**SALT Parish**

**St. John’s Lutheran Church, Saginaw**

**Ash Wednesday**

**February 22, 2023**

**6:30 pm**

**Greeting**

P: The Lord be with you.

***C: And also with you.***

**Prayer of the Day**

***C: Gracious God, out of your love and mercy you breathed into dust the breath of life, creating us to serve you and our neighbors. Call forth our prayers and acts of kindness, and strengthen us to face our mortality with confidence in the mercy of 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**

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?'"

**Psalm 51:1-17**

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 ever 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.**

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

8**Let 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.

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

11Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

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

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

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

15O LORD, open my lips, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

16**For 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**

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.

**Gospel**: **Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21**

[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."

**Sermon**

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

Vs. 1 Just as I am, without one plea, but that thy blood was

 shed for me, and that thou bidd'st me come to thee,
 O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Vs. 2 Just as I am, though tossed about with many a conflict,

 many a doubt, fightings and fears within, without,
 O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Vs. 3 Just as I am, thou wilt receive, wilt welcome, pardon,

 cleanse, relieve; because thy promise I believe,
 O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Vs. 4 Just as I am, thy love unknown has broken ev'ry

 barrier down; now to be thine, yea, thine alone,
 O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

**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, 9 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** *Page 252*

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

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**

**Following the Imposition of Ashes** Page 254

P: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, of 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.***

**Prayers of Intercession**

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

O Lord, our God, you gather your church and call us to return to you. Accompany us throughout our Lenten pilgrimage. Create in us clean hearts and renew all the baptized to declare your praise. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Renew your creation, O God. Bring rains to parched places and heal lands affected by a changing climate, that all inhabitants of the earth experience your abundance. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Renew the nations, O God. Give voice to those on the margins and resolve to world leaders who seek to protect those most vulnerable. Loosen the bonds of injustice and bring an end to all violence, oppression, and persecution. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Renew your people, O God. Respond to those who cry out to you in secret or in seclusion. Equip us with compassion to care for those who experience homelessness, food insecurity, economic hardship, and illness (*especially*).

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Renew this congregation, O God. Inspire our faith formation ministries and those who teach and lead. Invigorate us with lifelong curiosity and wonder as we grow as your disciples. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

O Lord, our God, we give thanks for all your faithful ones of every time and place. Renew us by the example of their lives of prayer and service, and at the last, bring us with them into your everlasting presence. 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 *“We Give Thee but Thine Own” vs. 1*** *Hymn #686*

We give thee but thine own, what e’er the gift may be;

All that we have is thine alone a trust, O Lord from thee.

**Offering Prayer**

Let us pray, Blessed are you, O God maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts; our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love; through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, or Savior and Lord. Amen.

**Great Thanksgiving**

P: The Lord be with you.

***C: And also with you.***

P: Lift up your hearts.

***C: We lift them to the Lord.***

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

***C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.***

**Words of Institution**

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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

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

**Lord’s Prayer**

P: Let us pray as Jesus has taught us.

***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**

**Post Communion Blessing**

**Post Communion Prayer** *Page 254*

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. ***Amen.***

**Blessing**

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord’s face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.

**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 week; help the afflicted; honor all people; love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

***C: Thanks be to God.***