

ASH WEDNESDAY
February 17, 2021
Faith Lutheran Church of Seaside

Gathering

Please stand as you are able.

PSALM 51:1-8

Greeting

The assembly stands. The presiding minister and the assembly greet each other.

P God be with you.

C And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

The presiding minister prays the prayer of the day.

P Let us pray. *A brief silence is kept.*

P Gracious God,

C 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. Amen.

The assembly is seated.

Word

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

Blow a trumpet in Zion; sound an alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming; it is near, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness there is spread upon the mountains a great and powerful people; their like has never been before, nor will be again after them through the years of all generations.

“Yet even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and 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. 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?

Blow the trumpet in Zion; consecrate a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather 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.

Between 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?’”

SECOND READING 2 CORINTHIANS 5:20B--6:10

We 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.

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

Please stand as you are able.

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

“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.

“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. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

“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. But 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.

P The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

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

The Gospel is proclaimed, concluding:

P The Gospel of the Lord.

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

The assembly is seated. Silence for reflection follows.

Invitation to Lent: *The assembly is seated.*

Friends in Christ, today with the whole church we enter the time of remembering Jesus' pilgrimage from life to death and 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.

Confession of Sin: *The presiding minister leads.*

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

The assembly kneels or sits. Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

P Most holy and merciful God,

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.

Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

P Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us.

C Hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.

Imposition of Ashes

P Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth.
May these ashes be a sign of our mortality and penitence, reminding us
that only by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ are we given eternal life;
through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C Amen.

People may come forward and kneel or stand to receive the ashes.

Ministers mark the forehead of each person with a cross of ashes, saying:

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

After those who desire ashes have received them, all may kneel or sit, and the minister continues.

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.**

P Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life.

C **Amen.**

The assisting minister leads a concluding prayer.

P Let us pray. *A brief silence is kept.* 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, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer is prayed by all. The presiding minister may introduce the prayer.

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

Our Father, who art in heaven, . . .

Sending

Blessing

The presiding minister proclaims God's blessing.

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

C **Amen.**

Dismissal

The assisting minister may address the assembly.

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.

Thanks be to God.