the west,
so far has he removed our sins from us.

As a father cares for his children,
so does the Lord care for those who fear him.

For he himself knows whereof we are made;
he remembers that we are but dust.

The people stand.

THE GOSPEL

Matthew 6:1-6,16-21

Gospeller The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew
People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus said: "Be careful that you do not practice your religion in front of people to draw their attention. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. Whenever you give to the poor, do not blow your trumpet as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets so that they may get praise from people. I assure you, that is the only reward they will get. But when you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing so that you may give to the poor in secret. Your Father who sees what you do in secret will reward you. When you pray, do not be like hypocrites. They love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners so that people will see them. I assure you, that is the only reward they will get. But when you pray, go to your room, shut the door, and pray to your Father who is present in that secret place. Your Father who sees what you do in secret will reward you. And when you fast, do not put on a sad face like the hypocrites. They distort their faces so people will know they are fasting. I assure you that they have their reward. When you fast, brush your hair and wash your face. Then you will not look like you are fasting to people, but only to your Father who is present in that secret place. Your Father who sees in secret will reward you. Stop collecting treasures for your own benefit on earth, where moth and rust eat them and where thieves break in and steal them. Instead, collect treasures for yourselves in heaven, where moth and rust do not eat them and where thieves do not break in and steal them. Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Gospeller The Gospel of the Lord.
People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

The people are seated at the invitation of the preacher.

The people stand.

INVITATION TO THE OBSERVANCE OF A HOLY LENT

Celebrant

Dear People of God: The first Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church to prepare for them by a season of penitence and fasting. This season of Lent provided a time in which converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism. It was also a time when those who, because of notorious sins, had been separated from the body of the faithful were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to the fellowship of the Church. Thereby, the whole congregation was put in mind of the message of pardon and absolution set forth in the Gospel of our Savior, and of the need which all Christians continually have to renew their repentance and faith.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word. And, to make a right beginning of repentance, and as a mark of our mortal nature, let us now kneel before the Lord, our maker and redeemer.

Silence is then kept for a time, all kneeling.

Celebrant Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth: Grant that these ashes may be to us a sign of our mortality and penitence, that we may remember that it is only by your gracious gift that we are given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

People **Amen.**

The congregation proceeds to the front of the nave for the imposition of ashes. Silence is kept.

The Celebrant says to each in turn,

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

The people return to the pews and remain kneeling.

When all have received ashes, the people are seated.

PSALM 51

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindness;
in your great compassion blot out my offenses.

Wash me through and through from my wickedness
and cleanse me from my sin.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.

Give me the joy of your saving help again
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.

I shall teach your ways to the wicked,
and sinners shall return to you.

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

Open my lips, O Lord,
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

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

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

LITANY OF PENANCE

The Celebrant and People pray together, all kneeling

Most holy and merciful Father: We confess to you and to one another, and to the whole communion of saints in heaven and on earth, that we have sinned by our own fault in thought, word, and deed; by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.

The Celebrant and People pray responsively

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 compassion on us, Lord.

We have been deaf 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 compassion on us, Lord.

We confess to you, Lord, all our past unfaithfulness: the pride, hypocrisy, and impatience of our lives,

We confess to you, Lord.

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people,

We confess to you, Lord.

Our anger at our own frustration, and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,

We confess to you, Lord.

Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonesty in daily life and work,

We confess to you, Lord

Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,

We confess to you, Lord.

Accept our repentance, Lord, for the wrongs we have done: for our blindness to human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,

Accept our repentance, Lord.

For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us,

Accept our repentance, Lord.

For our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us,

Accept our repentance, Lord.

Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us;

Favorably hear us, for your mercy is great.

Accomplish in us the work of your salvation,

That we may show forth your glory in the world.

By the cross and passion of your Son our Lord,

Bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.

The Celebrant alone stands and says

Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desires not the death of sinners, but rather that they may turn from their wickedness and live, has given power and commandment to his ministers to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins. He pardons and absolves all those who truly repent, and with sincere hearts believe his holy Gospel.

Therefore we beseech him to grant us true repentance and his Holy Spirit, that those things may please him which we do on this day, and that the rest of our life hereafter may be pure and holy, so that at the last we may come to his eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE PEACE

The people stand.

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People **And also with you.**

The Ministers and People greet one another in the name of the Lord and are then seated.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Offertory Sentences

If you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Matthew 5:23, 24

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Celebrant The Lord be with you.
People **And also with you.**
Celebrant Lift up your hearts.
People **We lift them to the Lord.**
Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Celebrant

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who was tempted in every way as we are, yet did not sin. By his grace we are able to triumph over every evil, and to live no longer for ourselves alone, but for him who died for us and rose again.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Celebrant and People

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

The people kneel or stand.

Celebrant

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given

for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.” 🛎

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, “Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.” 🛎

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Celebrant and People

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

The Celebrant continues

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say – in the language of our hearts –

Our Father in heaven,

holy is your Name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial,

and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are

yours, now and for ever. Amen.

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.

Anthems at the Breaking of Bread

My flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed, says the Lord.

My flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed, says the Lord.

Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood dwell in me and I in them.

My flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed, says the Lord.

A period of silence is kept.

Celebrant

The gifts of God for the people of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

The people sit.

Administration of the Sacrament: All are welcome to the Lord's Table at Ascension. To receive communion, come to a communion station at the direction of the Welcome Team. Receive the bread in the palm of your hand. Eat the bread and then drink from the cup when it is offered to you.

Gluten-free wafers are also available. Make your need known to the Clergy by holding up three fingers.

If you wish to receive a blessing rather than receive communion, please join in the movement to the communion station and cross your arms over the front of your chest - this will alert the Clergy of your desire to be blessed.

If you need communion brought to you please let a member of the Welcome Team know.

THE RICE BOWL OFFERING

The Lenten Rice Bowl Offering has been an Ascension tradition since the tenure of The Rev. William Smalley in the 1980s. Alternating between domestic and international causes, the offering comes from parishioners' cash or check donations left in the wooden bowl on the baptismal font as they come forward to receive Communion.

The people kneel.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Said by all.

**Almighty and everliving God,
we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food
of the most precious Body and Blood
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ;
and for assuring us in these holy mysteries
that we are living members of the Body of your
Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom.
And now, Father, send us out
to do the work you have given us to do,
to love and serve you
as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord.
To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit,
be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen**

THE BLESSING

Celebrant: Bow down before the Lord.

Grant, most merciful Lord, to your faithful people pardon and peace, that they may be cleansed from all their sins, and serve you with a quiet mind; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The people stand.

DISMISSAL

Celebrant Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

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