

A Mission Congregation of the ELCA  
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church  
P. O. Box 64 - 8520 Oakes Rd - Pittsburg, Ohio 45358

March 2, 2022  
Ash Wednesday



## ASH WEDNESDAY

- **PSALM 51 (Read responsively)**

<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 alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.**

<sup>5</sup>Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me.

<sup>6</sup>**You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.**

<sup>7</sup>Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

<sup>8</sup>**Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.**

<sup>9</sup>Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

<sup>10</sup>**Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.**

<sup>11</sup>Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.

<sup>12</sup>**Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.**

<sup>13</sup>Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

<sup>14</sup>**Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.**

<sup>15</sup>O LORD, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

<sup>16</sup>**For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.**

<sup>17</sup>The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

<sup>18</sup>**Do good to Zion in your good pleasure; rebuild the walls of Jerusalem,**

<sup>19</sup>then you will delight in right sacrifices, in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings; then bulls will be offered on your altar.

**C: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen**

- **EXHORTATION**

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

*Silence for reflection and self-examination.*

- **CONFESSION**

- P: Most holy and merciful Father:
- C: We confess to you and 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.**
- P: 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.
- C: Have mercy on us, Lord.**
- P: 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.
- C: Have mercy on us, Lord.**
- P: We confess to you, Lord, all our past unfaithfulness. The pride, hypocrisy, and impatience in our lives,
- 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**

*Those who desire to receive ashes come forward and kneel before the altar.*

*The ministers apply ashes to the forehead of each person with the words:*

*Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.*

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

The following song may be sung during the imposition of ashes...

## The Lord's My Shepherd



1 The Lord's my shep-herd; I'll not want. He makes me down to lie  
2 My soul he doth re - store a - gain, and me to walk doth make  
3 Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale, yet will I fear no ill;  
4 My ta - ble thou hast fur - nish - ed in pres - ence of my foes;  
5 Good-ness and mer - cy all my life shall sure - ly fol - low me,



in pas - tures green; he lead - eth me the qui - et wa - ters by.  
with - in the paths of righ-teous-ness, e'en for his own name's sake;  
for thou art with me, and thy rod and staff me com - fort still;  
my head thou dost with oil a - noint, and my cup o - ver - flows.  
and in God's house for - ev - er - more my dwell-ing-place shall be;



He lead - eth me, he lead - eth me the qui - et wa - ters by.  
with - in the paths of righ-teous-ness, e'en for his own name's sake.  
for thou art with me, and thy rod and staff me com - fort still.  
My head thou dost with oil a - noint, and my cup o - ver - flows.  
and in God's house for - ev - er - more my dwell-ing-place shall be.

### \* CONCLUSION OF CONFESSION

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 Passion of your Son, our Lord,

**C: bring us with all your saints to 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 and his Holy Spirit, that those things may please him which we do on this day, that the rest of our life may be pure and holy, and that at the last we may come to his eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen**

*Silence for Reflection*

**\* PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Good shepherd, we come to you broken, for we have broken your world.  
Heal what we have harmed, and make us whole again.

C: Amen.

**\* GOSPEL:**

**John 10:1-18**

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 10<sup>th</sup> chapter.

C: Glory to you O Lord. (*Spoken*)

<sup>1</sup>Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. <sup>2</sup>The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup>The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup>When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. <sup>5</sup>They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers." <sup>6</sup>Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

<sup>7</sup>So again Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. <sup>8</sup>All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. <sup>9</sup>I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. <sup>10</sup>The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

<sup>11</sup>I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup>The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away — and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. <sup>13</sup>The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. <sup>14</sup>I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, <sup>15</sup>just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup>I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. <sup>17</sup>For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. <sup>18</sup>No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you O Christ (*Spoken*)

- **SERMON**

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the one who turns our ashes into joy, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, amen.

It seems strange to read the Gospel story about Jesus being the Good Shepherd on Ash Wednesday. Under the old lectionary we used to hear this Gospel text on Good Shepherd Sunday which fell on the fourth Sunday of the Easter Season, not on the first day of Lent. So, when I first saw this was going to be our reading for this evening I began to rethink the meaning of Lent. Where it comes from why we do some of the strangest things like putting ashes on our foreheads. I discovered a book, written by one of my favorite religious authors, Frederick Buechner. It's titled, *Whistling In The Dark*. In the introduction he explains the title. When we're alone in the pitch dark we tend to become not only disoriented, but also a bit frightened. When we whistle in the dark it helps to give us courage and to hold the scary shadows at bay. As Buechner says, "To whistle in the dark isn't to pretend that the dark doesn't sometimes scare the living daylights out of us. Instead, I think, it's to demonstrate, if only to ourselves, that not even the dark can quite overcome our trust in the ultimate triumph of the Living Light." From the very beginning of his Gospel John tells us, "In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (John. 1:4-5 NRSV)

So, tonight we whistle in the dark, we remember that God formed us out of dust and that one day we will all return to that same dust from which we came. Why do we bother with this ancient ritual. The Church has been putting ashes on foreheads since the 9<sup>th</sup> century. That's over 1200 years and a lot of foreheads! I think we bother because it makes us feel a little bit less alone, a little bit less frightened in the darkness of this world. We get our ash in Church on Ash Wednesday because of all those days when we felt like dust, like dirt. For all those times when you felt like your face was turned into the wind and your life was being scattered to the four corners. We get dusty because it reminds us that the smallest breath can wipe us out as if we were insubstantial. It's a reminder that the wages of sin are still death and we all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Ash Wednesday reminds us we are mortal and we are nothing but dust in the wind.

Do you know what the Holy One can do with dust? In the Gospel text for today Jesus said, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" This is the day we declare we are scorched and helpless, but God is almighty! This is the hour when we proudly proclaim we are the ones who have made it through the burning and the testing and the darkness. We are the ones who proclaim Jesus is our Lord and He has overcome the darkness. In this moment we ask for the blessing that comes from and through these ashes -- the same ashes that come from



the dust of the earth. We're not just whistling in the dark for no reason. We're whistling as a call to others who are alone and afraid. We're whistling to give them hope and encouragement. How can we make our whistling in the dark more meaningful and relevant in our own lives?

In many cultures there is an ancient custom of giving a tenth of each year's income to some holy use. For Christians, to observe the forty days of Lent is to do the same thing with roughly a tenth of each year's days. After being baptized by John in the river Jordan, Jesus went off alone into the wilderness where he spent forty days asking himself the question what it meant to be Jesus. During Lent, Christians are supposed to ask one way or another what it means to be themselves. Here's a few questions to ponder during this next 40 days. As you spend time between now and Easter, meditating on each of them, think of it as the tithing of your time for God...

- † If you had to bet everything you have on whether there is a God or whether there isn't, which side would get your money and why?
- † When you reflect on your life as if looking at your face in a mirror, what do you see in it that you most like and what do you see in it that you most deplore?
- † If you had only one last message to leave to the handful of people who are most important to you, what would it be in twenty-five words or less?
- † Of all the things you have done in your life, which is the one you would most like to undo?
- † What is the one that makes you happiest to remember?
- † Is there any person in the world, or any cause, that, if circumstances called for it, you would be willing to die for?
- † If this were the last day of your life, what would you do with it?

These questions are printed out and available on the Communications Table across from the Church Office. Please feel free to take one home and use them for your Lenten Meditations. It can be a pretty depressing business all in all, but if sackcloth and ashes are at the start of it, something like Easter may be at the end.

So, let us be marked this night, not for sorrow and not for shame. Let us be marked not for false humility or for thinking we are less than we truly are. Instead let us be marked for claiming what God can do within the dust, within the dirt, within the stuff the world is made of. Let us be people marked for the hope we share in the one who is the light of the world.

May we be a people who don't just whistle in the dark because we're afraid, but we whistle a tune that echoes the long line of Saints before us who gave us this faith and gave us this tune to pass on to our children and grandchildren. May we whistle the love of God and what God can do with mere dust. We are God's dust after all... Jesus once said God could make children of Abraham from the stones. God has done and will continue to do even better than that. God raises his children up from the dust of the earth to new life in our Savior, Jesus Christ. Yes, dust is dirty. Life is dirty. I for one would rather be God's dust, than Satan's gold. May this dust remind us not only of our mortality, but of all our loving God does with the dirtiest dust of all, you and me. May we walk in God's dust every day, until we are called to live a resurrected life with Him in eternity. Amen.

*Silence for reflection may follow.*

**\* NICENE CREED**

*The Nicene Creed is said on all festivals and on Sundays in the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter. The Apostles' Creed is said at other times. The Creed is omitted here if the service of Holy Baptism or another rite with a creed is used.*

**C: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen**

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*\*Or, He descended to the dead.*

**\* THE PRAYERS**

**L: We pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.**

*A brief silence.*

**L: We are often stubborn and willfully ignorant of your guidance. Steer us back to your fold and reassure us of your unconditional love. Good Shepherd,**

**C: Hear our prayer.**

**L: You love all that you have made, O Lord, and long for us to tend it as carefully as you would yourself. Endow us with your careful, gentle spirit and return us to the work of stewardship with which you first entrusted us at creation. Good Shepherd,**

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: Lord, nothing can separate us from you. Not predators, nor dangers, nor death itself. As we remember our own mortality this day, we do so in the sure promise of your ultimate resurrection. Good Shepherd,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: You restore our souls and anoint our heads with healing oil. Bring all those who long for relief into your secure pasture, and into the wholeness of your family. We lift up especially... Good Shepherd,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: Blessed are those who dwell in your house forever, O God. Draw all your saints together, both living and resurrected, into one great fold, where we hear and know your voice, and where no threat of danger may harm us. Good Shepherd,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

*Here other petitions may be offered.*

P: Gather our prayers as you gather your beloved sheep, O Lord, for we entrust them, as we do ourselves, to your eternal care.

**C: Amen.**

#### **\* OFFERING PRAYER**

*While the congregation is still standing say:*

P: Instead of passing the offering plate, we ask you to please place your offering in the Offering Plates conveniently located on your way out of worship. For those worshipping with us from their vehicles, there is a ceramic flower pot located near the back door of the church.

P: When we put our trust in you, we find that we have everything we need. Accept these gifts; bless them and use them for the advancement of your earthly kingdom and the spread of your heavenly gospel of good news.

**C: Amen.**

### **THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

#### **\* DIALOGUE**

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

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

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

**C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

**\* THE PREFACE**

**P:** It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord. Sharing our life, he lived among us to reveal your glory and love, that our darkness should give way to his own brilliant light. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**\* THE SANCTUS**

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

**\* EUCHARISTIC PRAYER**

**P:** 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.

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

Remembering, therefore, his life, death, and resurrection, we await his coming again in righteousness and peace. Send your Spirit on us and on this bread and wine we share: strengthen our faith, increase our hope, and bring to birth the justice and joy of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever.

**C: Amen**

**\* THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**P:** We are united into one Body of Christ by this heavenly food, so let us pray as Jesus taught...

**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.

**\* INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P: We bring ourselves, just as we are, to your holy table where we know we will receive blessing, forgiveness and strength for the journey ahead. Come now and gather around the Lord's supper, prepared for you.

**• COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION**

*During the distribution the minister says these words to each communicant:*

P: At this time you may open the communion bread and partake of the body of Christ, given for you.  
Now please open the wine and you may now partake of the Blood of Christ, shed for you.

*The communicant may say: **Amen.***

**• POST COMMUNION BLESSING**

P: May this Body and Blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, strengthen, keep, and unite us.

**C: Amen.**

**\* POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

P: Let us pray... Gracious and abundant God, you have done great things for us, and we rejoice. In this bread and cup you give us life forever. In your boundless mercy, strengthen us and open our hearts to the world's needs, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**C: Amen**

**• ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**\* BLESSING**

P: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and ✝ give you peace.

**C: Amen**

\* **SENDING HYMN Savior Like A Shepherd Lead Us**

**ELW 789**



1 Sav-ior like a shep-herd lead us; much we need your ten - der care.  
 2 We are yours; in love be - friend us, be the guard-ian of our way;  
 3 You have prom-ised to re - ceive us, poor and sin - ful though we be;  
 4 Ear - ly let us seek your fa - vor, ear - ly let us do your will;



In your pleas-ant pas-tures feed us, for our use your fold pre-pare.  
 keep your flock, from sin de - fend us, seek us when we go a - stray.  
 you have mer - cy to re - lieve us, grace to cleanse, and pow'r to free.  
 bless - ed Lord and on - ly Sav - ior, with your love our spir - its fill.



Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have bought us; we are yours.  
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, hear us chil - dren when we pray.  
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, ear - ly let us turn to you.  
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have loved us, love us still.



Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have bought us; we are yours.  
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, hear us chil - dren when we pray.  
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, ear - ly let us turn to you.  
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have loved us, love us still.

\* **DISMISSAL**

P: Thank you for worshipping with us either in person or through the internet.  
 Until we gather to Worship our great God next week, depart in Christ's Love,  
 C: **Seeking, welcoming, and serving all. Amen!**

\* **POSTLUDE**

**Roxanne Groff**

### Trinity Worship Assistants and Staff

Ministers	All the People of Trinity
Lector	
Acolyte	
Organist	Roxanne Groff
Parrish Nurse	PJ Musser
Videographer	PJ Musser
Custodian	Mark Groff
Secretary	Sharon Fourman
Flowers	There are no flowers during Lent



**Trinity's Mission Statement**  
**In Christ's love, we seek, welcome, and serve all.**

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

<b>Thurs, Mar 3</b>	6:30 pm	WELCA Meeting
<b>Fri, Mar 4</b>	3:30 pm	FISH Choice Food Pantry
<b>Sun, Mar 6</b>	10:30 am	Worship Service w/Communion

### Trinity Contact Info

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