

ASH WEDNESDAY



18.02.26



✠ **The Gathering of the Community** *Please rise in body or spirit*

Priest: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Priest: Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, you despise nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our brokenness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

All: **Amen.**

First Reading - Joel 2.1-2, 12-17a

Please be seated

Reader: A Reading from the Book of Joel.

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?'"

Reader: The word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 103.8-18

Please rise in body or spirit

*The Psalm is said responsively by whole verse,
the priest reading the even numbered verses, and the congregation the odd.*

8. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and of great kindness.
9. He will not always accuse us,
nor will he keep his anger for ever.
10. He has not dealt with us according to our sins,
nor rewarded us according to our wickedness.
11. For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so is his mercy great upon those who fear him.
12. As far as the east is from the west,
so far has he removed our sins from us.
13. As a father cares for his children,
so does the Lord care for those who fear him.
14. For he himself knows whereof we are made;
he remembers that we are but dust.
15. Our days are like the grass;
we flourish like a flower of the field;
16. When the wind goes over it, it is gone,
and its place shall know it no more.
17. But the merciful goodness of the Lord
endures for ever on those who fear him,
and his righteousness on children's children;
18. On those who keep his covenant and remember his
commandments and do them.

All: God of infinite mercy and forgiveness, by the cross and resurrection of Jesus your Son, wash away our sins and deliver us from our infirmities of body and spirit, that we may live with him his risen life, to the praise and glory of your holy name. Amen.

Second Reading – 2 Corinthians 5.20b – 6.10

Please be seated

Reader: A Reading from Second Letter of Paul to the Corinthians

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, labours, 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 honour and dishonour, 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.

Reader: The word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel – Matthew 6.1- 6, 16-21

Please rise in body or spirit

Priest: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Priest: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Matthew.

People: **Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

‘Beware of practising 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.

Priest: The Gospel of Christ.

People: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Homily

Please be seated

Priest: Dear friends in Christ, every year at the time of the Christian Passover we celebrate our redemption through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Lent is a time to prepare for this celebration and to renew our life in the paschal mystery. We begin this holy season by remembering our need for repentance, and for the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Priest: We begin our journey to Easter with the sign of ashes, an ancient sign, speaking of the frailty and uncertainty of human life, and marking the penitence of the community as a whole.

Priest: I invite you therefore, in the name of the Lord, to observe a holy Lent by self-examination, penitence, prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, and by reading and meditating on the word of God. Let us kneel before our Creator and Redeemer.

Litany of Penitence

Please kneel

All: **Most holy and merciful Father, we confess to you, to one another, and to the whole communion of saints in heaven and on earth, that we have sinned by our own fault in thought, word, and deed; by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.**

Priest: We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves. We have not forgiven others, as we have been forgiven.

All: **Have mercy on us, Lord.**

Priest: 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 your Holy Spirit.

All: **Have mercy on us, Lord.**

Priest: We confess to you, Lord, all our past unfaithfulness: the pride, hypocrisy and impatience of our lives,

All: **We confess to you, Lord.**

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

All: **We confess to you, Lord.**

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

All: **We confess to you, Lord.**

Priest: Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonesty in daily life and work,
We confess to you, Lord.

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

All: **We confess to you, Lord.**

Priest: 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,

All: **Accept our repentance, Lord.**

Priest: For all false judgements, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbours and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us,

All: **Accept our repentance, Lord.**

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

All: **Accept our repentance, Lord.**

Priest: Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us;

All: **Hear us, Lord, for your mercy is great.**

Priest: Almighty God, from the dust of the earth you have created us. May these ashes be for us a sign of our mortality and penitence, and a reminder that only by your gracious gift are we given eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

All: **Amen.**

*Those who desire to receive ashes come forward;
the ashes are applied to the forehead of each person with the following words:*

Priest: Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

*After all who desire ashes have received them, the priest leads the congregation
in the conclusion of the confession, all kneeling.*

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

People: **That we may show forth your glory in the world.**

Priest: By the cross and passion of your Son, our Lord.

People: **Bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.**

Priest: Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.

All: **Amen.**

The Peace

Please rise in body or spirit

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

People: **And also with you.**

✠ The Celebration of the Eucharist

Priest: Merciful God, turn us from sin to faithfulness.
Accept our offering, and prepare us to celebrate
the death and resurrection of Christ our Saviour,
who is alive and reigns with you now and for ever.

All: **Amen.**

Priest: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Priest: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

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

People: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Priest: God of our weary years, God of our silent tears, you have brought us this far along the way. In times of bitterness you did not abandon us, but guided us into the path of love and light. In every age you sent prophets to make known your loving will for all humanity. The cry of the poor has become your own cry; our hunger and thirst for justice is your own desire.

All: **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Please kneel or be seated

Priest: In the fullness of time, you sent your chosen servant to preach good news to the afflicted, to break bread with the outcast and despised, and to ransom those in bondage to prejudice and sin. 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.

Priest: 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 all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Priest: For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

All: **Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again;**

Priest: Remembering, therefore, his death and resurrection, we await the day when Jesus shall return to free all the earth from the bonds of slavery and death. Come, Lord Jesus! And let the church say, Amen

All: **Amen.**

Priest: Send your Holy Spirit, our advocate, to fill the hearts of all who share this bread and cup with courage and wisdom to pursue love and justice in all the world. Come, Spirit of freedom! And let the church say, Amen

All: **Amen.**

Priest: Join our prayers and praise with your prophets and martyrs of every age, that, rejoicing in the hope of the resurrection, we might live in the freedom and hope of your Son. Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.

All: **Amen.**

Priest: As our Saviour taught us, let us pray,

All: **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, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Breaking of the Bread

Priest: We break this bread,

All: **Communion in Christ's body once broken.**

Priest: Let your Church be the wheat
which bears its fruit in dying.

All: **If we have died with him, we shall live with him;
if we hold firm, we shall reign with him.**

The Communion

Priest: The gifts of God for the People of God.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

*All baptized Christians are invited to receive communion.
Please come forward to the Altar rail and stand or kneel as you prefer.*

Prayer after Communion

Priest: All your works praise you, O Lord.

All: **And your faithful servants bless you.**

Gracious God, we thank you for feeding us with the body and blood of your son Jesus Christ. May we, who share his body, live his risen life; we, who drink his cup, bring life to others; we, whom the Spirit lights, give light to the world. Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us, so that we and all your children shall be free, and the whole earth live to praise your name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Blessing

Dismissal

Priest: Go in peace, to forgive as you have been forgiven.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

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Thank you to all that served during this service.

PRAYER AND WORSHIP IN LENT

COMPLINE - Most Lenten disciplines are intensely private, and are chosen by individuals to address their sense of personal separation from God. In all this, we sometimes overlook the way in which whole communities can also fail to be all God has called and hoped them to be. Members of the parish are invited to undertake the recitation of Compline as a sign of this awareness. Compline is the church's service of 'Night Prayer', meant to be said just before retiring. It takes about 5 minutes, and is a way of putting the day away, and commending oneself into the refreshing care of God through the night. If you would be willing to covenant to undertake this practice for the 40 days of Lent, copies of the service are available on the tables.

LENTEN VESPERS – Lenten Vespers will take place every Wednesday during Lent in the church at 7:00 p.m. These services will start on Wednesday, February 25th through to March 25th. All are welcome and encouraged to participate in this Lenten journey.

HOLY WEEK SERVICES:

March 29, 2026 – 8:00 a.m. & 10:00 a.m. – Palm Sunday – Church

April 1, 2026 – 10:00 a.m. – Holy Eucharist - Church

April 1, 2026 – 7:00 p.m. – Tenebrae – Church

April 2, 2026 – 7:30 p.m. – Maundy Thursday service – Church

April 2, 2026 - 8:30 – 12:00 p.m. – Garden Watch & Compline -Church

April 3, 2026 – 10:00 a.m. – Good Friday service – Church

April 5, 2026– 8:00 & 10:00 a.m. – Easter Day service – Church

