

Grace Lutheran Church
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Ash Wednesday Service
February 17/2021

Welcome and Announcements:

*Why Ash Wednesday?

*What is the Imposition of Ashes?

*** Call to Worship:**

P: Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love. ^(Joel 2:13)

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

P: Brothers and sisters, our Lord Jesus said: "If any would come after me, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me." ^(Mark 8:34)

C: Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me. ^(Psalm 23:4)

P: Let us lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus — the pioneer and perfecter of our faith — who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God. ^(Hebrews 12:1-2)

C: Lord, we believe; help us in our unbelief. ^(Mark 9:24)

P: Let us pray:

Merciful God, turn our hearts toward you, bringing us to repentance. Through your great mercy, grant us clean hearts and renew in us a right spirit; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever. Amen.

The Promise of Christ:

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: In the mercy of Almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for you, and for his sake, God forgives you all your sins. By his Holy Spirit, may he grant you true repentance, that you may live with him in righteousness and purity forever, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

Scripture Lessons: Gary Walter

Joel 2:12-13

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.

1 Peter 5:6-11

⁶Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. ⁷Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you.

⁸Discipline yourselves, keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. ⁹Resist him, steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters in all the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering.

¹⁰And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you. ¹¹To him be the power forever and ever. Amen.

*** Gospel Lesson: John 8:31-47 John 8:31-47**

³¹Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, “If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; ³²and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” ³³They answered him, “We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean by saying, ‘You will be made free’?” ³⁴Jesus answered them, “Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵The slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there forever. ³⁶So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed. ³⁷I know that you are descendants of Abraham; yet you look for an opportunity to kill me, because there is no place in you for my word.

³⁸I declare what I have seen in the Father’s presence; as for you, you should do what you have heard from the Father.” ³⁹They answered him, “Abraham is our father.” Jesus said to them, “If you were Abraham’s children, you would be doing what Abraham did, ⁴⁰but now you are trying to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did. ⁴¹You are indeed doing what your father does.” They said to him, “We are not illegitimate children; we have one father, God himself.” ⁴²Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now I am here. I did not come on my own, but he sent me. ⁴³Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot accept my word. ⁴⁴You are from your father the devil, and you choose to do your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies. ⁴⁵But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me. ⁴⁶Which of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me? ⁴⁷Whoever is from God hears the words of God. The reason you do not hear them is that you are not from God.”

Sermon: Pastor Tsena Dinssa

Welcome to our Visitors!

*** Prayers of the Church**

P: Father God, enrich our faith through repentance as we confess our sins and reflect on our mortality. Prepare our hearts to receive the good news of forgiveness in Christ and empower us to share your light in this world. **Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer.**

P: Lord, Jesus Christ, help us to love our Heavenly Father with our whole heart. We desire to put God first, but you know the distractions that get in our way. Keep us daily in holy faith and steadfast love until you call us home to eternal life with you. **Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer.**

P: Wise Counselor and Heavenly Father, keep us abiding in your Holy Spirit so we do not fall prey to following our faulty instincts in matters of this world. We pray for leaders that they may see Christ as a wise counselor of truth. **Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer.**

P: Gracious God, we pray for those who have fallen ill in body, mind, or spirit. May they feel your constant presence beside them, your gentle spirit within them, and therefore know they are not alone. Let us be your church that is a safe haven for anyone seeking guidance, love, and understanding. **Lord in your mercy. Hear our prayer.**

*** The Lord’s Prayer**

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.

Pastoral Blessing:

P: Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C: Amen!

P: Go in peace. Christ is with you.

C: Thanks be to God.