

HAVE MERCY ON ME O GOD
ACCORDING TO YOUR STEADFAST
LOVE BLOT OUT MY TRANSGRESSIONS
WASH ME THOROUGHLY AND CLEANSE
ME FROM MY SIN + RESTORE TO ME
THE JOY OF YOUR SALVATION PSALM 51:1,2,12



ASH WEDNESDAY

FEBRUARY 17, 2021

6:30 P.M.

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA

OUR WORSHIP TODAY

Ash Wednesday is a solemn day of prayer that begins the forty-day season of Lent. During Lent we prepare for the celebration of the Three Days of Jesus' death and resurrection. On Ash Wednesday we confess our sin in a litany of penitence.

We receive the sign of ashes as an external mark of our mortality. Ashes are an ancient symbol of repentance and mourning. We recall God's words to Adam and Eve following their disobedience: "You are dust, and to dust you shall return." The use of ashes also calls to mind the words of the funeral liturgy, "ashes to ashes, dust to dust." By honestly facing our need for forgiveness and healing, we turn to the springtime of God's mercy and grace.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Cover art by Judy Swanson.

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GATHERING IN GOD'S PRESENCE

Prelude — “Lamb of God”
“Abide with Me”

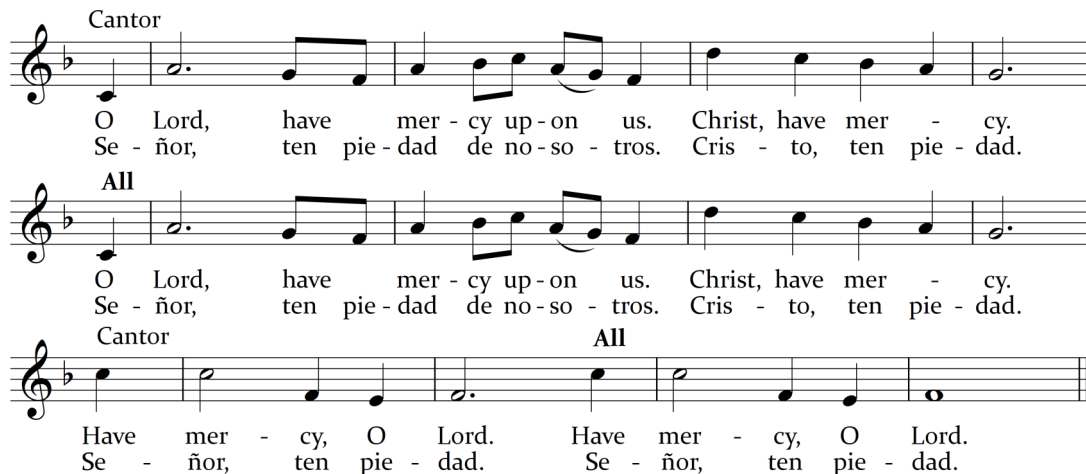
F. M. Christiansen, arr. G. Winston Cassler
Robert Hobby

Welcome and Announcements

***Kyrie** — from *All Creation Sings*, setting 11

Ana Hernandez

Cantor



O Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy.
Se - ñor, ten pie - dad de no - so - tros. Cris - to, ten pie - dad.

All

O Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy.
Se - ñor, ten pie - dad de no - so - tros. Cris - to, ten pie - dad.

Cantor

All

Have mer - cy, O Lord. Have mer - cy, O Lord.
Se - ñor, ten pie - dad. Se - ñor, ten pie - dad.

*Greeting

- P** The Lord be with you.
- C** And also with you.

*Prayer of the Day

- P** 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.
- C** Amen.

Imposition of Ashes

As the sign of the cross is made with ashes, the words “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return” are spoken as a reminder of our brokenness before God.

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

HEARING GOD’S WORD

First Reading — Isaiah 58:1-12

¹Shout out, do not hold back! Lift up your voice like a trumpet! Announce to my people their rebellion, to the house of Jacob their sins. ²Yet day after day they seek me and delight to know my ways, as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness and did not forsake the ordinance of their God; they ask of me righteous judgments, they delight to draw near to God. ³“Why do we fast, but you do not see? Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?” Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day, and oppress all your workers. ⁴Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight and to strike with a wicked fist. Such fasting as you do today will not make your voice heard on high. ⁵Is such the fast that I choose, a day to humble oneself? Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush, and to lie in sackcloth and ashes? Will you call this a fast, a day acceptable to the LORD? ⁶Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? ⁷Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin? ⁸Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard. ⁹Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am. If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, ¹⁰if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday. ¹¹The LORD will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail. ¹²Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.

- L** The word of the Lord.
- C** **Thanks be to God.**

Second Reading — 2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10

^{20b}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.

L The word of the Lord. **C** **Thanks be to God.**

*Gospel — Matthew 6:1, 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.**

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Hymn of the Day — “Abide with Me” (#629)

EVENTIDE



A - abide with me, fast falls the e - ven - tide.
 Swift to its close ebbs out life's lit - tle day;
 I need thy pres - ence ev - 'ry pass - ing hour;
 I fear no foe, with thee at hand to bless;
 Hold thou thy cross be - fore my clos - ing eyes,



The dark - ness deep - ens; Lord, with me a - abide.
 earth's joys grow dim, its glo - ries pass a - way;
 what but thy grace can foil the tempt - er's pow'r?
 ills have no weight, and tears no bit - ter - ness.
 shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;



When oth - er help - ers fail and com - forts flee,
 change and de - cay in all a - round I see;
 Who like thy - self my guide and stay can be?
 Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy vic - to - ry?
 heav'n's morn - ing breaks, and earth's vain shad - ows flee;



help of the help - less, oh, a - abide with me.
 O thou who chang - est not, a - abide with me.
 Through cloud and sun - shine, oh, a - abide with me.
 I tri - umph still, if thou a - abide with me!
 in life, in death, O Lord, a - abide with me.

Text: Henry F. Lyte; Music: William H. Monk

Invitation to Lent

*Confession of Sin

- P** Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who brings us safely through the sea,
who gives us water from the rock,
who leads us into the land of milk and honey.
- C** Amen.
- P** Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.
- C** Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
have mercy on us.
- P** For self-centered living,
and for failing to walk with humility and gentleness:
- C** Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
have mercy on us.
- P** For longing to have what is not ours,
and for hearts that are not at rest with ourselves:
- C** Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
have mercy on us.
- P** For misuse of human relationships,
and for unwillingness to see the image of God in others:
- C** Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
have mercy on us.
- P** For jealousies that divide families and nations,
and for rivalries that create strife and warfare:
- C** Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
have mercy on us.
- P** For reluctance in sharing the gifts of God,
and for carelessness with the fruits of creation:
- C** Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
have mercy on us.
- P** For hurtful words that condemn,
and for angry deeds that harm:
- C** Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
have mercy on us.

P For idleness in witnessing to Jesus Christ,
and for squandering the gifts of love and grace:
C **Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
have mercy on us.**

P In the mercy of almighty God,
Jesus Christ was given to die for us,
and for his sake God forgives us all our sins.
Through the Holy Spirit, God cleanses us
and gives us the power to proclaim
the mighty acts of the one who called us
out of hiding into his marvelous truth.
As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ,
and by his authority, I therefore declare to you
the entire forgiveness of all your sins,
in the name of the Father, and of the **+** Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.
C **Amen.**

***Prayers of Intercession**

After each petition:

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

***The Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be 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 forever. Amen.**

DEPARTING TO SERVE GOD'S WORLD

*Blessing

☐ Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever.

☑ Amen.

*Sending Hymn — “The Day You Gave Us, Lord, Has Ended” (#569) ST. CLEMENT

The day you gave us, Lord, has end - ed;
We thank you that your church, un - sleep - ing
As to each con - ti - nent and is - land
So be it, Lord; your realm shall nev - er,

the dark - ness falls at your be - hest.
while earth rolls on - ward in - to light,
the dawn leads on an - oth - er day,
like earth's proud em - pires, pass a - way;

To you our morn - ing hymns as - cend - ed;
through all the world its watch is keep - ing,
the voice of prayer is nev - er si - lent,
but stand and grow and rule for - ev - er,

your praise shall hal - low now our rest.
and nev - er rests by day or night.
nor dies the strain of praise a - way.
till all your crea - tures own your sway.

Text: John Ellerton, Music: Clement C. Scholefield

***Dismissal**

- ☐ 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, rejoice in the power of the Holy Spirit.

☑ **Thanks be to God.**

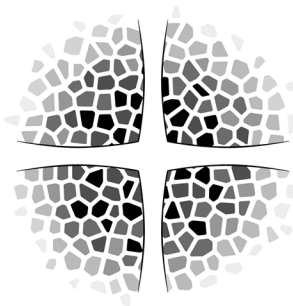
Postlude — “We Thank You, Lord Jesus Christ” BWV 623

J. S. Bach



SERVING AT ST. JOHN’S TODAY:

Presiding	Pastor Pam Fickenscher
Preaching	Pastor Jonathan Davis
Assisting Minister	Will Schroeer
Organist	Nathan Proctor



St. John's

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Jonathan Davis, *Associate Pastor*
Carol Benson, *Director of Jubilate Choir*
Julie Brehmer, *Director of Children's Ministry*
Tim Byers, *Facility Manager*
Leah H. Garlie, *Office Manager / Finance Manager*
Angie Gehring, *Shared Ministry Coordinator*
Christy Hall-Holt, *Welcome Ministry Coordinator*
Emmanuel Kaghondi, *Director of Ministry with Youth & Families*
Sally Lindell, *Parish Nurse*
Arielle Loy, *Director of Alleluia Choir*
Zachery Pelletier, *Director of Rejoice Rings*
Jaida Gehring / Marvin Perez, *Security and Custodial Assistants*
Nathan Proctor, *Organist and Director of Worship, Music & Arts*

Call the church office or check the website for a complete listing of staff emails.