

# *“Growing God’s Kingdom”*



*Remember man  
that you are  
dust and into  
dust you shall  
return.*

## *ASH WEDNESDAY*

March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022

### **MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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**TONIGHT’S INTRODUCTION:** *On Ash Wednesday we begin our forty-day journey toward Easter with a day of fasting and repentance. Marking our foreheads with dust, we acknowledge that we die and return to the earth. At the same time, the dust traces the life-giving cross indelibly marked on our foreheads at baptism. While we journey through Lent to return to God, we have already been reconciled to God through Christ. We humbly pray for God to make our hearts clean while we rejoice that "now is the day of salvation." Returning to our baptismal call, we more intentionally bear the fruits of mercy and justice in the world.*

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# Messiah Lutheran Church

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Altar Guild

## ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

March 2, 2022 – 7:00 p.m.

\*Please stand as YOU are able

### PREPARATION

CHIMES

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

[Please use the prelude as a quiet time to prepare yourself for worship].

### \* CONFESSION OF SIN

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

Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

P Most holy and merciful God,

**C 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.**

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, O God.**

P 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.

**C Have mercy on us, O God.**

P Our past unfaithfulness, the pride, envy, hypocrisy, and apathy that have infected our lives, we confess to you.

**C Have mercy on us, O God.**

P Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people, we confess to you.

**C Have mercy on us, O God.**

P Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to share the faith that is in us, we confess to you.

**C Have mercy on us, O God.**

P Our neglect of human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty, we confess to you.

**C Have mercy on us, O God.**

P Our false judgments, our uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us, we confess to you.

**C Have mercy on us, O God.**

P Our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us, we confess to you.

**C Have mercy on us, O God.**

P Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us.

**C Hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.**

### IMPOSITION OF ASHES

P *Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.* (Those who desire to receive the ashes as a reminder of their guilt, contrition, and mortality may come forward by the center aisle and return to your seats by the side aisles).

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 Savior,

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

P 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.

**C Amen.**

### THE SERVICE

\* OPENING HYMN                      “Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me”                      #327 (Green Hymnal)

\* GREETING

P The Lord be with you.

**C And also with you.**

\* KYRIE (spoken)

P Lord, have mercy upon us.

**C Lord, have mercy upon us.**

P Christ, have mercy upon us.

**C Christ, have mercy upon us.**

P Lord, have mercy upon us.

**C Lord, have mercy upon us.**

\* SALUTATION AND RESPONSE (Spoken)

P The Lord be with you.

**C And also with you.**

\* PRAYER OF THE DAY (spoken in unison)

P Let us pray....

**C 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.**

## WORD

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON.....Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

<sup>1</sup>Blow 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—<sup>2</sup>a 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.

<sup>12</sup>Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; <sup>13</sup>rend 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. <sup>14</sup>Who 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?

<sup>15</sup>Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; <sup>16</sup>gather 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.

<sup>17</sup>Between 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?'"

L: Here ends the reading.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

PSALM.....Psalm 51:1-17 (**responsively**)

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; in your great compassion blot out my offenses.

**<sup>2</sup>Wash me through and through from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sin.**

<sup>3</sup>For I know my offenses, and my sin is ever before me.

**<sup>4</sup>Against 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.**

<sup>5</sup>Indeed, I was born steeped in wickedness, a sinner from my mother's womb.

**<sup>6</sup>Indeed, you delight in truth deep within me, and would have me know wisdom deep within.**

<sup>7</sup>Remove my sins with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be purer than snow.

**<sup>8</sup>Let me hear joy and gladness, that the body you have broken may rejoice.**

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

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

<sup>11</sup>Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

<sup>12</sup>**Restore to me the joy of your salvation and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.**

<sup>13</sup>Let me teach your ways to offenders, and sinners shall be restored to you.

<sup>14</sup>**Rescue me from bloodshed, O God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness.**

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

<sup>16</sup>**For you take no delight in sacrifice, or I would give it.**

You are not pleased with burnt offering.

<sup>17</sup>**The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; a troubled and broken heart, O God, you will not despise.**

EPISTLE LESSON.....Isaiah 58:1-12

<sup>1</sup>Shout out, do not hold back! Lift up your voice like a trumpet! Announce to my people their rebellion, to the house of Jacob their sins. <sup>2</sup>Yet day after day they seek me and delight to know my ways, as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness and did not forsake the ordinance of their God; they ask of me righteous judgments, they delight to draw near to God. <sup>3</sup>"Why do we fast, but you do not see? Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?" Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day, and oppress all your workers. <sup>4</sup>Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight and to strike with a wicked fist. Such fasting as you do today will not make your voice heard on high. <sup>5</sup>Is such the fast that I choose, a day to humble oneself? Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush, and to lie in sackcloth and ashes? Will you call this a fast, a day acceptable to the LORD?

<sup>6</sup>Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? <sup>7</sup>Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin? <sup>8</sup>Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard. <sup>9</sup>Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, <sup>10</sup>if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday. <sup>11</sup>The LORD will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail. <sup>12</sup>Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.

L: Here ends the reading.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

\* THE VERSE

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

\* GOSPEL.....Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

P The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter.

C **Glory to you, O Lord** (spoken)

[Jesus said to the disciples:] <sup>1</sup>"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.

<sup>2</sup>"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. <sup>3</sup>But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, <sup>4</sup>so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

<sup>5</sup>"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. <sup>6</sup>But 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.

<sup>16</sup>"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. <sup>17</sup>But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup>so 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.

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

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ** (spoken)

SERMON: "Freedom Ashes, Freedom Dust" Vicar Sam Leister

\* HYMN OF THE DAY "Lord Jesus, Think on Me" #309 (Green Hymnl)

\* APOSTLES' CREED (all)

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again 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 (Prayers read by Worship Leader)

P Merciful God,  
C **receive our prayer.**

ANTHEM

“Savior, When in Dust to You”

Parry

\* OFFERING PRAYER

P Extravagant God, you have blessed us with the fullness of creation. Now we gather at your feast where you offer us the food that satisfies. Take and use what we offer here, come among us, and feed us with the body and blood of Christ, in whose name we pray.

C **Amen**

**SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

\* EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

P Holy God, you alone are holy, you alone are God. The universe declares your praise: beyond the stars; beneath the sea; within each cell; with every breath.

C **We praise you, O God.**

P Generations bless your faithfulness: through the water; by night and day; across the wilderness; out of exile; into the future.

C **We bless you, O God.**

P We give you thanks for your dear Son: at the heart of human life; near to those who suffer; beside the sinner; among the poor; with us now.

C **We thank you, O God.**

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 his love for us on the way, at the table, and to the end, we proclaim the mystery of faith.

C **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

P We pray for the gift of your Spirit: in our gathering; within this meal; among your people; throughout the world. Blessing, praise, and thanks to you, holy God, through Christ Jesus, by your Spirit, in your church, without end.

C **Amen.**

\* THE LORD’S PRAYER [‘trespasses’] (all)

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 Here is food and drink for the journey. Take and be filled.

P The Body of Christ given for you. (Wafer)

P The Blood of Christ shed for you. (Juice)

\* POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

**C Amen.**

\* PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P 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.

**C Amen.**

\* BLESSING

P You are children of God, anointed with the oil of gladness and strengthened for the journey. Almighty God, motherly, majestic, and mighty, + bless you this day and always.

**C Amen.**

\* CLOSING HYMN                      “Beneath the Cross of Jesus”                      #107 (Green Hymnal)

\* DISMISSAL

P 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.

**C Thanks be to God.**

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## **WELCOME TO ALL!**

WITH CHRIST'S LOVE AND GOD'S GRACE, we welcome all who worship at Messiah this evening. If you are a VISITOR or GUEST, we invite you to record your visit in the guest book provided in the Narthex. If you are seeking a church home, please speak to the Vicar. Our fellowship in Jesus Christ is open and extended to all persons who confess His Lordship over all life. Young children are also encouraged to join us in our worship experience! We are so thankful that you joined us for worship today!

FOR YOUR COMFORT, restrooms are located in the hallway through the double doors of the Adult Sunday School Room and to the left.

WE WELCOME OUR NEIGHBORS, FRIENDS AND CHRISTIAN BROTHERS AND SISTERS from other churches of our community and appreciate the opportunity that is ours as fellow Christians to worship together. Messiah is glad to have you as our guests this evening and we pray that the service will be a rich blessing to you.

WE THANK all who are participating in the service this evening.

THE OFFERING PLATES are located in the Adult Sunday School Room.

2022 LENTEN SERVICES – Vicar Leister will be conducting weekly Lenten services at Messiah this year. The services will be held each Wednesday during Lent starting at 7:00 p.m. The sermon topics are listed below.

- March 9 – “Fast From Injury; Feast on Pardon”
- March 16 – “Fast From Doubt; Feast on Faith”
- March 23 – “Fast From Darkness; Feast on Light”
- March 30 – “Fast From Despair; Feast on Hope”
- April 6 – “Fast From Hatred; Sow Love”

## **ASH WEDNESDAY**

Ash Wednesday is one of the most sober days of our church year. It is sober because we set aside this day that starts the Lenten season to reflect on the quality of our lives. And when we do, we reach three conclusions: we are sinners, we are mortal, and we need our relationship with God renewed. And all three truths lead to the cross of Christ.

Ashes are symbolic of all three of these truths. Sinfulness: from Old Testament times, ashes have been used to show our guilt before God, as when someone donned sackcloth and ashes as an outward sign of contrition. Mortality: ashes are the remains of something once alive: we recognize this in our Christian burial service with the words “earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.” Renewal: ashes also symbolize cleansing (soap was often made from ashes) and new life (fields are burned after the harvest to clear the ground and fertilize the soil for the new season's growth).

Therefore, since as early as the third century, Christians have used ashes as the symbol for this day which was set aside especially to recognize our great need for a savior, someone to save us from our guilt of sin and from our mortality and to renew us with the Father in heaven.

Those who wish will be able to follow this centuries-old Christian tradition of receiving ashes in the sign of the cross on their foreheads during our service this evening.