**ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**WOODLAND, MI**



**Ash Wednesday**

**February 22, 2023**

**Gathering Song “Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling” ELW 608**



**Greeting**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

**Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray together.

**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.**

**First Reading:** **Joel 2:1-2, 12-17**

A reading from Joel.

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.**

### Psalm Psalm 51:1-6, 8-17

1Have mercy on me, O God, according to your | steadfast love;  
  in your great compassion blot out | my offenses.  
 2**Wash me through and through | from my wickedness,**  
  **and cleanse me | from my sin.**  
 3For I know | my offenses,  
  and my sin is ev- | er before me.  
 4**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.**   
 5Indeed, I was born | steeped in wickedness,  
  a sinner from my | mother’s womb.  
 6**Indeed, you delight in truth | deep within me,**  
  **and would have me know wisdom | deep within.**   
**8Let me hear | joy and gladness;  
  that the body you have broken | may rejoice.**  **9Hide your face | from my sins,  
  and blot out | all my wickedness.**

**10Create in me a clean | heart, O God,  
  and renew a right spir- | it within me.  
 11Cast me not away | from your presence,  
  and take not your Holy Spir- | it from me.   
 12Restore to me the joy of | your salvation  
  and sustain me with your boun- | tiful Spirit.**  **13Let me teach your ways | to offenders,  
  and sinners shall be re- | stored to you.  
 14Rescue me from bloodshed, O God of | my salvation,  
  and my tongue shall sing | of your righteousness.  
15O Lord, o- | pen my lips,  
  and my mouth shall pro- | claim your praise.  
 16For you take no delight in sacrifice, or | I would give it.  
  You are not pleased | with burnt offering.  
 17The sacrifice of God is a | troubled spirit;  
  a troubled and broken heart, O God, you will | not despise.**

**Second Reading:** **2 Corinthians 5:20b--6:10**

A reading from 2 Corinthians.

20bWe 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.  
 6:1As 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.**

**Gospel Acclamation**

**We are turning Lord to hear you;**

**You are merciful and kind**

**Slow to anger, rich in blessing**

**And with love to us inclined**

**Gospel:**  **Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21**

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**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  Pastor Becky Ebb-Speese**

**Hymn of the Day “Just As I Am, Without One Plea” ELW 592**



**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**

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

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.

**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. *(as ashes are imposed)*

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.**

**Prayers of Intercession**

Renewed in the promises of baptism, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

*A brief silence.*

We pray for the church. Turn our lives toward you in repentance. Turn our hearts toward our neighbors in love. Turn our actions toward the world in mercy. Renew us in faith, in prayer, and in compassion. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

We pray for the world. Teach us to treasure the earth as your beloved creation. Provide plentiful and healthy homes for all creatures. Bring new life from decay. Repair what has been damaged from misuse or neglect. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

We pray for the nations. Empower leaders to resist the use of power for personal gain or selfish interest. Teach us to build communities where all can live in safety and peace. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

We pray for those in need. Protect those who are victimized by crime or injustice. Unburden those who are weighed down by guilt or shame. Assist those who are unemployed. Comfort those who mourn and heal the sick. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

We pray for this assembly. Deepen our faith. Empower those who work in our community to provide food, shelter, and health care to those who are in need. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

With thanksgiving, we remember all who have died in faith. Bring us with them to the promise of unending life with you. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

Trusting in your covenant of mercy, O God, we lift our prayers to you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior.

**Amen.**

**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.**

**Sending**

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

**Blessing**

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

**Amen.**

**Sending SONG “Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me” ELW 623**



**Dismissal**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

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