

Black Forest Lutheran Church

Pastor Ken Hohag

Ash Wednesday - February 14, 2024 - 7:00 p.m.

ASH WEDNESDAY is the beginning of Lent. It is the service in which a cross of ashes is made on our foreheads.

Ashes are a rich symbol in the Jewish and Christian tradition. They suggest God's judgment of our sin, our own repentance and our total dependence on God. We are reminded forcefully of the words in the burial service: "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." One day these words will be said over us.

Ashes also suggest cleansing and renewal. They were once used as a cleansing agent in the absence of soap. On Ash Wednesday, the ashes have sometimes been understood as a penitential substitute for the water as a sign of Baptism. Water both stifles and refreshes, drowns and makes us alive; so the ashes also tell of both death and renewal.

Because of the meditative nature of the worship, the congregation remains seated.

Psalm 51:1-12

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

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. Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me. You desire truth in the inward being; therefore, teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and sustain in me a willing spirit.

EXHORTATION

Pastor: Brothers and sisters: We were created to experience joy in communion with God, and to live in harmony with all creation. But sin separates us from God, our neighbors and creation, and so we do not enjoy the life our Creator intended for us. As disciples of the Lord Jesus, we are called to struggle against everything that leads us away from love of God and neighbor. I invite you, therefore, to commit yourselves to this struggle and confess your sins, asking our Father for strength to persevere in following our Lord Jesus Christ.

(Silence for reflection and self-examination.)

THE CONFESSION

Pastor: Most holy and merciful Father,

Cong.: WE CONFESS TO YOU AND TO ONE ANOTHER THAT WE HAVE SINNED IN THOUGHT, WORD AND DEED; BY WHAT WE HAVE DONE AND BY WHAT WE HAVE LEFT UNDONE.

Pastor: We have not loved you with our whole heart, mind and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others, as we have been forgiven.

Cong.: HAVE MERCY ON US, LORD.

Pastor: We have been deaf to your call to serve as Christ served us. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

Cong.: HAVE MERCY ON US, LORD.

Pastor: We confess to you, Lord, all our unfaithfulness, our pride, and impatience in our lives.

Cong.: HAVE MERCY ON US, LORD.

Pastor: Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people.

Cong.: WE CONFESS TO YOU, LORD.

Pastor: Our anger at ourselves, and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves.

Cong.: WE CONFESS TO YOU, LORD.

Pastor: Our excessive love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonesty in daily life and work.

Cong.: WE CONFESS TO YOU, LORD.

Pastor: Our negligence in prayer and worship and our failure to share the faith that is in us.

Cong.: WE CONFESS TO YOU, LORD.

Pastor: 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.

Cong.: ACCEPT OUR REPENTANCE, LORD.

Pastor: Create in me a clean heart, O God.

Cong.: AND RENEW A RIGHT SPIRIT WITHIN ME.

Pastor: Cast me not away from your presence,

Cong.: AND TAKE NOT YOUR HOLY SPIRIT FROM ME.

Pastor: Restore to me the joy of your salvation,

Cong.: AND UPHOLD ME WITH YOUR FREE SPIRIT. AMEN.

THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Those who desire to receive ashes to remember their frailty and as a sign of repentance, may come forward to the altar rail. The ashes are applied to the forehead of each person with the words: "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return."

Silent meditation on: Psalm 90

p. 338+

Pastor: Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation.

Cong.: That we may show forth your glory in the world.

Pastor: By the cross and passion of your Son, our Lord.

Cong.: Bring us with all your Saints to the joy of His Resurrection.

Pastor: 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.

Cong.: AMEN.

Reading	Joel 2:12-13	
Gospel	Matthew 6:7-15	
Sermon	Our Father	Pastor Ken
Song	<i>In All Our Grief</i>	red 615
Offering	<i>God of the Sparrow</i>	Choir
Offering Prayer		
Communion Service		p. 144
Lord's Prayer		p .145
Lamb of God		p. 146
Distribution Hymns		red 629, 592, 616
Prayer		
Sending Song	<i>All Praise to Thee</i>	red 565
Blessing / Postlude		

The Lord's Prayer

Wednesdays in Lent

Many people know of the Lord's prayer. Many say it often and even have it memorized. Yet few people know what it means or have explored its depths. On our Lenten Wednesday evenings, we will be going deep into this prayer Jesus taught us.

February 14	Our Father	Ash Wednesday
21	Hallowed be thy name	
28	Thy kingdom come thy will be done	
March 6	Give us our daily bread	
13	Forgive us as we forgive	
21	Lead us not into temptation	Maundy Thursday

During Lent we will meet each Wednesday evening. Soup suppers begin on February 21 at 6:00p. Our peaceful Holden Evening Prayer service is at 7:00p. Sign up on bulletin board to bring soup or bread.

Acolyte:	Eleanor Makowsky
Assistants:	Steve & Nancy Lord
Choir Director:	Melanie Hohag
Organist:	Barb Gurnett
Flute:	Donna Yonce
Reader:	Maureen Lang
Ushers:	Mike & Lisa Regennitter

Offerings for Lenten Wednesdays go to Didi & Seraphina Panzo's mission in feeding orphans.

Lenten devotional booklets are on the table in the Narthex.

Ash

WEDNESDAY

