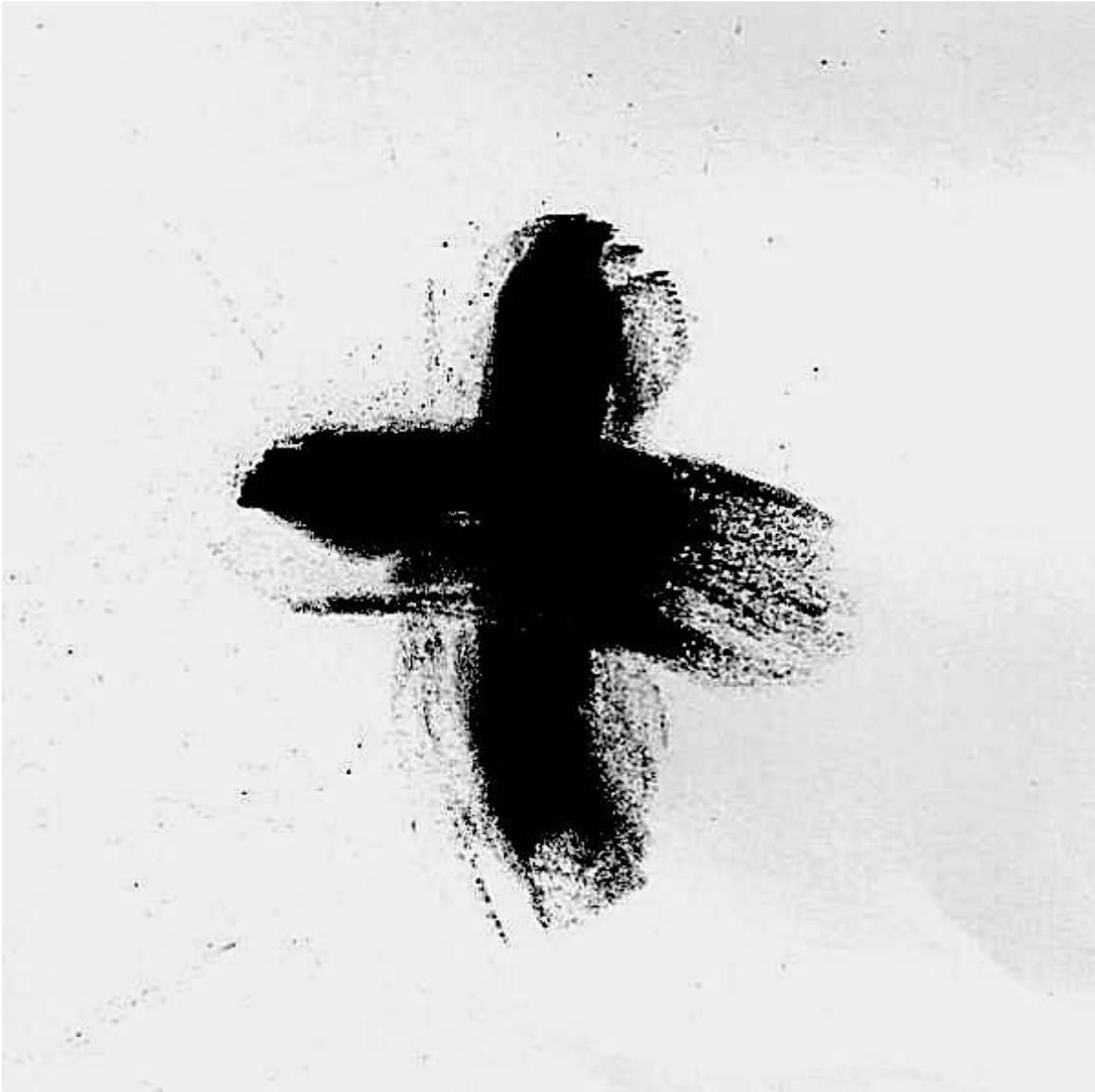


+Ash Wednesday+
February 17, A.+D. 2021



**Remember That You Are Dust
And To Dust You Shall Return**

Yet even now," declares the LORD, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster.

Joel 12:12-19

The Divine Service on Ash Wednesday

Prayer Before Worship.

O Lord who is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, You are our Father; we are the clay, and You are our potter; we are all the work of Your hand. Be not so terribly angry, O Lord, and remember not iniquity forever. Behold, please look, we are all Your people. As we come to worship in spirit and in truth, we humbly pray that You would open our hearts to the preaching of Your Word so that we all may repent of our sins, believe in Jesus Christ as our only Savior, and grow in grace and holiness. Hear us for the sake of Jesus Christ, whom you made to be sin who knew no sin, that we may not receive Your grace in vain; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the holy season of Lent.

The Imposition of Ashes has its foundation in the ritual observances of Old Testament Israel. When the people would gather before God to repent of their sin, they would humble themselves with sackcloth and ashes [Jer. 6:26].

Tonight, as we come before God in repentance, mourning and lamenting our sin and the destruction that sin has wrought in the world and in our lives, we take the palm branches used in last year's Palm Sunday procession, which have been burned to ashes, trace the Sign of the Holy Cross traced upon our foreheads, while hearing the words God spoke to Adam after the Fall: "*Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return*" [Gen. 3:19].

Just as the people of Israel marked their doors at the first Passover with the blood of the Lamb, shielding them from the angel of death, the ash on our foreheads tonight is marked in the shape of a Cross, reminding us of the Lamb of God who has saved us by his blood and marked us in Holy Baptism as his own, that we might not taste death but live with him forever. We repent in view of the Lamb that was slain, trusting that in his blood we have forgiveness and life.

After the bells, stand. The procession of the cross proceeds in silence.

Lenten Address

Pastor addresses the congregation:

- P Dear brothers and sisters of our Lord Jesus Christ, on this day the Church begins a holy season of prayerful and penitential reflection. Our attention is especially directed to the holy sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

From ancient times the season of Lent has been kept as a time of special devotion, self-denial, and humble repentance born of a faithful heart that dwells confidently on His Word and draws from it life and hope.

Let us pray that our dear Father in heaven, for the sake of His beloved Son and in the power of His Holy Spirit, might richly bless this Lententide for us so that we may come to Easter with glad hearts and keep the feast in sincerity and truth.

The Litany for Ash Wednesday

Silence for reflection.

P O Lord,

C **have mercy.**

P O Christ,

C **have mercy.**

P O Lord,

C **have mercy.**

P O Christ,

C **hear us.**

P God the Father in heaven,

C **have mercy.**

P God the Son, Redeemer of the world,

C **have mercy.**

P God the Holy Spirit,

C **have mercy.**

P Be gracious to us.

C **Spare us, good Lord.**

P Be gracious to us.

C **Help us, good Lord.**

P By the mystery of Your holy incarnation;

by Your holy nativity;

by Your baptism, fasting, and temptation;

by Your agony and bloody sweat;

by Your cross and passion;

by Your precious death and burial;

by Your glorious resurrection and ascension;

and by the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter:

C **Help us, good Lord.**

P In all time of our tribulation;

in all time of our prosperity;

in the hour of death;

and in the day of judgment:

C **Help us, good Lord.**

P We poor sinners implore You

C **to hear us, O Lord.**

P To prosper the preaching of Your Word;

to bless our prayer and meditation;

to strengthen and preserve us in the true faith;

and to give heart to our sorrow and strength to our repentance:

C **We implore You to hear us, good Lord.**

P To draw all to Yourself;

to bless those who are instructed in the faith;

to watch over and console the poor, the sick, the distressed, the lonely, the forsaken,
the abandoned, and all who stand in need of our prayers;

to give abundant blessing to all works of mercy;

and to have mercy on us all:

C **We implore You to hear us, good Lord.**

P To turn our hearts to You;

to turn the hearts of our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers;

and graciously to hear our prayers:

C **We implore You to hear us, good Lord.**

P Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,

C **we implore You to hear us.**

P Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

C **have mercy.**

P Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

C **have mercy.**

P Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

C **grant us Your peace.**

P O Christ,

C **hear us.**

P O Lord,

C **have mercy.**

P O Christ,

C **have mercy.**

P O Lord,

C **have mercy. Amen.**

P O God, You desire not the death of sinners, but rather that they turn from their wickedness and live. We implore You to have compassion on the frailty of our mortal nature, for we acknowledge that we are dust and to dust we shall return. Mercifully pardon our sins that we may obtain the promises You have laid up for those who are repentant; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

The Imposition of Ashes

Sit

The pastor and assistants receive ashes first, followed by the congregation.

Using the right thumb, the pastor places the ashes on the forehead of each person in the sign of the cross, saying:

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

After receiving the ashes, each person returns to his place in silence. There is no statement of dismissal. The hymn "Savior, When in Dust to Thee" is sung during the imposition of ashes.

Imposition Hymn | 419 Savior, When in Dust to Thee



1 Sav - ior, when in dust to Thee Low we bow the a -
2 By Thy help - less in - fant years, By Thy life of
3 By Thine hour of dire de - spair, By Thine ag - o -
4 By Thy deep ex - pir - ing groan, By the sad se -



dor - ing knee; When, re - pen - tant, to the skies
want and tears, By Thy days of deep dis - tress
ny of prayer, By the cross, the nail, the thorn,
pul - chral stone, By the vault whose dark a - bode



Scarce we lift our weep - ing eyes; O, by all Thy
In the sav - age wil - der - ness, By the dread, mys -
Pierc - ing spear, and tor - turing scorn, By the gloom that
Held in vain the ris - ing God, O, from earth to



pains and woe Suf - fered once for us be - low, Bend - ing
te - rious hour Of the in - sult - ing tempt - er's pow'r, Turn, O
veiled the skies O'er the dread - ful sac - ri - fice, Lis - ten
heav'n re - stored, Might - y, re - as - cend - ed Lord, Bend - ing



from Thy throne on high, Hear our pen - i - ten - tial cry!
turn a fa - v'ring eye; Hear our pen - i - ten - tial cry!
to our hum - ble sigh; Hear our pen - i - ten - tial cry!
from Thy throne on high, Hear our pen - i - ten - tial cry!

Confession and Absolution

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

P In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C **who made heaven and earth.**

P If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

C **But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.**

P Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

C **Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.**

P Almighty God, merciful Father, in Holy Baptism You declared us to be Your children and gathered us into Your one, holy Church, in which You daily and richly forgive us our sins and grant us new life through Your Spirit. Be in our midst, enliven our faith, and graciously receive our prayer and praise; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C **Amen.**

The Service of the Word

Introit

Psalm 51:1–3, 10–12; antiphon: v. 17

Antiphon: *The sacrifices of God are a broken | spirit;**
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will | not despise.

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your | steadfast love; *
according to your abundant mercy blot out my trans- | gressions.

**Wash me thoroughly from my in- | iquity, *
and cleanse me | from my sin!**

For I know my trans- | gressions, *
and my sin is ever be- | fore me.

**Create in me a clean heart, | O God, *
and renew a right spirit with- | in me.**

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

**Restore to me the joy of your sal- | vation, *
and uphold me with a willing | spirit.**

(Spoken) **Glory be to the Father and | to the Son *
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning, *
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

*Antiphon: The sacrifices of God are a broken | spirit; *
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will | not despise.*

Kyrie

LSB 204



C Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy; Lord, have mer - cy.

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, You despise nothing You have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and contrite hearts that lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness we may receive from You full pardon and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Sit

Old Testament Reading

Joel 2:12–19

¹²“Yet even now,” declares the LORD,
“return to me with all your heart,

with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
¹³and rend your hearts and not your garments.”
Return to the LORD, your God,
for he is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love;
and he relents over disaster.
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;
consecrate a fast;
call a solemn assembly;
¹⁶gather the people.
Consecrate the congregation;
assemble the elders;
gather the children,
even nursing infants.
Let the bridegroom leave his room,
and the bride her chamber.
¹⁷Between the vestibule and the altar
let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep
and say, “Spare your people, O LORD,
and make not your heritage a reproach,
a byword among the nations.
Why should they say among the peoples,
‘Where is their God?’”
¹⁸Then the LORD became jealous for his land
and had pity on his people.
¹⁹The LORD answered and said to his people,
“Behold, I am sending to you
grain, wine, and oil,
and you will be satisfied;
and I will no more make you
a reproach among the nations.”

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle

2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10

We implore 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.

¹Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. ²For he says,

“In a favorable time I listened to you,
and in a day of salvation I have helped you.”

Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. ³We put no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, ⁴but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, ⁵beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; ⁶by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; ⁷by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; ⁸through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; ⁹as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; ¹⁰as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Stand

Holy Gospel

Matthew 6:1–6, 16–21

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the sixth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

¹[Jesus said:] “Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

²“Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ³But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

⁵“And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ⁶But when 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 when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ¹⁷But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, ¹⁸that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

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

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Nicene Creed

**C I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.**

**And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**



Kyrie Eleison

LORD, HAVE MERCY

Sit

Hymn of the Day | 607 From Depths of Woe I Cry to Thee



1 From depths of woe I cry to Thee, In trial and
2 Thy love and grace a - lone a - veil To blot out
3 There - fore my hope is in the Lord And not in
4 And though it tar - ry through the night And till the
5 Though great our sins, yet great - er still Is God's a -



trib - u - la - tion; Bend down Thy gra - cious
my trans - gres - sion; The best and ho - liest
mine own mer - it; It rests up - on His
morn - ing wak - en, My heart shall nev - er
bun - dant fa - vor; His hand of mer - cy



ear to me, Lord, hear my sup - pli - ca - tion.
deeds must fail To break sin's dread op - pres - sion.
faith - ful Word To them of con - trite spir - it
doubt His might Nor count it - self for - sak - en.
nev - er will A - ban - don us, nor wa - ver.



If Thou re - mem - b'rest ev - 'ry sin, Who then could heav - en
Be - fore Thee none can boast - ing stand, But all must fear Thy
That He is mer - ci - ful and just; This is my com - fort
O Is - rael, trust in God your Lord. Born of the Spir - it
Our shep - herd good and true is He, Who will at last His



ev - er win Or stand be - fore Thy pres - ence?
strict de - mand And live a - lone by mer - cy.
and my trust. His help I wait with pa - tience.
and the Word, Now wait for His ap - pear - ing.
Is - rael free From all their sin and sor - row.

Sermon

Stand

Service of the Sacrament

Preface

LSB 208

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 Him thanks and praise.**

P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for the countless blessings You so freely bestow on us and all creation. Above all, we give thanks for Your boundless love shown to us when You sent Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into our flesh and laid on Him our sin, giving Him into death that we might not die eternally. Because He is now risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity, all who believe in Him will overcome sin and death and will rise again to new life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth a - dored;



Heav'n and earth with full ac-claim shout the glo-ry of Your name.



Sing ho - san-na in the high-est, sing ho-san - na to the Lord;



Tru - ly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!

Lord's Prayer

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.**

The Words of Our Lord

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My T body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My T

blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

Pax Domini

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

Agnus Dei | 434 Lamb of God, Pure and Holy

st. 1

Stanza 1 of this hymn shall serve as the Agnus Dei throughout the Season of Lent.



1 Lamb of God, pure and ho - ly, Who on the cross didst suf - fer,



Ev - er pa - tient and low - ly, Thy - self to scorn didst of - fer.



All sins Thou bor - est for us, Else had de - spair reigned o'er us:



Have mer - cy on us, O Je - sus! O Je - sus!

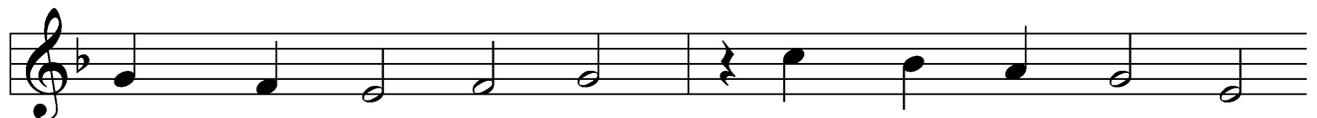
Sit

Distribution

Distribution Hymn | 615 When in the Hour of Deepest Need



1 When in the hour of deep - est need We know not
2 Then is our com - fort this a - lone That we may
3 For You have prom - ised, Lord, to heed Your chil - dren's
4 And so we come, O God, to - day And all our



where to look for aid; When days and nights of
meet be - fore Your throne; To You, O faith - ful
cries in time of need Through Him whose name a -
woes be - fore You lay; For sore - ly tried, cast



anx - ious thought No help or coun - sel yet have brought,
 God, we cry For res - cue in our mis - er - y.
 lone is great, Our Sav - ior and our ad - vo - cate.
 down, we stand, Per - plexed by fears on ev - 'ry hand.

5 O from our sins, Lord, turn Your
 face;
 Absolve us through Your
 boundless grace.
 Be with us in our anguish still;
 Free us at last from ev'ry ill.

6 So we with all our hearts each day
 To You our glad thanksgiving
 pay,
 Then walk obedient to Your
 Word,
 And now and ever praise You,
 Lord.

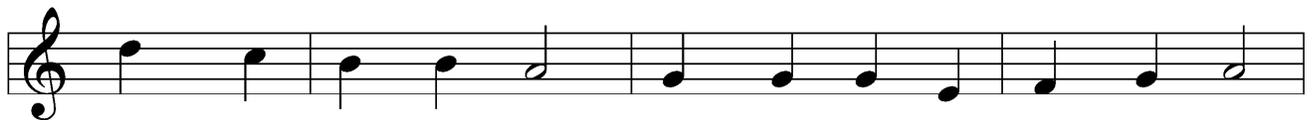
Distribution Hymn | 421 Jesus, Grant That Balm and Healing



1 Je - sus, grant that balm and heal - ing In Your ho - ly
 2 Should some lust or sharp temp - ta - tion Fas - ci - nate my
 3 If the world my heart en - tic - es With the broad and
 4 Ev - 'ry wound that pains or grieves me By Your wounds, Lord,
 5 O my God, my rock and tow - er, Grant that in Your



wounds I find, Ev - 'ry hour that I am feel - ing Pains of
 sin - ful mind, Draw me to Your cross and pas - sion, And new
 eas - y road, With se - duc - tive, sin - ful vi - ces, Let me
 is made whole; When I'm faint, Your cross re - vives me, Grant - ing
 death I trust, Know - ing death has lost its pow - er Since You



bod - y and of mind. Should some e - vil thought with - in
 cour - age I shall find. Or should Sa - tan press me hard,
 weigh the aw - ful load You were will - ing to en - dure.
 new life to my soul. Yes, Your com - fort ren - ders sweet
 crushed it in the dust. Sav - ior, let Your ag - o - ny



Tempt my treach-'rous heart to sin, Show the per - il, and from
 Let me then be on my guard, Say - ing, "Christ for me was
 Help me flee all thoughts im - pure And to mas - ter each temp-
 Ev - 'ry bit - ter cup I meet; For Your all - a - ton - ing
 Ev - er help and com - fort me; When I die be my pro -



sin - ning Keep me from its first be - gin - ning.
 wound - ed," That the tempt - er flee con - found - ed.
 ta - tion, Calm in prayer and med - i - ta - tion.
 pas - sion Has pro - cured my soul's sal - va - tion.
 tec - tion, Light and life and res - ur - rec - tion.

Stand. In dismissing the communicants, the following is said:

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. Depart T in peace.

C Amen.

Nunc Dimittis

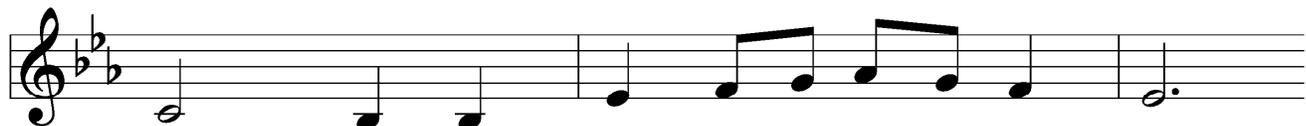
LSB 211



1 O Lord, now let Your ser - vant De -
2 All glo - ry to the Fa - ther, All



part in heav'n - ly peace, For I have seen the
 glo - ry to the Son, All glo - ry to the



glo - ry Of Your re - deem - ing grace:
 Spir - it, For - ev - er Three in One;



A light to lead the Gen - tiles Un -
 For as in the be - gin - ning, Is



to Your ho - ly hill, The glo - ry of Your
now, shall ev - er be, God's tri - une name re -
peo - ple, Your cho - sen Is - ra - el.
sound - ing Through all e - ter - ni - ty.

Post-Communion Collect

A Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Benedicamus

LSB 212

A Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Benediction

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and T give you peace.

C Amen.

Closing Hymn | 418 O Lord, throughout These Forty Days



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



The Liturgy of Lent

Lent is a season of solemn, penitential (repentant) reflection of our sin and the suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ for our salvation. In Lent, we put away the *Alleluia* verse, the *Gloria in Excelsis*, and the *Gospel procession* until the Easter Vigil. These changes reflect the solemn, penitential character of the season and aid our Lenten reflection. We will also use Divine Service Setting Four throughout Lent, a setting with less chanting and more speaking, to aid us in our Lenten observance.

Lenten Disciplines

On Ash Wednesday, we hear the Holy Gospel from Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21. The words of our Lord from this text are fitting because they are programmatic for the disciplines of Lent. Lent gives the occasion for increased prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Jesus does not consider any of these disciplines options, for he says, when you fast...when you pray...when you give to the needy, as if they will be a regular part of the Christian life. These disciplines are not performed to earn our salvation or justify ourselves before God. Rather, they are the fruit of a heart that has been awakened to faith in Christ through the Means of Grace. So, how might we pray, fast, and give alms?

Almsgiving

Consider giving a donation to the poor and needy. LCMS World Relief and Human Care is a national organization www.lcms.org/how-we-serve/mercy which serves those struck by disaster. Give to local organizations such as the Hope Clinic hopeandanswers.com or Love, Inc. loveinc.org.

Fasting

Many Lutherans think fasting means 'giving up' something in particular, whether it be a favorite food or activity, during Lent. Historically, fasting meant the foregoing of an entire meal during the day. For instance, a person might set aside lunch, or eat something very light—juice, nuts, berries, etc.—in place of a larger meal, and forego eating until sunset. Fasting is 'fine outward training.' By it, we train ourselves to not be so dependent on earthly food, but to seek the greater spiritual nourishment that comes through the Word of God. If the enemies of the cross take from us food, drink, clothing, and other earthly necessities, Christians have lost nothing. The living bread of heaven, Jesus Christ, is present for us in his Word. A fasting person might take the extra time gained from not eating to pray the Psalms (below).

Prayer

All Christians pray. The Catechism instructs us to pray. We begin with the Invocation with the Sign of the Cross, “In the Name of the Father and of the +Son and of the Holy Spirit.” We then pray the Our Father, the Apostles’ Creed, and Luther’s Morning or Evening Prayer. Having a daily schedule for prayer is important. If you do not have a regular habit for prayer, no time is better to learn one than the season of Lent. A Christian may deepen her life of prayer by praying the prayerbook of the Bible during Lent—the Psalms. Here is a schedule for praying the entire Psalter (Book of Psalms) during Lent:

Day 1—Psalms 1-5	Day 21—Psalms 75-77
Day 2—Psalms 6-9	Day 22—Psalm 78
Day 3—Psalm 10-14	Day 23—Psalms 79-81
Day 4—Psalms 15-18	Day 24—Psalms 82-86
Day 5—Psalms 19-23	Day 25—Psalms 87-89
Day 6—Psalms 24-29	Day 26—Psalms 90-93
Day 7—Psalms 30-33	Day 27—Psalms 94-97
Day 8—Psalms 34-36	Day 28—Psalms 98-101
Day 9—Psalms 37-40	Day 29—Psalms 102-104
Day 10—Psalms 41-44	Day 30—Psalms 105-106
Day 11—Psalms 45-48	Day 31—Psalms 107-109
Day 12—Psalms 49-51	Day 32—Psalms 110-115
Day 13—Psalms 52-55	Day 33—Psalms 116-119 BETH
Day 14—Psalms 56-58	Day 34—Psalm 119 GIMEL-TETH
Day 15—Psalms 59-62	Day 35—Psalm 119 YODH-TAW
Day 16—Psalms 63-66	Day 36—Psalms 120-129
Day 17—Psalms 67-68	Day 37—Psalms 130-136
Day 18—Psalms 69-70	Day 38—Psalms 137-141
Day 19—Psalms 71-72	Day 39—Psalms 142-144
Day 20—Psalms 73-74	Day 40—Psalms 145-150

Confession and Absolution

Finally, the congregation is encouraged to make the most of this season of repentance by coming to Individual Confession and Absolution, Sundays in Lent from 6:30-7:30am in Pastor’s study. The Rite of Individual Confession and Absolution is on page 292 is the LSB hymnal. The rite is short and ordinarily takes ten minutes to complete. The benefit of such private Absolution is to hear the word of forgiveness pronounced directly toward those sins which we know and feel in our hearts. The pastor is bound by his office never to divulge the sins confessed to him. No appointment is required. Prepare for Confession by reflecting on the Biechtspiegel or ‘Mirror of Confession’ found here:

Biechtspiegel or Confessional Mirror

Christians preparing for Individual Confession and Absolution may examine themselves in light of the Ten Commandments with the help of these simple questions.

Consider your place in life according to the Ten Commandments. Are you a father, mother, son, daughter, husband, wife, or worker? Have you been disobedient, unfaithful, or lazy? Have you been hot-tempered, rude, or quarrelsome? Have you hurt someone by your words or deeds? Have you stolen, been negligent, wasted anything, or done any harm? —*Luther's Small Catechism, Confession, Third Question.*

I. You shall have no other gods. What do I trust? What am I afraid of? In what, or whom, do I trust for financial security, physical safety, or emotional support? Do I fear God's wrath and therefore avoid every sin? Is the love of God evident in all my thoughts, words, and actions? Do I bear the cross with patience, or chafe against it? Do I doubt?

II. You shall not misuse the Name of the Lord your God. Do I pray as often as I should? Do I curse, speak carelessly, or misuse God's Name? Have I become bored or indifferent in prayer? Have I kept all the vows I have made in the Lord's name? Does the Gospel adorn my daily speech and conduct? Can others tell from my words that I am a child of God?

III. Remember the Sabbath Day, by keeping it holy. Am I faithful in the Divine Service? Do I prioritize the hearing of God's Word above all things? Have I sought rest in leisure activities, sports, or other entertainment, rather than the ultimate rest that Christ gives in his Divine Service to us? Do I lead my family in prayer and devotions at home?

IV. Honor your father and your mother. How do I treat my parents? Have I been angry, short-tempered, disrespectful, or ashamed of them? Do I submit to other authorities too—teachers, employers, those in government? Do I pray for the President and Congress or slander them? Do I obey the laws of city, state, and country? Do I pay my taxes?

V. You shall not murder. Who angers me? Have I been hostile or physically violent? Do I desire vengeance for wrongs committed against me? Do I forgive those who sin against me? Have I lost my temper and let emotions get the best of me? Have I reconciled with my enemies? Have I gotten drunk? Have I done drugs? Have I thought of suicide?

VI. You shall not commit adultery. Have I been sexually pure? Have I reserved sexual activity for the marriage bed? Have I watched pornography? Told crude jokes, viewed lewd images? Do I love my spouse as my own flesh? Have I laid down my life for my wife as Christ did for the Church? Have I submitted to my husband as the Church to Christ?

VII. You shall not steal. Have I been generous? Have I given money to the poor? Have I spent on others as freely as I spend on myself? Am I industrious and productive at work or school? Do I waste time? Is my work worthy of praise? Have I been greedy? Have I hoarded? Am I a good steward of what God has given me? Am I a Scrooge?

VIII. You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor. Have I told lies? Have I betrayed someone's trust? Do I gossip or take pleasure in talking about the faults of others?

Do I cover the shame of others? Do I use my words to build my neighbor up? Do I praise those who do good? Am I jealous when another is praised and I am ignored?

IX. You shall not covet your neighbor's house. Am I happy with the life God has given me? Do I wish for more? Am I jealous of my neighbor? Do I envy or resent those that have more than I? Have I sued unjustly? Have I fought with my family over an inheritance? Do I gamble? Have I tried to take something that was not mine? Am I thankful?

X. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor. Am I unhappy with my spouse? Am I discontented with my job, or the employees I supervise? Have I tried to turn my neighbor's wife or workers away from him or her? Have I sowed seeds of discontent? Have I wanted my neighbor's husband or wife or property to be mine? Am I content?

