

**First Sunday in Lent – Worship begins with Imposition of Ashes**  
**February 26, 2023**

Today's gospel tells of Jesus' temptation in the desert. His forty-day fast becomes the basis of our Lenten pilgrimage. In the early church Lent was a time of intense preparation for those to be baptized at the Easter Vigil. This catechetical focus on the meaning of faith is at the heart of our Lenten journey to the baptismal waters of Easter. Hungry for God's mercy, we receive the bread of life to nourish us for the days ahead.

**Psalm 51:8-19**

Let me hear joy and gladness;  
that the body you have broken may rejoice.  
Hide your face from my sins,  
and blot out all my wickedness.  
Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and renew a right spirit within me.  
Cast me not away from your presence,  
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation  
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.  
Let me teach your ways to offenders,  
and sinners shall be restored to you.  
Rescue me from bloodshed, O God of my  
salvation, and my tongue shall sing of your  
righteousness.  
O Lord, open my lips,  
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

**Greeting**

The Grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you.

**And also with you.**

**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**

*The presiding minister leads the following or another confession.*

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

*The assembly kneels or sits. Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.*

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. We confess to you. **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.**

**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.**

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

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.**

*The presiding minister addresses the assembly.*

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.**

**Gathering Song**

**“Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery”**

**#334 vs. 1,2,3 L1**

**Prayer of the Day**

Lord God, our strength, the struggle between good and evil rages within and around us, and the devil and all the forces that defy you tempt us with empty promises. Keep us steadfast in your word, and when we fall, raise us again and restore us 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.**

**Reading: Psalm 32 – We will read responsively by verse**

<sup>1</sup>Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is put away!

<sup>2</sup>**Happy are they to whom the LORD imputes no guilt, and in whose spirit there is no guile!**

<sup>3</sup>While I held my tongue, my bones withered away, because of my groaning all day long.

<sup>4</sup>**For your hand was heavy upon me day and night; my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.**

<sup>5</sup>Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not conceal my guilt.

I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD." Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.

**<sup>6</sup>Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of trouble; when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.**

<sup>7</sup>You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

**<sup>8</sup>"I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go; I will guide you with my eye.**

<sup>9</sup>Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding; who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will not stay near you."

**<sup>10</sup>Great are the tribulations of the wicked; but mercy embraces those who trust in the LORD.**

<sup>11</sup>Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the LORD; shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

## Children's Message

### Gospel: Matthew 4:1-11

<sup>1</sup>Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. <sup>2</sup>He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. <sup>3</sup>The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." <sup>4</sup>But he answered, "It is written,

'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

<sup>5</sup>Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, <sup>6</sup>saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written,

'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'"

<sup>7</sup>Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

<sup>8</sup>Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; <sup>9</sup>and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." <sup>10</sup>Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written,

'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'"

<sup>11</sup>Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to You, O Christ**

## Sermon

People of God, grace to you and peace from God, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. AMEN

*Unfinished: Discovering God's Call in the Not Yet*, our Lent theme for this year has us today reconnecting with the baptismal promise that we are called to values.

From our Lent resource we hear:

"There are countless things in this life that we value. Some of those valuables are tangible, like people or relationships, or good food, fine wine, time with loved ones, or warm sunshine. Others are intangible, like love, or hope, or peace. Some things that we value are lifegiving, and some might be life-draining. And sometimes life might get in the way of us valuing in practice what we value in idea. In the story of Jesus' temptation, we are invited to hear the words "led by the Spirit" not simply as words about Jesus, but words for us, too. On our own journey between no longer and not yet, we are led by the Spirit as we daily wrestle with what it means for our own lives to value what Jesus values."

Hearing of Jesus experience in the wilderness, an experience that we can often relate to all too well, we are reminded of the following.

First, that we share this experience with Christ himself. Just as we share the Baptismal promise and God's proclamation that we are God's beloved, we also share in those moments where we are faced with temptation.

Admittedly, we probably don't face those experiences as well as Christ himself, and this is okay, there is grace for that.

But those moments of temptation, Christ's and our own, bring us to some realizations when it comes to being Called to Values

- Sometimes living our values is hard
- Sometimes our values compete with one another
- Sometimes it is difficult to know what we really do value
- Sometimes determining what Jesus values is a challenge
- The Spirit led Jesus
- The Spirit leads us

In our thinking about those realizations, and coming to some clarity and understanding in them, and exploring our own values, we ask ourselves these questions:

- What do I value?
- How have I lived my values today?
- How have my values been in conflict today?
- What do I need for tomorrow?

People of God, in this season of Lent we are reminded again and again that we do not go it alone. Jesus came out of his temptation experience and realized the need to surround himself with those who would help in his calling on this earth. He gathered disciples. People committed to the spreading of the Good News of God's Love for God's people.

Let us go and do the same.

Thanks be to God. AMEN

**Song of the Day**

"I Want Jesus to Walk with Me"

#325

**The Apostles' Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church, the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## **Prayers of Intercession**

Sustained by God's abundant mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

*A brief silence.*

You alone are God. Sustain your church in times of wilderness. Give vision and wisdom to bishops, their staff, and all entrusted with the ministry of administration (*especially*). Counsel all who faithfully lead your people into the future. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

You create verdant gardens and expansive deserts. Tend to the needs of every living creature. Bless those who work in fields and orchards (*local sources of food and food distributors may be named*), that the world is nourished by the fruits of their labor. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

You know our temptations. Sustain those who govern and legislate. Instill in them a sense of your justice and righteousness, that equity and peace would pervade all the regions and nations of the world. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

You are a hiding place for all in distress. Draw near to exiles, and accompany all refugees and immigrants, especially children who travel alone. In times of trouble, trauma, or illness, surround your people with your steadfast love (*We pray especially for Peyton, Matt, David, Verna, Irene, Connie, Clarice, Steve, Kathy, Val, Jacob, Keith and JoJo, Bob and Joanne, Bill and Bonnie, Frank and Heather, Bob and Sonja, Bill and Betty, Tom and Kay, Sherm and Mary, Sandy*). Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

You offer abundance to all. Bless the ministries of hospitality in this place. Care for those who tend to the needs of others, especially worship greeters, coffee hour hosts, and nursery attendants (*other ministries of care and hospitality may be named*). Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

You alone are God. We praise you for the faithful departed in every age. Unite our prayers with theirs, until our wilderness journey is complete, and we rest in you. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

**Amen.**

## **Offering**

### **Offertory Prayer**

God of good gifts,  
receive these and all our offerings  
as we present them in faithful service  
for the sake of your gospel.  
Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal  
as you pour out your very presence  
through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life.

**Amen.**

## **Words of Institution**

### **Lord's Prayer**

**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**

## **Communion**

## Prayer

Embodied God,  
at your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus.  
With the eyes of our hearts open to your promise,  
empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors  
and touch the world with your love.

**Amen.**

## Blessing

God, the giver of love,  
✠ Christ, the resurrection and the life,  
and the Holy Spirit of rebirth  
bless you in this Lenten journey.

**Amen.**

## Sending Song

**“Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer”**

**#618 vs. 1,3**

## Dismissal

Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord.

**Okay! We will! Thanks be to God!**

And all of Good Shepherd said,

**AMEN!**

## February Financial Snapshot

The numbers thru February 22:

Total Revenue **\$17,671**

Total Expenses **\$24,101**

Current Difference  
**-\$6,430**

What's to come:

1 more Sundays Offering

Last February Offering:

\$20,667

Budgeted Expense/Revenue

\$29,017

**UNFINISHED**  
DISCOVERING GOD'S CALL  
IN THE NOT YET  
Sundays in Lent with Bible Study following worship.

**In Community**

Lent Midweek  
Tuesday Bible Study at 11  
Wednesday Soup at 5 pm  
Wednesday Worship at 6:30



**Get your Easter lily order in by March 5!**

**GOOD SHEPHERD ~ GOOD FRIDAY  
FISH FRY**

**APRIL 7TH  
4:30 - 6:00**

FISH, POTATOES,  
GREEN BEANS, COLE  
SLAW, DINNER ROLLS,  
DESSERT

2 OR 3 PIECE MEAL  
KIDS MEAL INCLUDES  
CHICKEN

QUILT RAFFLE

SPONSORED BY: LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD ENDOWMENT

**Call the church office if you would like to sign up!**