

PLACES *of the* PASSION

The City of Jerusalem



Look, we are going up to Jerusalem. The Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and experts in the law, and they will condemn him to death. - Matthew 20:18

Ash Wednesday 2021

WHY IS IT CALLED ASH WEDNESDAY?

Imposition of Ashes on Ash Wednesday is an ancient ritual of the church that employs a symbol long associated with the contrition aspect of confession. God spoke these words to Adam soon after the fall into sin: "By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return." Job connected sorrow over sin to this symbol when he lamented, "Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes." Daniel understood he had no right to come before a holy God with pleas for deliverance. "So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes." Jesus attached the same meaning to the symbol: "Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes." Ashes also connote purification. When Peter wrote "These have come so that your faith--of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire--may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed," he painted a picture in which faith is strengthened as the fire of trials burns away the impure ash of the sinful nature.

While, historically speaking, only Catholics and some Anglicans have been known to wear ashes, Lutherans have begun to attempt to "reclaim" the custom while leaving behind the burden of penance.

Like all symbols, the Imposition of Ashes is a servant of gospel ministry. It has value only in so far as it recalls and enables a deeper understanding of a spiritual truth. God has little interest in ashes; he is concerned with a contrite and repentant heart. For some, ashes will have little impact on their Lenten contrition. For others, however, the ashes imposed on Ash Wednesday may be a powerful reminder of the sorrow over sin that always precedes lifting our eyes to Jesus in faith.

Above all, we demonstrate Christian love in our practices. We do not make judgments on anyone based on their participation in the Imposition of Ashes. In love, we try to understand the perspective of those who either appreciate or struggle with new forms of worship. Think of the "more excellent way" Paul talks about in 1 Corinthians 13—love your God and love your neighbor—in whatever way you find to be pleasing and glorifying to our Savior.

ORDER OF SERVICE

OPENING HYMN

Not All the Blood of Beasts | CW 128
Verse 1-All; 2-Choir; 3-Women; 4-Men; 5-All

Please stand.

INVOCATION AND CALL TO WORSHIP

M: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

C: And also with you.

M: Let us ever walk with Jesus.

C: To see the depths of his love.

M: To behold the gift of his forgiveness.

C: To gaze upon the heights of his grace.

M: To marvel at the magnitude of his mercy.

C: We walk with Jesus to the City of Jerusalem.

M: Because Passover is coming.

C: And the Son of Man will be crucified.

M: Faithful Lord, with me abide.

C: I shall follow where you guide!

♪ **Let us ever walk with Jesus, follow his example pure,
Through a world that would deceive us and to sin our spirits lure.
Onward in his footsteps treading, pilgrims here, our home above
Full of faith and hope and love, Let us do the Father's bidding.
Faithful Lord, with me abide; I shall follow where you guide.** ♪

CONFESSION

M: Merciful Father, because we walk in dark and dangerous places, hear us as we confess our sins: Our feet take us to places of compromise and sinful ambition.

C: Our hearts linger in places of lust and lies.

M: Our words take us to places of anger, rage and hatred.

C: Our ears delight in going to places of gossip, deceit and ridicule.

M: Our minds take us to places of selfishness and pride.

C: Our eyes lead us to places of envy and greed.

M: Because of these and all our other sins, along with the sinful nature we have born into, we admit that we are nothing but dust and ashes in your sight. But we know your mercy is greater than our sin. Therefore, we implore you to hide your face from our sins and blot out our iniquities.

C: Restore to us the joy of your salvation and grant us willing spirits to sustain us.

Please be seated and observe a few moments of silence for meditation.

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Those wishing to receive ashes may come forward at the direction of the ushers in the same fashion as our current communion practice. All are invited – young children may come forward with a parent. If you do not desire ashes on your forehead, please extend your right hand and the pastor will place the ashes on the back of your hand. Given the current reality, a cotton swab will be used to administer the ashes. As the ashes are placed in the form of the cross, pastors will say: “Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.”

PROCLAMATION OF FORGIVENESS

M: Hear the good news! Jesus walked to places of rejection, suffering, torment and death—for you. Jesus was determined to go to Gethsemane, Gabbatha and Golgotha—for you. Because he walked the way of sacrifice, Jesus forgives you completely and loves you eternally. Faithful Lord, with us abide!

C: We shall follow where you guide!

SONG

Lamb of God

Choir - Lamb of God, Lamb of God,
You take away the world’s sin,
Lamb of God, Lamb of God,
have mercy upon us.

**All - Lamb of God, Lamb of God,
You take away the world’s sin,
Lamb of God, Lamb of God,
have mercy upon us.**

Choir - As high as the heavens are over the earth,
so great is Your love for us.
As far as the east is from the west,
so far have You removed our sin.

**All - Lamb of God, Lamb of God,
You take away the world's sin,
Lamb of God, Lamb of God,
have mercy upon us.**

Choir - A Father's heart you turn to us,
You hear us when we call,
Now, Lord, in compassion, lend Your ear,
You know our needs, O hear our prayer.

**All - Lamb of God, Lamb of God,
You take away the world's sin,
Lamb of God, Lamb of God,
have mercy upon us.**

Choir - Lamb of God, Lamb of God,
You take away the world's sin,
Lamb of God, Lamb of God,
give to us Your peace.

READING

Exodus 12:1–13

SERMON TEXT

Matthew 26:1–5

HYMN

*Draw Near and Take the Body of the Lord | CW 309
Verse 1-All; 2-Pastors; 3-All*

SERMON

OFFERING

Please stand.

PRAYERS

M: Lord Jesus, you deliver us from every storm, so we lift our prayers and raise our petitions to you.

C: Lord, hear our prayer.

M: Deliver us from pride and arrogance, lest we fail to acknowledge our sins and confess them.

C: Lord, hear our prayer.

M: Deliver the world from the enemies of peace and from injustice. Give us good and faithful leaders to protect the unborn and to promote virtue.

C: Lord, hear our prayer.

M: Deliver the erring from their darkness, the doubting from their uncertainty, and the wandering from their ways, and return them to you.

C: Lord, hear our prayer.

M: Deliver us from the terror of death and the grave.

C: Lord, hear our prayer.

M: Deliver us from selfish desire, from the tyranny of things, and from the wasteful use of the resources you have entrusted to our care.

C: Lord, hear our prayer.

M: Deliver us from ingratitude for all your mercies and restore our hearts to hope and joy.

C: Lord, hear our prayer.

M: Jesus, deliver us and bring us to the table of your body and blood.

C: Jesus, shine on us your face; let us taste and see your grace.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

Then he took the cup, gave thanks and gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

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

C: ♪ Amen.

O CHRIST, LAMB OF GOD

| CW p. 35

C: ♪ O Christ, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
O Christ, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
O Christ, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world; grant us your peace.
Amen. ♪

Please be seated and await the direction of the ushers.

DISTRIBUTION

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION

- † *Do I believe that I am a sinner in need of forgiveness?*
- † *Do I believe that Jesus died on the cross to win forgiveness for me?*
- † *Do I believe that Jesus offers his true body and blood with the bread and wine in this sacrament?*
- † *Do I believe this sacrament strengthens my faith and strengthens me to live a God-pleasing life?*
- † *Am I a member of a church that belongs to the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) or Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS)?*
- † *If you answered “no” to any of these questions, please hold off on communing with us today. Following worship, one of the pastors would be happy to explain why we ask you to do this.*

Following the distribution, the minister says:

Christ's true body and his true blood will strengthen and keep you in the one true faith. Depart in peace knowing that all your sins are forgiven. Amen.

Please stand.

SONG OF THANKSGIVING

| *CW 616*

♪ **Feed your children, God most holy;
Comfort sinners poor and lowly.
Jesus, bread of life from heaven,
Bless the food you here have given.
As these gifts the body nourish,
May our souls in graces flourish
Till with saints in heav'nly splendor
At your feast due thanks we render. ♪**

BENEDICTION

M: Jesus invites us to walk with him to Jerusalem, a place of great suffering and a place of great love. We will walk with Jesus all the way to the empty tomb—and resurrection victory.

C: Let us ever walk with Jesus! Amen.

Please be seated.

CLOSING HYMN

Glory Be to Jesus | CW 103

Verse 1-All; 2-Men; 3-Women; 4-All; 5-Pastors; 6-All



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