

# Ash Wednesday

## March 2, 2022

### Ash Wednesday Prayer

Gracious Savior I fall at your feet this day as your Church once more enters the Lenten season to meditate upon your passion, by which we have been eternally redeemed.

In spirit I appear before you in sackcloth and ashes in true repentance; let me receive your full pardon. Do not let the pleasures of life, the worries of the day, and the activities of my daily routine crowd You out of my heart and out of my thoughts. Draw me to Your wounded side, and cleanse me with Your most precious blood. Bring healing to my soul and peace to my mind. By Your grace, let me crucify my sinful affections, lusts, and desires. Make me more than a conqueror over every temptation.

I confess to You all my sins. Let none of them cling to me. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Teach me to love You more and more. Give me grace to Confess You as my Savior, who has redeemed me on Calvary, lifting me out of the darkness of sin to be Your own. Gracious Savior, let Your constraining love keep me and all God's children steadfast to the end. Amen.

*Lutheran Book of Prayer*  
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- L** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**C** Amen.

### Psalm 51:1–13

- L** <sup>1</sup>Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;  
according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.  
**C** <sup>2</sup>**Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!**  
**L** <sup>3</sup>For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.  
**C** <sup>4</sup>**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.**  
**L** <sup>5</sup>Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.  
**C** <sup>6</sup>**Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.**  
**L** <sup>7</sup>Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.  
**C** <sup>8</sup>**Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice.**  
**L** <sup>9</sup>Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.  
**C** <sup>10</sup>**Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.**  
**L** <sup>11</sup>Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.  
**C** <sup>12</sup>**Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.**  
**L** <sup>13</sup>Then I will teach transgressors your ways,  
**C** and sinners will return to you.

### Kyrie

- |                    |                            |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>L</b> O Lord,   | <b>C</b> Have Mercy on us. |
| <b>L</b> O Christ, | <b>C</b> Have Mercy on us. |
| <b>L</b> O Lord,   | <b>C</b> Have Mercy on us. |

## Joel 2:12–14

<sup>12</sup>“Yet even now,” declares the LORD,  
“return to me with all your heart,  
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;  
<sup>13</sup>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.  
<sup>14</sup>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?

## 2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10

<sup>20b</sup>We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup>For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

<sup>6:1</sup>Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. <sup>2</sup>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. <sup>3</sup>We put no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, <sup>4</sup>but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, <sup>5</sup>beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; <sup>6</sup>by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; <sup>7</sup>by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; <sup>8</sup>through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; <sup>9</sup>as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; <sup>10</sup>as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.

## Matthew 6:1–6, 16–21

**L** The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 9<sup>th</sup> chapter.

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

<sup>1</sup>[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.

<sup>2</sup>“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. <sup>3</sup>But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, <sup>4</sup>so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

<sup>5</sup>“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. <sup>6</sup>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. . . .

<sup>16</sup>“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. <sup>17</sup>But when you fast, anoint your

head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup>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.

<sup>19</sup>“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, <sup>20</sup>but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup>For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

**L** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

Yesterday was Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday). It was a day of revelry before the somber season of Lent. Strictly speaking, there is nothing inherently wrong with festivities at any time of the year. However, approaching a season of repentance with a party does seem contrary to the spirit and purpose of Lent. However, it does illustrate an important point about repentance.

Repentance is not something that can be forced! True repentance comes from the startling recognition of sin and its consequences. This is something that cannot be programmed. It is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Martin Luther calls this the alien or foreign work of the Holy Spirit. The proper work of the Holy Spirit is bringing forgiveness through faith in the Gospel that Jesus is the savior who died for the sins of the world. But before that can happen, the Holy Spirit must convince us of our need for a savior.

King David was fully convinced that his scheming had covered up the consequence of his twin sins of adultery and murder. If God had not sent the prophet Nathan to challenge His unrepentant heart, David would have gone to His grave without true repentance.

By the working of the Holy Spirit through the words of the prophet, David repented. He left us a remembrance of his repentance in Psalms 32 and 51.

Read Psalm 51 again and imagine what David experienced in his heart. As far as possible make his words, your words.

- <sup>1</sup> Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your steadfast love;  
according to your abundant mercy  
blot out my transgressions.
- <sup>2</sup> Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,  
and cleanse me from my sin!
- <sup>3</sup> For I know my transgressions,  
and my sin is ever before me.
- <sup>4</sup> Against you, you only, have I sinned  
and done what is evil in your sight,
- <sup>10</sup> Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and renew a right spirit within me.
- <sup>11</sup> Cast me not away from your presence,  
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
- <sup>12</sup> Restore to me the joy of your salvation,  
and uphold me with a willing spirit.
- (Psalm 51:1-4; 10-12)

Prayer: 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.

**Abide with Me** Lutheran Service Book 876, Lutheran Worship 490, The Lutheran Hymnal 552  
Stanzas 1 & 6

1 A - bid e with me, fast falls the e - ven - tide.

The dark - ness deep - ens; Lord, with me a - bid e.

When oth - er help - ers fail and com - forts flee,

Help of the help - less, O a - bid e with me.

- 6 Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;  
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies.  
Heav'n's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;  
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

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**Service Notes:**

One person may serve as Leader or this may be shared with a number of individuals.

Read one or more of the lessons. Hymns may be sung or read. Use as much or little of this service as you would like.

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