

Our Saviour Lutheran Church

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February 22, 2023



ASH Wednesday

Gathering in Silence -*The assembly gathers in silence reflecting the penitential and solemn mood of the day. As we gather, we remember how our lives began, and will return to dust; at the same time knowing that we have our hope in the Resurrection to come.*

Penitential Psalm 51- *(Read aloud by lector)*

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your lovingkindness;
in your great compassion blot out my offenses.
Wash me through and through from my wickedness,
and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.
Against you only have sinned and done what is evil in your sight.
And so you are justified when you speak and upright in your judgment.
Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth, a sinner from my mother's womb.
For behold, you look for truth deep within me,
and will make me understand wisdom secretly.
Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure;
wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.
Make me hear of joy and gladness,
that the body you have broken may rejoice.

Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.
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.
Give me the joy of your saving help again
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.

I shall teach your ways to the wicked, and sinners shall return to you.
Deliver me from death, O God,
and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness, O God of my salvation.
Open my lips, O Lord, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.
Had you desired it, I would have offered sacrifice,
but you take no delight in burnt-offerings.
The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Prelude

Invocation

Greetings to you in the name of Jesus, our conversation partner;
the Holy Spirit, our great unknowable mystery;
and the Creator God, the one who answers shame with love.

Greeting *(The assembly stands)*

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Prayer of the Day *(spoken in unison)*

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.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Lesson

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

¹Blow 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—

²a 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.

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.

¹⁴Who 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?

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

¹⁷Between 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?'"

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Second Lesson

2 Corinthians 5:20b--6:10

^{20b}We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

^{6:1}As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. ²For he says,

"At an acceptable time I have listened to you,
and on a day of salvation I have helped you."

See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! ³We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, ⁴but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, ⁵beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; ⁶by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, ⁷truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; ⁸in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; ⁹as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; ¹⁰as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

The Holy Gospel

Gospel Reading

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 6th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹“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.

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

⁵“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. ⁶But 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.

¹⁶“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. ¹⁷But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸so 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.

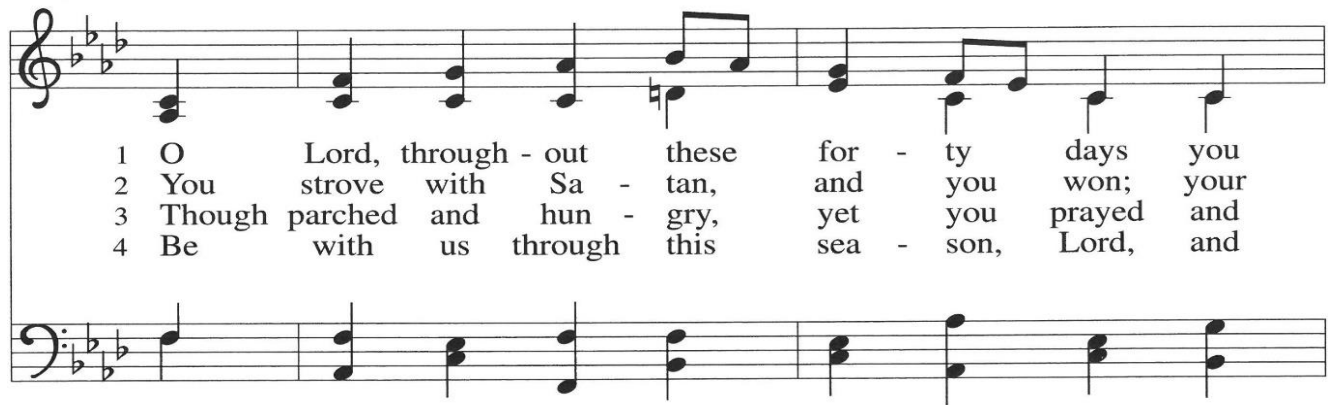
¹⁹“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will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

The Gospel of the Lord.

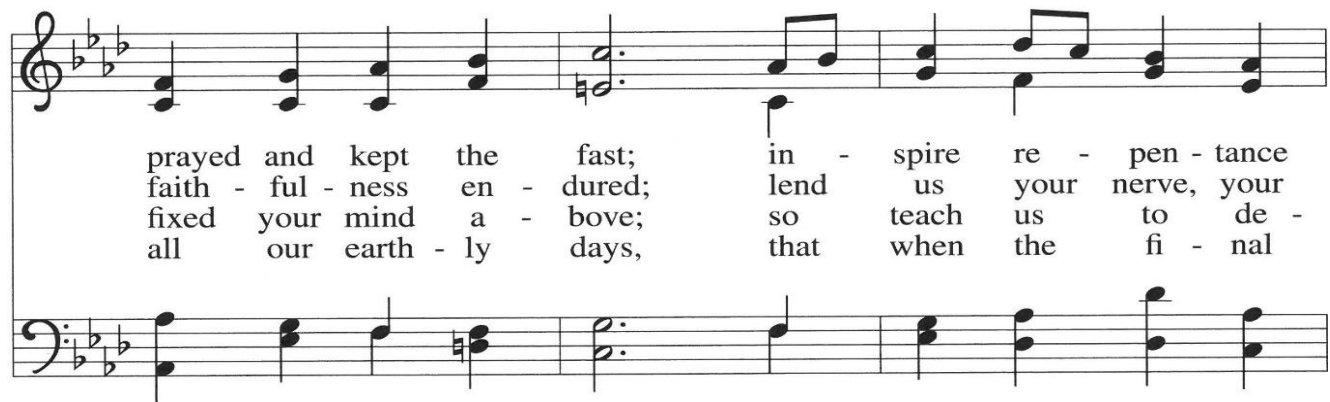
Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

After silence for reflection stand



1 O Lord, through - out these for - ty days you
 2 You strove with Sa - tan, and you won; your
 3 Though parched and hun - gry, yet you prayed and
 4 Be with us through this sea - son, Lord, and



prayed and kept the fast; in - spire re - pen - tance
 faith - ful - ness en - dured; lend us your nerve, your
 fixed your mind a - bove; so teach us to de -
 all our earth - ly days, that when the fi - nal



for our sin, and free us from our past.
 skill and trust in God's e - ter - nal word.
 ny our - selves that we may know God's love.
 Eas - ter dawns, we join in heav - en's praise.

Gathering Words

In our Lenten series we're embracing questions.

We are pondering what we do not know,

opening ourselves to uncertainty, holding space for discernment.

This can feel

Destabilizing.

Challenging.

Uncomfortable.

Before we enter this searching time,
let me tell you something unquestionably true.

God loves you.
God embraces you.

And God uses everything—
Even the uncertain—
to create love and connection.

A brief Silence for reflection and self-examination is kept.

Confession

Most holy and merciful Father:

**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.**

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, Lord.

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.

Have mercy on us, Lord.

We confess to you, Lord, all our past unfaithfulness.

The pride, hypocrisy, and impatience in our lives,

we confess to you, Lord.

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of others,

we confess to you, Lord.

Our anger at our own frustration,

and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,

we confess to you, Lord.

Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts,

and our dishonesty in daily life and work,

we confess to you, Lord.

Our negligence in prayer and worship,

and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,

we confess to you, Lord.

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,

accept our repentance, Lord.

For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors,
and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us,

accept our repentance, Lord.

For our waste and pollution of your creation,
and our lack of concern for those who come after us,

accept our repentance, Lord.

Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us.

Hear us, Lord, for your mercy is great. Amen

Imposition of Ashes

Those wishing to receive the imposition of ashes may come forward.

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

Prayer

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.

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.

Hymn

Restore in Us, O God

ELW 328



1 Re - store in us, O God, the splen - dor of your love; re -
2 O Spir - it, wake in us the won - der of your pow'r; from
3 Bring us, O Christ, to share the full - ness of your joy; bap -
4 Three - per - soned God, ful - fill the prom - ise of your grace, that



new your im - age in our hearts, and all our sins re - move.
fruit - less fear un - furl our lives like spring - time bud and flow'r.
tize us in the ris - en life that death can - not de - stroy.
we, when all our search - ing ends, may see you face to face.

WE COME TO THE LORD'S TABLE

Holy Communion

Dialogue

Where is our God?

God is here in this place.

Where are your hearts?

We have given them to God.

What shall we do in the presence of our God?

We shall give our thanks and praise.

Preface

Praise and thanks go to you, Great God,
for at the beginning of time you wondered what your Spirit
hovering over the water could bring forth:

Sky and sea? Yes.

Sun and moon? Yes.

Land and plants and animals?

People made in your divine image?

The answer was yes. And you loved this answer.

Everything you made was good.

From the first days of humankind, when your people fell far from you in sin,
you always lovingly inquired,

Where are you?

When they were enslaved, you questioned the oppressor's true power
to set your people free.

When they were hungry, you sent them mysterious food.

They asked, "What is it?"

and the answer was good and sustaining.

Any time your people were exiled and afraid, you asked the prophet
if the dry bones of their self-inflicted pain could live anew.

The answer was yes.

Out of your unflinching yes for our salvation, you sent to us Jesus,
a savior with questionable beginnings from a dubious place.

When everyday people met your Son,
they asked, "He cannot be the Messiah, can he?"

When religious leaders heard Christ's teachings,
they wondered, "Can these words come from the God we know?"

Folks had their doubts, but Jesus' faith compelled them to ask,

"Is this really the one who will save us from our sins?"

Christ's abundant forgiveness to sinners, humiliating death at the hands of the state, and glorious resurrection from the depths of the tomb all answered yes.

Now, humble people, we respond with our own affirmation.

Is our God loving?

Does our God work for the good of those who wait for justice?

Does our God bring new life to those who have died?

Yes,

yes,

yes.

Table Prayer:

For all this, even the people who knew Jesus best carried doubts in their hearts.

They lived under the burden of unanswered questions.

And when Jesus gathered them for one last meal, uncertainty swirled in their hearts.

So to explain God's love, and to show it and share it,

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.

Invitation to the Lord's Prayer

Jesus, you asked us to ask you for anything we need.

So we pray: ...

The Lord's Prayer

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

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 the Lord's Table

If you wonder whether God really wants you at this table, Jesus answers yes.

Bring your unanswered questions with you, because the Spirit unquestionably beckons you to taste the truth of God's love.

The Distribution

All the baptized are invited to come forward to receive the holy gifts. Those not receiving may come forward for a blessing or remain in the pews in prayer.

Post-Communion Sentence

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

Post-Communion Prayer

Let us pray. Almighty God, you gave your Son both as a sacrifice for sin and a model of the godly life. Enable us to receive him always with thanksgiving, and to conform our lives to his; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

WE ARE SENT

Blessing and Dismissal

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. And may Almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

1 Bless now, O God, the jour - ney that all your peo - ple make,
 2 Bless so - journ - ers and pil - grims who share this wind - ing way;
 3 Di - vine e - ter - nal lov - er, you meet us on the road.

the path through noise and si - lence, the way of give and take.
 your hope burns through the ter - rors, your love sus - tains the day.
 We wait for lands of prom - ise where milk and hon - ey flow,

The trail is found in des - ert and winds the moun - tain round,
 We yearn for ho - ly free - dom while of - ten we are bound;
 but wait - ing not for plac - es, you meet us all a - round.

then leads be - side still wa - ters, the road where faith is found.
 to - geth - er we are seek - ing the road where faith is found.
 Our cov - e - nant is writ - ten on roads, as faith is found.

The Assembly Departs in Silence

Welcome to Our Saviour

Do you want to live life to its fullest? Do you want to have resources to cope with the challenges of life? Since his disciples first followed him, Jesus' teachings and example have been providing enduring answers for life's most troubling questions. Jesus' life was given for us. His life remains a gift to be received and God's Word through him waits to be heard. Come and see! The Lord is good!

Our Saviour is a safe, friendly, welcoming place *for* you and your family to hear Good News and find warm, caring community. We welcome people of all races, ethnicities, political affiliations, sexual orientations and gender identities or expressions. We invite you to join us in any or all of the activities. Please ask any member for further details.

You will find the Order of Worship set out in this bulletin. You will also find a schedule of devotional readings and next Sunday's scripture set out inside the back cover.

HOLY COMMUNION: All are invited to the Lord's Table, as Jesus welcomed all without condition, to commune with Him. You need not be Lutheran or a church member. Young children may receive at their parents' discretion.



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**
God's work. Our hands.

Welcome to Our Saviour Evangelical Lutheran Church

Rev. Justin Johnson, Pastor
Phill Greenland, Music Minister

Sunday School 9:00 am
Sunday Worship Service 10:00 am

Pastor's Office Hours: Mon & Tues: 9:00 am – 12:00 noon;
Wed, Sat & Sun: by appointment; Thurs & Friday: Pastor's Days Off.

Church Secretary's Office Hours: Mon, Tues & Fri: 9:00 am – 12:00 pm
Church Office Phone: 914-271-4632 **Pastor's Phone:** 914 863-1601

<http://www.oursaviourcroton.org>

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Our Saviour

Your Saviour

Our Saviour