

# Ash Wednesday

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

Ecclesiastes 3:20



**February 18, 2026**



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## Ash Wednesday

### Introduction

On Ash Wednesday we begin our forty-day journey toward Easter with a day of fasting and repentance. Marking our foreheads with dust, we acknowledge that we die and return to the earth. At the same time, the dust traces the life-giving cross indelibly marked on our foreheads at baptism. While we journey through Lent to return to God, we have already been reconciled to God through Christ. We humbly pray for God to make our hearts clean while we rejoice that “now is the day of salvation.” Returning to our baptismal call, we more intentionally bear the fruits of mercy and justice in the world.

### Announcements

### Preparation for Worship – Silent Prayer

## Gathering Hymn..... "Chief of Sinners Though I Be"



1 Chief of sin - ners though I be, Je - sus shed his blood for me,  
2 Oh, the height of Je - sus' love! High - er than the heav'ns a - bove,  
3 On - ly Je - sus can im - part balm to heal the wound - ed heart,  
4 Chief of sin - ners though I be, Christ is all in all to me;  
5 O my Sav - ior, help af - ford by your Spir - it and your word!



died that I might live on high, lives that I might nev - er die.  
deep - er than the depths of sea, last - ing as e - ter - ni - ty.  
peace that flows from sin for - giv'n, joy that lifts the soul to heav'n,  
all my wants to him are known, all my sor - rows are his own.  
When my way - ward heart would stray, keep me in the nar - row way;



As the branch is to the vine, I am his, and he is mine.  
Love that found me—won-drous thought—found me when I sought him not.  
faith and hope to walk with God in the way that E - noch trod.  
He sus - tains the hid - den life safe with him from earth - ly strife.  
grace in time of need sup - ply while I live and when I die.

Text: William McComb, 1793–1870

Music: GETHSEMANE, Richard Redhead, 1820–1901

## **INVITATION INTO LENT**

Brothers and sisters: God created us to experience joy in communion with him, to love all humanity, and to live in harmony with all of God's 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 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.

## **Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

**Amen.**

Let us return to God, confessing our sin in the assurance of God's abiding love.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Compassionate One,  
**you are slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, but our lives do not always reflect you and your love for the world. We do not show others the tender compassion you have shown to us. We do not welcome others with the radical hospitality you grant to all people. We oppress others, even though you have set us free again and again. We squander the abundant gifts of the earth. Transform our lives and guide us again in the way of the cross.**

**Amen.**

Beloved in Christ, God's arms are always stretched open wide to welcome the wandering ones home. In + Christ your sins are forgiven. You have a place in God's house forever.

**Amen.**



## **THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES**

Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation

**that we may show forth your glory in the wor**

By the cross and Passion of your Son, our Lord,

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

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 God to grant us true repentance and the Holy Spirit that those things may be pleasing 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 God's eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

*Those who wish to receive ashes are invited to come forward. Ashes are applied to the forehead of each person with the words:*

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

## **Prayer of the Day**

Almighty and ever-living God, you hate nothing you have made, and you forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and honest hearts, so that, truly repenting of our sins, we may receive from you, the God of all mercy, full pardon and forgiveness through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **First Reading: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17**

*Because of the coming Day of the LORD, the prophet Joel calls the people to a community lament. The repentant community reminds God of his gracious character and asks God to spare the people, lest the nations doubt God's power to save.*

Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the 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 spread upon the mountains a great and powerful army comes; their like has never been from of old, nor will be again after them in ages to come. Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the LORD, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing. 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; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her canopy. Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep. Let them say, "Spare your people, O LORD, and do not make your heritage a mockery, a byword among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'"

**HERE ENDS THE READING.**

## **Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10**

*The ministry of the gospel endures many challenges and hardships. Through this ministry, God's reconciling activity in the death of Christ reaches into the depths of our lives to bring us into a right relationship with God. In this way, God accepts us into the reality of divine salvation.*

We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For 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! We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

**HERE ENDS THE READING.**

## **Choir Anthem..... "Did You Think to Pray" by Greg Gilpin**

### **Gospel: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21**

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew

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

*In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus commends almsgiving, prayer, and fasting, but emphasizes that spiritual devotion must not be done for show.*

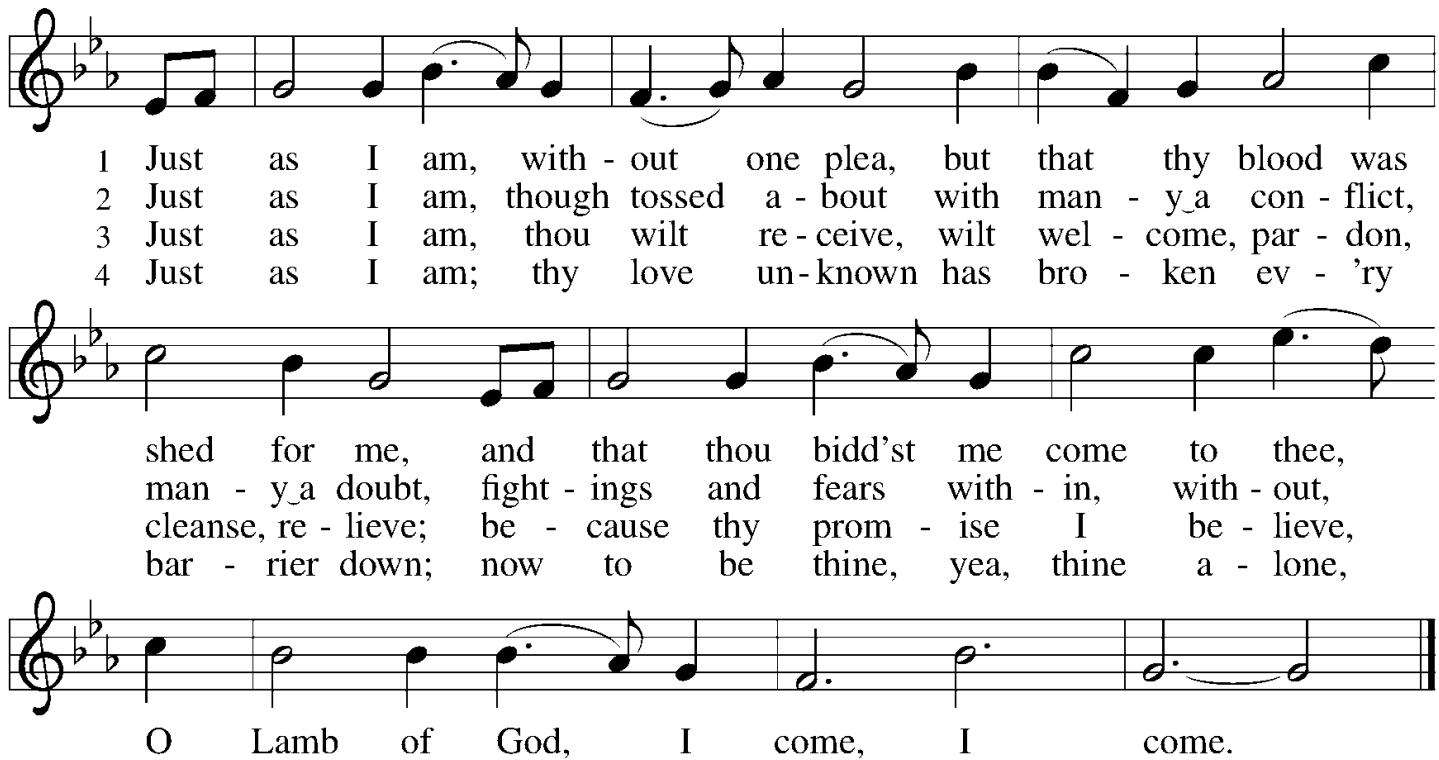
"Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. "So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. "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. But 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. "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. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so 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. "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

**The Gospel of the Lord**

# Praise to you O Christ.

## Sermon

### Sermon Hymn..... "Just As I Am"



1 Just as I am, with - out one plea, but that thy blood was  
2 Just as I am, though tossed a - bout with man - y\_a con - flict,  
3 Just as I am, thou wilt re - ceive, wilt wel - come, par - don,  
4 Just as I am; thy love un-known has bro - ken ev - 'ry

shed for me, and that thou bidd'st me come to thee,  
man - y\_a doubt, fight - ings and fears with - in, with - out,  
cleanse, re - lieve; be - cause thy prom - ise I be - lieve,  
bar - rier down; now to be thine, yea, thine a - lone,

O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Text: Charlotte Elliott, 1789–1871

Music: WOODWORTH, William B. Bradbury, 1816–1868

## The Apostles' Creed

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
    who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit,  
        born of the Virgin Mary,  
        suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
        was crucified, died, and was buried;  
        he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again;  
    he ascended into heaven,  
    he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

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

**Amen**

## Prayers of Intercession

Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs.

*A brief silence.*

Guide your church, O God. Accompany all Christians in this season of repentance, and renew our faith in the riches of grace you give to us in baptism.

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

Heal this earth, O God. Satisfy the needs of every parched place, every diverse ecosystem, every suffering creature. Though all return to dust, grant beauty and purpose to each living thing.

Lord, in your mercy,

## **Hear our prayer.**

Restore the nations, O God. Let your healing spring up quickly across the world. Give all in authority the will to loose the bonds of injustice and let any who are oppressed go free.

Lord, in your mercy,

## **Hear our prayer.**

Deliver your people, O God. Comfort any whose hearts are rent by grief, uphold any who are sick, bring food to those who hunger, and give housing to all without shelter (*We pray especially for Jeff, Eric, Lizzy, Christi, Debbie, Adrian, Larry, Katie, Angelika, Jenna, Dave, Joy, Frank, Tricia, Kyle, Tyler, John, Tom, Matt, Jason, Gene, Shirley, Roy, Jana, Kathie, Del, Regan, Geri, Kristen, Janet, Bob, Michael, Iris, Peter, Marge, Kelly, Brian and friends & family of Joan*).

Lord, in your mercy,

## **Hear our prayer.**

Bless this assembly, O God. Reconcile us to one another and to you. Strengthen our resolve to fast from evil, open our hands in sharing, and quicken our prayer.

Lord, in your mercy,

## **Hear our prayer.**

Hold us forever, O God. We thank you for all who now know their treasure in heaven, and for all who on earth proclaimed your abounding, steadfast love.

Lord, in your mercy,

## **Hear our prayer.**

Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation.

**Amen.**

## **Sharing of the Peace**

The peace of the Lord be with you all.  
**And also with you.**

## **Offering**

### **Offering Prayer**

O God, maker of heaven and earth, your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work.

We ask this in Jesus' name.

**Amen.**

### **Thanksgiving at the Table**

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of  
sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

## **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.**

## **Distribution**

*We will be using the intinction method for distribution. You will be handed bread and asked to dip the bread in the chalice. Gluten-free bread and grape juice are available. Please make your way forward by the center aisle, returning down the side. If mobility is a problem for you, please notify an usher and you will be served at your seat.*

## **Invitation to the Table**

Come to the table. Feast on God's goodness and mercy.

## **Post Communion Prayer**

God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## **Blessing**

Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity: God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation, + bless you now and always.

**Amen.**

## Sending Hymn..... "Be Thou My Vision"

1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;  
2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;  
3 Rich - es I heed not, nor vain, emp - ty praise,  
4 Light of my soul, af - ter vic - to - ry won,

naught be all else to me, save that thou art:  
I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord.  
thou mine in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways:  
may I reach heav - en's joys, O heav - en's Sun!

thou my best thought both by day and by night,  
Thou my soul's shel - ter, and thou my high tow'r,  
thou and thou on - ly, the first in my heart,  
Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,

wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.  
raise thou me heav'n - ward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.  
great God of heav - en, my trea - sure thou art.  
still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

Text: Irish, 8th cent.; vers. Eleanor H. Hull, 1860–1935, alt.; tr. Mary E. Byrne, 1880–1931  
Music: SLANE, Irish traditional

## Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**