

Ash Wednesday
February 22, 2023

Faith Lutheran Church

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Georgetown, TX 78628

flcms.org

(The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod)

WELCOME

INVOCATION:

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

CALL TO WORSHIP: Hebrews 12:2

Pastor: [Come,] let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith,

People: 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.

Pastor: Brothers and sisters in Christ, on this day the Church begins a holy season of prayerful and penitential reflection, the season of Lent. Our attention is especially directed to the holy sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. From ancient times this season of Lent has been kept as a time of special devotion, self-denial, and humble repentance born of a faithful heart that dwells confidently on God's Word and draws from it life and hope.

People: May our dear Father in heaven, for the sake of His beloved Son and in the power of His Holy Spirit, richly bless us this season and prepare us to gather together with glad hearts for a glorious Easter celebration. Amen.

OPENING HYMN: "Jesus, I Will Ponder Now" (LSB, #440)

Jesus, I will ponder now
On Your holy passion;
With Your Spirit me endow
For such meditation.
Grant that I in love and faith
May the image cherish
Of Your suff'ring, pain, and death
That I may not perish.

Make me see Your great distress,
Anguish, and affliction,
Bonds and stripes and wretchedness
And Your crucifixion;
Make me see how scourge and rod,
Spear and nails did wound You,
How for them You died, O God,
Who with thorns had crowned You.

Yet, O Lord, not thus alone
Make me see Your passion,
But its cause to me make known
And its termination.
Ah! I also and my sin
Wrought Your deep affliction;
This indeed the cause has been
Of Your crucifixion.

Grant that I Your passion view
With repentant grieving.
Let me not bring shame to You
By unholy living.
How could I refuse to shun
Ev'ry sinful pleasure
Since for me God's only Son
Suffered without measure?

If my sins give me alarm
And my conscience grieve me,
Let Your cross my fear disarm;
Peace of conscience give me.
Help me see forgiveness won
By Your holy passion.
If for me He slays His Son,
God must have compassion!
Graciously my faith renew;
Help me bear my crosses,
Learning humbleness from You,
Peace mid pain and losses.
May I give You love for love!
Hear me, O my Savior,
That I may in heav'n above
Sing Your praise forever.

Text: Public domain

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION:

Pastor: Fellow disciples of the Lord Jesus, our God is unfailing in love and great in compassion. We need not fear to confess our sins to Him, for it is God's own kindness that leads us to repentance, and it is through His Son that contrition is rewarded with pardon. With Jesus' blood God blots out transgressions and creates pure hearts. Come, let us kneel in reverent awe before the altar of mercy to admit our failures and receive divine forgiveness.

People: Sinners from birth yet believers by second birth, we offer to You, O God, no excuses for our wickedness. We come to You in the name of Your Son to seek Your favor beneath His cross. Though sin fatally infects us, His wounds eternally heal us. Grant us Your peace for Jesus' sake, and by His Spirit prompt us always to declare Your praise. Amen.

Pastor: God is proved right when He speaks, my friends. His judgments are true, and through Jesus He has judged you "not guilty." You are free to live for Christ and follow Him to heaven. As a servant of this gospel and with the authority the Lord Jesus bestowed on His Church, I, therefore, forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

GREETING and PRAYER OF THE DAY:

Pastor: *The Lord be with you.*

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: *We pray:*

People: **Almighty and everlasting God, You despise nothing You have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and contrite hearts that, lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, we may receive from You full pardon and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

THE FIRST READING: *Joel 2:12–19*

“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?””

Then the Lord became jealous for His land
and had pity on His people.

The Lord answered and said to His people,
“Behold, I am sending to you
grain, wine, and oil,
and you will be satisfied;
and I will no more make you
a reproach among the nations.”

RESPONSORY: Hosea 14:1-2

Lector: Return, O Israel, to the LORD your God. Your sins have been your downfall!

People: Take words with you and return to the LORD. Say to Him, “Forgive all our sins and receive us graciously, that we may offer the fruit of our lips.

EPISTLE READING: 2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10

We implore 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.

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.

RESPONSORY: Psalm 102:12-13

Lector: But You, O LORD, sit enthroned forever; Your renown endures through all generations.

People: You will arise and have compassion on Zion, for it is time to show favor to her; the appointed time has come.

Lector: Please rise, as you are able.

Lector: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 6thth chapter:

People: Glory to You, O Lord!

GOSPEL READING: Matthew 6:1–6, 16–21

[Jesus said:] “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. . . .

“And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father Who is in secret. And your Father Who sees in secret will reward you.

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Lector: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ!

Lector: We confess together our Christian faith, using the explanation to the Second Article of the Apostles' Creed, from Luther's Small Catechism:

CONFESSION OF FAITH:

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary is my Lord, Who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own, live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true!

HYMN: "Wearing Ashes of Repentance" (melody: Ringe Recht)

Wearing ashes of repentance,
Jesus, I before You kneel,
Though unworthy, here receiving
Treasures thieves can never steal.

Purify my acts of kindness
By refinement through Your blood.
Sanctify my prayers and praises;
Make them pleasing unto God.

Pardon, Lord, my loveless fasting
And my phony piety.
Hide beneath dark cross-shaped shadows
All my vain hypocrisy.

Rectify my selfish motives
That seek only public fame.
Work through me the unseen service
That brings glory to Your name.

Savior not with ash but water
You have clothed me in the sign
Of Your death and resurrection,
Making life eternal mine.

Walter A. Pohland (2019) 8.7.8.7

SERMON: "The Missing Verses" (Matthew 6:7-15)

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS AND OFFERINGS

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH: A Litany on the Prayer of Our Lord

Pastor: O God, Name above all names, all wise, bountiful Provider, most merciful, most mighty, strong Defender, great King, powerful Ruler, all-glorious, Who in incomprehensible love regards us as Your children, we come to You as Your children in prayer:

People: Our Father Who art in heaven.

Pastor: O God, Name above all names, help us to teach Your Word in truth and purity; teach us to know You through You the inerrant Scriptures You have authored by Your Spirit; grant us grace to believe them, and sanctify us to lead lives of discipleship according to them:

People: Hallowed be Thy name, O Lord.

Pastor: O God, Who would have all people to be saved, graciously grant us true faith in Your Son and daily repentance; revive Your Church beginning with us; extend Your kingdom of grace into the distant places of the earth; and speed the advent of Your kingdom of glory:

People: Thy kingdom come, O Lord.

Pastor: O God, knowing all things, break and hinder every evil counsel and will, which would not let us hallow Your name nor let Your kingdom come; strengthen and preserve us steadfast in Your Word and faith; let us do Your will as gladly as do the angels in heaven; and in all trials and temptations keep us faithful to the end:

People: They will, O Lord, be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Pastor: O God, Creator and Sustainer of life, Who gives us all things that belong to the support and care of our bodies, grant us, according to our needs, food, drink, and clothing, a Christian family, devout and faithful rulers, peace, good friends, and pious neighbors:

People: O Lord, give us this day our daily bread.

Pastor: O God, most merciful, though we daily sin much and indeed deserve nothing but punishment, yet we are not always willing to forgive everyone as You have forgiven us; help us so to know Your mercy and grace in Christ Jesus that we also heartily forgive and readily do good to those who sin against us:

People: And forgive us our trespasses, O Lord, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Pastor: O God, most mighty, opposed by the devil, who conspires to destroy our souls, the world, which seeks to lure us into sinful pleasures, and our own flesh, which tries to seduce us away from the high purposes of our faith, keep us, we pray, from being deceived and enticed into misbelief, despair, and other great shame and vice:

People: Lead us not into temptation, O Lord.

Pastor: O God, our strong Defender, keep safe our bodies and souls, property and honor, and so guard our faith that when we depart this world we dwell with Christ eternally:

People: O Lord, deliver us from evil.

Pastor: O God, great King, the holy Christian Church on earth is Yours, purchased by Your Son with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death. You have seated Him on the throne and place all things under His feet, so that truly:

People: Thine is the kingdom.

Pastor: O God, omnipotent Ruler, the earth with all its fullness is Yours; You govern and preserve it, You protect and defend it, and in You is all might and wisdom:

People: Thine is the power.

Pastor: O God, all glorious Ruler in all heavenly places, around Whose throne angels and archangels chant unending hymns of adoration, You save us from damnation to give us eternal life, You make us holy through faith in Jesus, Your Son, that we dwell eternally with You:

People: Thine is the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Pastor: In the name of our Redeemer:

People: Amen. Amen. This is most certainly true!

THE SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

WORDS OF INSTITUTION:

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night in which He was betrayed, took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and gave it to His disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sin. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

PAX DOMINI ~ *The Peace of the Lord*

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: Amen.

DISTRIBUTION

The Lord's Supper will be distributed at the altar rail. Please follow the ushers' directions.

DISTRIBUTION HYMN: "The Death of Jesus Christ, Our Lord" (LSB, #634)

The death of Jesus Christ, our Lord,
We celebrate with one accord;
It is our comfort in distress,
Our heart's sweet joy and happiness.

He blotted out with His own blood
The judgment that against us stood;
For us He full atonement made,
And all our debt He fully paid.

That this forever true shall be
He gives a solemn guarantee:
In this His holy Supper here
We taste His love so sweet, so near.

His Word proclaims and we believe
That in this Supper we receive
His very body, as He said,
His very blood for sinners shed.

We dare not ask how this can be,
But simply hold the mystery
And trust this word where life begins:
"Given and shed for all your sins."

They who this word do not believe
This food unworthily receive,
Salvation here will never find—
May we this warning keep in mind!

But blest is each believing guest
Who in these promises finds rest;
For Jesus shall in love remain
With all who here His grace obtain.

Help us sincerely to believe
That we may worthily receive
Your Supper and in You find rest.
Amen! They who believe are blest.

Text: Public domain

DISTRIBUTION HYMN: "O Savior, Precious Savior" (LSB, #527)

O Savior, precious Savior,
Whom yet unseen we love;
O name of might and favor,
All other names above,
We worship Thee, we bless Thee,
To Thee, O Christ, we sing;
We praise Thee and confess Thee,
Our holy Lord and King.

O bringer of salvation,
Who wondrously hast wrought
Thyself the revelation

Of love beyond our thought,
We worship Thee, we bless Thee,
To Thee, O Christ, we sing;
We praise Thee and confess Thee,
Our gracious Lord and King.

In Thee all fullness dwelleth,
All grace and pow'r divine;
The glory that excelleth,
O Son of God, is Thine.

We worship Thee, we bless Thee,
To Thee, O Christ, we sing;
We praise Thee and confess Thee,
Our glorious Lord and King.

O grant the consummation
Of this our song above
In endless adoration
And everlasting love;
Then shall we praise and bless Thee
Where perfect praises ring,
And evermore confess Thee,
Our Savior and our King!

Text: Public domain

DISTRIBUTION HYMN: “Chief of Sinners Though I Be” (LSB, #611)

Chief of sinners though I be,
Jesus shed His blood for me,
Died that I might live on high,
Lives that I might never die.
As the branch is to the vine,
I am His, and He is mine.

Oh, the height of Jesus' love,
Higher than the heav'ns above,
Deeper than the depths of sea,
Lasting as eternity!
Love that found me—wondrous thought!
Found me when I sought Him not.

Only Jesus can impart
Balm to heal the wounded heart,
Peace that flows from sin forgiv'n,
Joy that lifts the soul to heav'n,
Faith and hope to walk with God
In the way that Enoch trod.

Chief of sinners though I be,
Christ is all in all to me;
All my wants to Him are known,
All my sorrows are His own.
He sustains the hidden life
Safe with Him from earthly strife.

O my Savior, help afford
By Your Spirit and Your Word!
When my wayward heart would stray,
Keep me in the narrow way;
Grace in time of need supply
While I live and when I die.

Text: Public domain

COMMON DISMISSAL:

Pastor: Now may this true body and blood our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in faith unto life everlasting.

People: Amen.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Pastor: Let us pray.

People: Lord Jesus Christ, in Your pure mercy You have bequeathed to us a meal of forgiveness. You have given us Your body and blood to eat and drink, with the promise that all who feast on You in faith will be raised by You to everlasting life. We praise You for Your lavish love and humbly ask the privilege of sharing it with others until all nations behold Your cross and bow before You in grateful joy. Amen.

BENEDICAMUS

Pastor: Let us bless the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTION: (*Numbers 6:24-26*)

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

People: Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” (LSB, #425)

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast
Save in the death of Christ, my God;
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.

See, from His head, His hands, His feet
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a tribute far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all!

Text: Public domain

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Go in peace and serve the Lord!

In Christian Service:

All disciples of the Lord Jesus

with

Proclaimer & Liturgist: Rev. Walt Pohland

Lector: Vicar John Cotner

Organist: Adam Perez