

# ASH WEDNESDAY

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DAY

**PSALM 51:1-17** (read responsively)

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. **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

<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, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from punishment.

<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; consecrate a fast; call a solemn assembly;

<sup>16</sup> gather the people. Consecrate 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?'"

## SECOND READING – 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

<sup>20b</sup> We entreat you on behalf of Christ: be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup> For our sake God made the one who knew no sin to be sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. <sup>6:1</sup> As we work together with him, we entreat you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. <sup>2</sup> For he says, "At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you." Look, now is the acceptable time; look, now is the day of salvation! <sup>3</sup> We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, <sup>4</sup> but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: in great endurance, afflictions, hardships, calamities, <sup>5</sup> beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; <sup>6</sup> in purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, <sup>7</sup> truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; <sup>8</sup> in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors and yet are true, <sup>9</sup> as unknown and yet are well known, as dying and look—we are alive, as punished and yet not killed, <sup>10</sup> as sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich, as having nothing and yet possessing everything.

## GOSPEL READING – Matthew 6:1-6 [7-15] 16-21

[Jesus said to the disciples:] <sup>1</sup>“Beware of practicing your righteousness 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>7</sup>“When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. <sup>8</sup> Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. <sup>9</sup>“Pray, then, in this way: Our Father in heaven, may your name be revered as holy. <sup>10</sup> May your kingdom come. May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. <sup>11</sup> Give us today our daily bread. <sup>12</sup> And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. <sup>13</sup> And do not bring us to the time of trial, but rescue us from the evil one. <sup>14</sup>“For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, <sup>15</sup> but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.] <sup>16</sup>“And whenever you fast, do not look somber, like the hypocrites, for they mark their faces 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.

SPECIAL MUSIC (7:00pm)

Choir

SERMON

HYMN #606

*Our Father, We Have Wandered*

INVITATION TO THE LENTEN DISCIPLINE

## CONFESSION OF OUR SINS

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 to the whole company of heaven that we have sinned by our fault, 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. 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.**

We confess to you, O God, all our past unfaithfulness: the pride, hypocrisy, and impatience in our lives; our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people; our anger at our own frustrations, and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves; our love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonesty in daily life and work; our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to share the faith that is in us.

**We confess to you, O God.**

Accept our repentance, O God, for the wrongs we have done. For our neglect of human need and suffering, for our indifference to injustice and cruelty, for all false judgments, for our uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us, for our waste and pollution of your good creation, and for our lack of concern for those who come after us.

**Accept our repentance, O God.**

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

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

HYMN #328

*Restore in Us, O God*

## 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.

*(Those who desire to receive ashes in the sign of the cross on their foreheads may come forward to the altar; return to your seat after receiving the ashes.)*

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.**

**OFFERING**

**OFFERING RESPONSE (7:00 pm) #599**      *Lord Jesus Think on Me (v.1-3)*

**OFFERING PRAYER**

**WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

**THE LORD'S PRAYER**

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.**

**HOLY COMMUNION (7:00 pm) #338**      *Beneath the Cross of Jesus*

**POST-COMMUNION BLESSING**

**SENDING PRAYER**

Let us pray. 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, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

**BLESSING**

The God who formed us in love, who renews us through grace, and who will transform us into glory, +bless you this day and always.  
**Amen.**

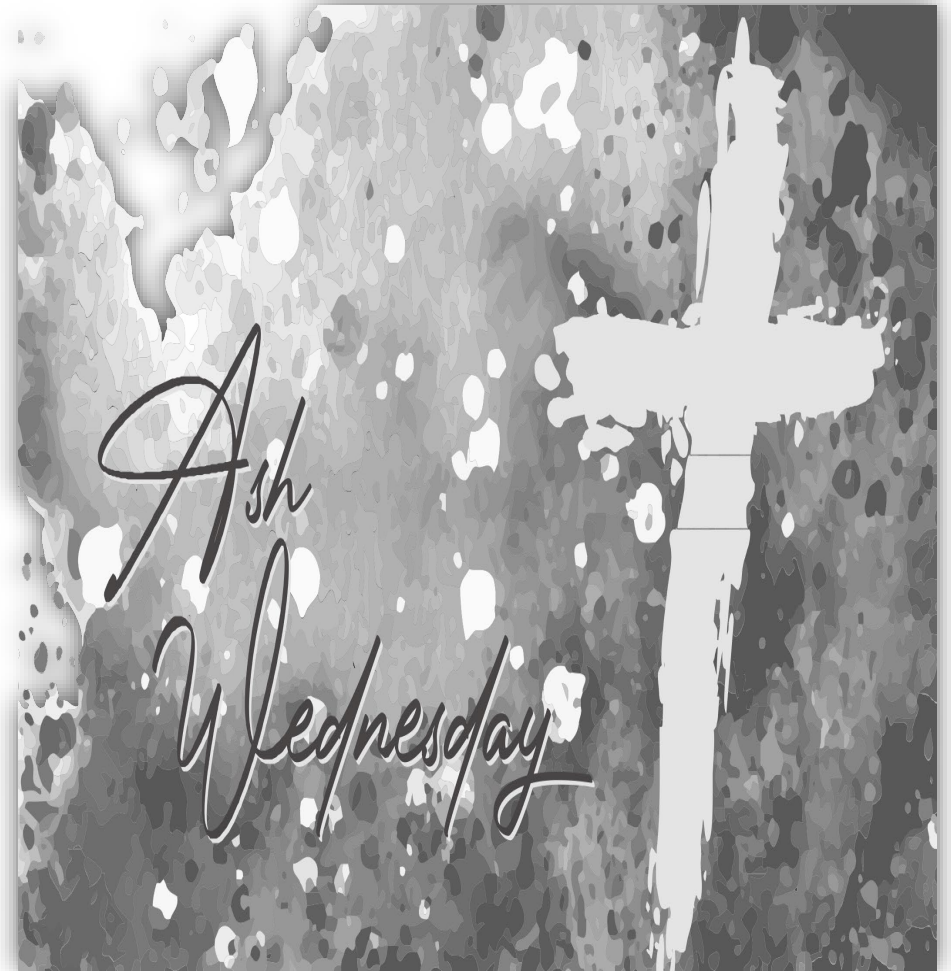
**DISMISSAL**

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.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**SENDING HYMN #326**      *Bless Now, O God, the Journey*

**ASH WEDNESDAY**

**February 18, 2026 - 11:00am & 7:00pm**



**EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MT. HOREB**

*A family in faith reaching out to share God's love  
with all people*

**Ministers  
Pastor**

**All Members of the Church  
Karen Hofstad**