

Ash Wednesday

February 17, 2021

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
Deerfield Beach, Florida

Lent begins with a solemn call to fasting and repentance as we begin our journey to the baptismal waters of Easter. As we hear in today's readings, now is the acceptable time to return to the Lord. During Lent the people of God will reflect on the meaning of their baptism into Christ's death and resurrection. The sign of ashes suggests our human mortality and frailty. What seems like an ending is really an invitation to make each day a new beginning, in which we are washed in God's mercy and forgiveness. With the cross on our brow, we long for the spiritual renewal that flows from the springtime Easter feast to come.

WE GATHER

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

The assembly gathers in silence. As the assembly gathers, the Cantor and musicians will offer a musical call to worship.

"Come, Come, Whoever You Are" (N. Aronson)

GREETING

The assembly stands, as they are able.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray...Almighty and ever-living God, you hate nothing you have made, and you forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and honest hearts, so that, truly repenting of our sins, we may receive from you, the God of all mercy, full pardon and forgiveness through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

The assembly is seated.

WE HEAR & RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: JOEL 2:1-2, 12-17

A reading from Joel.

¹Blow 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—²a 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. ¹²Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; ¹³rend 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. ¹⁴Who 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? ¹⁵Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; ¹⁶gather 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. ¹⁷Between 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?'"

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

MUSICAL REFLECTION

"Burning in My Soul" (B. Younker, D. Carson, J. Reeves, and M. Maher)

SECOND READING: 2 CORINTHIANS 5:20b—6:10

A reading from Second Corinthians.

^{20b}We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. ^{6:1}As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. ²For 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! ³We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, ⁴but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, ⁵beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; ⁶by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, ⁷truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; ⁸in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; ⁹as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; ¹⁰as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The assembly stands, as they are able, to welcome the gospel.

Cantor	Assembly	All
Come	come,	Come,
let us	let us	let us
re - turn	re - turn	re -
to the Lord,	to the Lord;	-
-turn	let us	to the
to the Lord,	re - turn	Lord.
	_	_____

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 6:1-6, 16-21

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the sixth chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord!**

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹“Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. ²“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. ³But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

⁵“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. ⁶But 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.

¹⁶“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. ¹⁷But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸so 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.

¹⁹“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ!**

The assembly is seated.

SERMON

Silence for reflection follows the sermon.

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Bless Now, O God, the Journey” (Hymn #326)

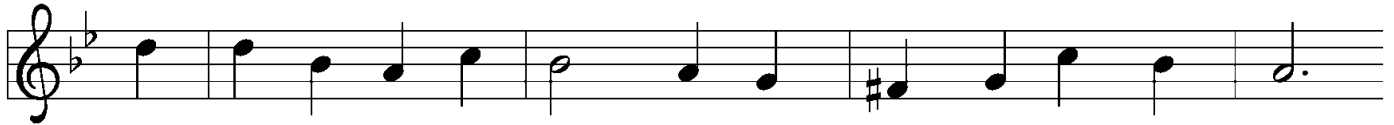
The assembly stands, as they are able, to proclaim the word of God in song.



1 Bless now, O God, the jour - ney that all your peo - ple make,
2 Bless so - journ - ers and pil - grims who share this wind - ing way;
3 Di - vine e - ter - nal lov - er, you meet us on the road.



the path through noise and si - lence, the way of give and take.
your hope burns through the ter - rors, your love sus - tains the day.
We wait for lands of prom - ise where milk and hon - ey flow,



The trail is found in des - ert and winds the moun - tain round,
We yearn for ho - ly free - dom while of - ten we are bound;
but wait - ing not for plac - es, you meet us all a - round.



then leads be - side still wa - ters, the road where faith is found.
to - geth - er we are seek - ing the road where faith is found.
Our cov - e - nant is writ - ten on roads, as faith is found.

The assembly is seated.

INVITATION TO LENT

Friends in Christ, today with the whole church we enter the time of remembering Jesus' Passover from death to life, and our life in Christ is renewed.

We begin this holy season by acknowledging our need for repentance and for God's mercy. We are created to experience joy in communion with God, to love one another, and to live in harmony with creation. But our sinful rebellion separates us from God, our neighbors, and creation, so that we do not enjoy the life our creator intended.

As disciples of Jesus, we are called to a discipline that contends against evil and resists whatever leads us away from love of God and neighbor. I invite you, therefore, to the discipline of Lent—self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love—strengthened by the gifts of word and sacrament. Let us continue our journey through these forty days to the great Three Days of Jesus' death and resurrection.

CONFESSION OF SIN

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most holy and merciful God, **we confess to you and to one another, and before the whole company of heaven, that we have sinned by our fault, by our own fault, by our own most grievous fault, in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone.**

We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

We have shut our ears 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. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our past unfaithfulness, the pride, envy, hypocrisy, and apathy that have infected our lives, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to share the faith that is in us, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our neglect of human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our false judgments, our uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us.
Hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.

HYMN

"Our Father, We Have Wandered" (Hymn #606)

1 Our Fa - ther, we have wan - dered and hid - den from your face;
2 And now at length dis - cern - ing the e - vil that we do,
3 O Lord of all the liv - ing, both ban - ished and re - stored,

in fool-ish-ness have squan - dered your leg - a - cy of grace.
be - hold us, Lord, re - turn - ing with hope and trust to you.
com-pas-sion-ate, for - giv - ing, and ev - er - car - ing Lord,

The musical score consists of two systems. Each system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

But now, in ex - ile dwell - ing, we rise with fear and shame,
 In haste you come to meet us and home re - joic - ing bring,
 grant now that our trans - gress - ing, our faith - less - ness may cease.

as, dis - tant but com - pel - ling, we hear you call our name.
 in glad - ness there to greet us with calf and robe and ring.
 Stretch out your hand in bless - ing, in par - don, and in peace.

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth. May these ashes be a sign of our mortality and penitence, reminding us that only by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ are we given eternal life; through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

People may come forward and kneel or stand to receive the ashes.

During this time, Psalm 51 will be read and silence observed for the remainder of the time.

PSALM 51:1-17

¹Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; in your great compassion blot out my offenses. ²Wash me through and through from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sin. ³For I know my offenses, and my sin is ever before me. ⁴Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are justified when you speak and right in your judgment. ⁵Indeed, I was born steeped in wickedness, a sinner from my mother's womb. ⁶Indeed, you delight in truth deep within me, and would have me know wisdom deep within. ⁷Remove my sins with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be purer than snow. ⁸Let me hear joy and gladness; that the body you have broken may rejoice. ⁹Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my wickedness. ¹⁰Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. ¹¹Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. ¹²Restore to me the joy of your salvation and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit. ¹³Let me teach your ways to offenders, and sinners shall be restored to you. ¹⁴Rescue me from bloodshed,

O God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness. ¹⁵O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise. ¹⁶For you take no delight in sacrifice, or I would give it. You are not pleased with burnt offering. ¹⁷The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; a troubled and broken heart, O God, you will not despise.

After those who desire ashes have received them, all may kneel or sit.

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

that we may show forth your glory in the world.

By the cross and passion of your Son, our Savior,

bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.

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

Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

The assembly stands, as they are able, for prayer.

Hearing the call to return to the Lord, let us join the whole people of God in prayer for all who cry out in pain and in hope.

Merciful Lord, where people ask, "Where is their God?" send your church. Equip us with compassion and boldness to listen to our neighbors. Make our speech and actions witness to your eternal presence. Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Merciful Lord, where the soil cries for rain, send relief. Restore depleted water tables and cleanse waterways around the world. Teach us to treasure all creation as you do. Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Merciful Lord, where terror shouts, send peace. Deliver all from the threat of bloodshed and the trauma of violence. Reconcile nation with nation and neighbor with neighbor. Wash us in your peace. Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Merciful Lord, where bellies rumble, send food. Bless Lutheran World Relief and all who work to ensure no one goes to bed hungry. Provide for all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit, including those we name in our hearts. Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Merciful Lord, when hearts and minds call for you, send faithful disciples. Walk with all who prepare for baptism. Uphold them with a community rooted in your word and nourished by bread and wine. Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Merciful Lord, where death stings, send comfort. Be with all who mourn. In the midst of their sorrow and pain, sustain their trust in the eternal life you give. Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

To you, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your boundless mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

OFFERING

This is the time in our worship to give thanks to God for your blessings. How is God blessing you and calling you to bless others? We invite your support of ongoing and growing ministries at Zion.

PRAYER

Let us pray...Merciful God, accompany our journey through these forty days. Renew us in the gift of baptism, that we may provide for those who are poor, pray for those in need, fast from self-indulgence, and above all that we may find our treasure in the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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.

WE ARE SENT FORTH TO LOVE & SERVE

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING & DISMISSAL

Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor all people; love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. **Thanks be to God!**

The assembly departs in silence.

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Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church

959 SE 6th Avenue
Deerfield Beach, Florida 33441
www.zion-lutheran.org



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