

Ash Wednesday



Valentines Day



Serving the Portland Area with the Means of Grace and as a family of believers for over 110 years... as a church, school, preschool, mission, and ministry.

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Ash Wednesday February 14, 2024

Grace ~ “I am not ashamed of the gospel. . .”



When it comes to the truth of Scripture, there is no room for compromise. The Bible is the book we live by... for life now and for life forever. We accept the Bible as the pure Word of God. We believe that our only Savior is Jesus Christ, the sinless Son of God, who was crucified, died, and was buried but rose again to open the door to heaven for everyone who believes in him.

Grace ~ “These are written that you may believe. . .”



Grace Lutheran Church has served the Portland area for over 100 years by faithfully preaching and teaching the timeless truth of God’s Word. We believe that God uses the timeless message of Word and Sacraments to bring souls into his care. This is a message that we share here and around the world through our affiliation with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS).

Grace ~ “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations. . .”



Grace Lutheran Church exists to win souls by joyfully proclaiming the truth of God’s grace through Christ, to nurture believers in growing in faith and lives of Christian service, and to join together in worship and praise. **“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and forever! Amen.” 2 Pt. 3:18**

Ash Wednesday – February 14, 2024

Worship Today - The mood of Ash Wednesday is solemn because it begins the 40 days of Lent, the season during which the Church remembers the passion and death of Jesus. During these 40 days Christians examine their lives and repent of the sin that sent the Savior to the cross. Our Ash Wednesday worship begins with the timeless rite of the imposition of ashes, a solemn symbol that has deep roots and wide precedent in both the Old and New Testament. Ashes symbolize human mortality and the deserved destruction of all who sin. Like Job, believers throughout the ages repent in "dust and ashes." The symbol, joined to a right understanding of its meaning, emphasizes in a striking way the absoluteness and enormity of sin. *Receiving ashes is a personal choice, neither right or wrong.* Worshipers who wish to participate approach the baptismal font and the pastor applies ashes to each forehead, imposed in the sign of the cross, with the words: *"Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."* Worshipers then return to their places. The ashes may be removed after worship, or after you return home.

THE GREETING

M: Brothers and sisters: God created us to experience joy in communion with him, to love all humanity, and to live in harmony with all 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. Therefore, God in his mercy has sent our Lord Jesus Christ to take our place under the law, to suffer for us, and to die the death we deserve. God made Jesus, who had no sin, to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. During the forty days of Lent we fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. The time of Lent reminds us that, in order to know Christ and the power of his resurrection, we must also know the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death. As disciples of the Lord Jesus we are called to struggle against everything that leads us away from love of God and our neighbor. I invite you, therefore, to commit yourselves to this struggle and confess your sins, asking our Father for strength. Let us be silent. Let us be still. Let us pause now for a time of reflection and self-examination.

Silence

*Savior, when in dust to you Low we bow in homage due,
When, repentant, to the skies Scarce we lift our weeping eyes;
Oh, by all your pains and woe Suffered once for us below,
Bending from your throne on high, Hear our penitential cry!*

*By your deep expiring groan, By the sad sepulchral stone,
By the vault whose dark abode Held in vain the rising God,
Oh, from earth to heav'n restored, Mighty, re-ascended Lord,
Bending from your throne on high, Hear our penitential cry!*

CONFESSION OF SINS

M: 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 own fault, by our own grievous fault in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have failed to do.

M: We have not loved you with our whole heart, 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, Lord.

M: 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 the Holy Spirit.

C: Have mercy on us, Lord.

M: We confess to you, Lord, all our past unfaithfulness. The pride, hypocrisy, and impatience in our lives:

C: We confess to you, O Lord.

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

C: We confess to you, O Lord.

M: Our anger and our frustration, and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves:

C: We confess to you, O Lord.

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

C: We confess to you, O Lord.

M: Our negligence in worship and prayer, and our failure to show the faith that is in us:

C: We confess to you, O Lord.

M: Pardon us, Lord, for the wrongs we have done. For our blindness to human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty.
C: **Forgive us, O Lord.**
M: For what we think or say or do that is at variance with your will:
C: **Forgive us, O Lord.**
M: Restore us, O Lord, and let your anger depart from us:
C: **Hear us, Lord, for your mercy is great. Amen.**

THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES

M: Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation.
C: **That we may show forth your glory in the world.**
M: By the cross and passion of your Son, our Lord,
C: **Bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.**

Those wishing to receive ashes are asked to form a line in the midst of the sanctuary.

THE EXHORTATION

M: Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, does not desire the death of sinners, but rather that they turn from their wickedness and live. Therefore, during these days of Lent we implore him to give us renewal and his Holy Spirit. May we continue to abide in true faith, and at the last be received by him through the merits of Jesus Christ, our Lord.
C: **Amen.**

THE LESSON

Matthew 27:15-26

¹⁵ Now it was the governor's custom at the festival to release a prisoner chosen by the crowd. ¹⁶ At that time they had a well-known prisoner whose name was Jesus Barabbas. ¹⁷ So when the crowd had gathered, Pilate asked them, "Which one do you want me to release to you: Jesus Barabbas, or Jesus who is called the Messiah?" ¹⁸ For he knew it was out of self-interest that they had handed Jesus over to him. ¹⁹ While Pilate was sitting on the judge's seat, his wife sent him this message: "Don't have anything to do with that innocent man, for I have suffered a great deal today in a dream because of him."

²⁰ But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus executed.

²¹ "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" asked the governor. "Barabbas," they answered.

²² "What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called the Messiah?" Pilate asked. They all answered, "Crucify him!"

²³ "Why? What crime has he committed?" asked Pilate. But they shouted all the louder, "Crucify him!"

²⁴ When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, but that instead an uproar was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd. “I am innocent of this man’s blood,” he said. “It is your responsibility!”

²⁵ All the people answered, “His blood is on us and on our children!”

²⁶ Then he released Barabbas to them. But he had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY

CW21 #410 *“Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed”*

*Alas! and did my Savior bleed,
And did my Sov'reign die?
Would he devote that sacred head,
For sinners such as I?*

*Was it for crimes that I had done,
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity, grace unknown,
And love beyond degree!*

*Well might the sun in darkness hide,
And shut its glories in
When God, the mighty Maker, died
For his own creatures' sin.*

*Thus might I hide my blushing face,
While his dear cross appears,
Dissolve my heart in thankfulness,
And melt my eyes to tears.*

*But drops of grief can ne'er repay,
The debt of love I owe;
Here, Lord, I give myself away –
'Tis all that I can do.*

OFFERING



PRAYER OF THE CHURCH & THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

THE SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

Liturgical responses will be spoken this evening.

M: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

M: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift them up to the Lord.**

M: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

M: Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In love he has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. He made his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world. Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ. To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and thanks and honor and glory forever and ever.

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

M: Holy, holy, holy Lord God of heavenly hosts: heaven and earth are full of your glory.

C: **Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he, blessed is he, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat, this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me. Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: Amen.

LAMB OF GOD

M: O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us!

DISTRIBUTION

Thank you for honoring our practice of "close" communion. The Bible teaches that participating in the Lord's Supper is an expression of complete unity of faith (1 Cor. 10:17). We lovingly ask, therefore, that before joining in this, the highest act of fellowship, a unity of faith based on the Bible be established through membership in this congregation or in a sister congregation of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). We are most eager for you to join us in the unity of faith and confession we enjoy.

BLESSING

CLOSING HYMN

CW#21 Blue 576 **"Amazing Grace – How Sweet the Sound"**

Amazing grace --how sweet the sound

That saved a wretch like me!

I once was lost but now am found,

Was blind but now I see.

The Lord has promised good to me;

His Word my hope secures.

He will my shield and portion be

As long as life endures.

Through many dangers, toils, and snares

I have already come;

'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,

And grace will lead me home.

When we've been there ten thousand years,

Bright shining as the sun,

We've no less days to sing God's praise

Than when we'd first begun.