

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
Ash Wednesday Service
February 14, 2024 – 7:00pm

**Indicates when you should stand, if you are able.*

Prelude

***Opening Prayer - All:** Father in heaven, as we walk together, on the road to the cross, during the season of Lent, we pray that the Holy Spirit will fill our hearts, with a desire to know Jesus, more deeply than we have ever known him before. Set our hearts on fire, so that our lives may bear witness to the world, about the love of Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

***Opening Hymn #660**

“Lift High The Cross”

***Responsive Reading: Psalm 51:1-17**

P: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

C: Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!

P: For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

C: Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.

P: Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

C: Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.

P: Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

C: Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice.

P: Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

C: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

P: Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

C: Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.

P: Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

C: Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness.

P: O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

C: For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering.

ALL: The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Choir Anthem

“Lord, Keep Us Steadfast In Your Word”

***Ash Wednesday Litany**

P: 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 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.

As disciples of the Lord Jesus we are called to struggle against everything that leads us away from the love of God and our neighbor. Repentance, fasting, prayer, and works of love—the disciplines 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 disciplines.

(Silence for reflection and self-examination)

P: Most holy and merciful Father,

C: We confess to you and to one another that we have sinned by our own fault, in our thoughts, words, and deeds; by what we have done and by what we have left undone.

P: We have not loved you with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others, as we ourselves have been forgiven by you.

C: Have mercy on us, Lord.

P: We have often been deaf 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, Lord.

P: We confess to you, O Lord, all of our past unfaithfulness. All of our pride, hypocrisy, and impatience,

C: We confess to you, Lord.

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

C: We confess to you, Lord.

P: Our anger at our own frustration, and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,

C: We confess to you, Lord.

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

C: We confess to you, Lord.

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

C: We confess to you, Lord.

P: Accept our repentance, Lord, for the wrongs we have done. For our blindness to human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,

C: Accept our repentance, Lord.

P: For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us,

C: Accept our repentance, Lord.

P: For our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us,

C: Accept our repentance, Lord.

P: Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us.

C: Hear us, Lord, for your mercy is great. Amen.

Imposition of Ashes – Come forward and stand in front of Pastor to receive ashes.

**After the imposition of ashes, we continue:*

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 by the passion of your Son, our Lord,

C: Bring us, with all your saints, into the joy of his resurrection.

P: 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 him to grant us true repentance, through his Holy Spirit, that those things which we do on this day may please him, and that the rest of our lives may be pure and holy, and that, on the last day, we may come into his eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord, **C: Amen.**

Hymn #337

“Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed”

Sermon Text: Luke 1:26-33

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, “Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!” ²⁹But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

Galatians 4:4-7

⁴But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” ⁷So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

Sermon Series: “The Jesus I Never Knew” (based on the book by Philip Yancey)

Part 1 – “Background: Jewish Roots And Soil”

Pastor William Shields

(text: Luke 1:26-33 & Galatians 4:4-7)

***Confession of Faith**

P: What is your only comfort in life and in death?

C: That I, with body and soul, both in life and in death, am not my own, but belong to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ, who with his precious blood has fully satisfied for all my sins, and redeemed me from the power of the devil. And he so preserves me that, without the will of my Father in heaven, not a hair can fall from my head; indeed, that all things must work together for my salvation. Wherefore, by his Holy Spirit, he also assures me of eternal life, and makes me heartily willing and ready, from now on, to live unto him. Amen.

Offering

***The Words of Institution**

***The Lord's Prayer C: 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.**

Communion Distribution: *Hymns during distribution #606, 608, 609, 613.*

***The Blessing**

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **C: Amen.**

***Benediction**

***Closing Hymn #629**

“Abide With Me”

***Dismissal P: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. C: Thanks be to God!**

Postlude