

**FEBRUARY 13<sup>th</sup>, 2013**  
**Ash Wednesday**



**BETHESDA LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MALMO**  
21590 State Highway 47, Isle, MN 56342  
Phone: 320-684-2123 (1-877-684-2123) Fax: 320-684-2836  
E-mail address: [blcmalmo@frontiernet.net](mailto:blcmalmo@frontiernet.net)  
Church Web Site: [blcmalmo.org](http://blcmalmo.org)  
Pastor: Rev. James Raisanen  
Church Secretary: Evelyn Richter  
Parish Nurses: Darlene Christensen, RN, C 320-684-2846  
Patti Honnold, RN CNP 320-676-8421  
Kathy Berland RN ANP 320-495-3988  
Ministers: All Members of the Congregation

**MISSION STATEMENT**

We will grow spiritually and in numbers as we serve Christ. We will reach out and address the hurts and hopes in our community. We will maintain a church home that is reverently joyous and extend a welcome to all who seek to join us in our mission.

**Hearing Assistance is available during the service.**  
**Please notify usher if you would like assistance**

# Wednesday, February 13, 2013/Ash Wednesday

## Holy Communion

### INTRODUCTION

*Lent begins with a solemn call to fasting and repentance as we begin our journey to the baptismal waters of Easter. As we hear in today's readings, now is the acceptable time to return to the Lord. During Lent the people of God will reflect on the meaning of their baptism into Christ's death and resurrection. The sign of ashes suggests our human mortality and frailty. What seems like an ending is really an invitation to make each day a new beginning, in which we are washed in God's mercy and forgiveness. With the cross on our brow, we long for the spiritual renewal that flows from the springtime Easter feast to come.*

**OPENING HYMN:            "In the Cross of Christ I Glory"            # 324 ELW**

### GREETING

The Lord be with you.  
And also with you.

### PRAYER OF THE DAY

**Almighty and everlasting 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

*Because of the coming Day of the Lord, the prophet Joel calls the people to a community lament. The repentant community reminds God of his gracious character and asks God to spare the people, lest the nations doubt God's power to save.*

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

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.

Yet even now, says the LORD,  
return to me with all your heart,  
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;  
rend 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.

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?

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

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?"

Word of God, word of life.

**PSALM: Psalm 51:1-17**

*Refrain: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love. (Ps. 51:1)*

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;  
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 offenses,  
and my sin is ever before me.

**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. R**

Indeed, I was born steeped in wickedness,  
a sinner from my mother's womb.

**Indeed, you delight in truth deep within me,  
and would have me know wisdom deep within.**

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

**Let me hear joy and gladness,  
that the body you have broken may rejoice. R**

Hide your face from my sins,  
and blot out all my wickedness.

**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.

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

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

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

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

**For you take no delight in sacrifice, or I would give it.  
You are not pleased with burnt offering.**

**The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit;  
a troubled and broken heart, O God, you will not despise. R**

## **GOSPEL: Matthew 6:1–6, 16–21**

*In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus commends almsgiving, prayer, and fasting, but emphasizes that spiritual devotion must not be done for show.*

"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.

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

"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. 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.

"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. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 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.

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

## **SERMON**

### **OFFERING AND OFFERTORY PRAYER**

Let us pray.

**God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**HYMN:**

**"Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross"**

**# 335 ELW**

## 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.**

#### **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Returning to the Lord with all our heart, let us pray for the whole people of God, the earth, and all who cry out for healing.

*A time for silent prayer.*

For Christians around the world assembled at the beginning of the Lenten fast; for greater understanding among the religions of the world; and for faith to recognize Christ as life's true treasure. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

For faithful leaders who call us to compassion for the poor; and for all facing affliction, imprisonment, unemployment, hunger, and sleepless nights. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

For the well-being of all creation; for earth's ecosystems; for plants and animals; and for rocks and soil. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

For the health of our communities; for an end to injustice, oppression, poverty, and homelessness. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

For this assembly; for a deeper awareness of our mortality; and for all who live with illness, addiction, loss, or anxiety (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Here other intercessions may be made.

Reconcile us to one another and to you, gracious God, until we join all your holy ones in life everlasting. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Hear us according to your steadfast love, O God, and in your great compassion bring us to resurrection and rebirth in Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **DIALOGUE**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

## **PREFACE**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that, renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## **HOLY, HOLY, HOLY**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

## **THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

**Blessed are you, O God of the universe. Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age.**

Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth.  
Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood.  
Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea.  
Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness to the land of milk and honey.

Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one.  
Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ.  
Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

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.

With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's passover from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

O God of resurrection and new life: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine.

Bless this feast. Grace our table with your presence.

**Come, Holy Spirit.**

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread. Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world.

Breathe new life into us. Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.

**Come, Holy Spirit.**

With your holy ones of all times and places, with the earth and all its creatures, with sun and moon and stars, we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

## **COMMUNION**

## **CONCLUDING PRAYER**

**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**

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

**CLOSING HYMN: "God Be with You Till We Meet Again" # 536 ELW**

## **FOLLOW YOUR TREASURE**

Matthew 6:21, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also," can be read as if it says that we should put our treasure where our heart already is. As the faithful, we often operate on this level. So once we get more involved in church, then we increase our pledge. Or if we suddenly, in our heart, become more interested in feeding the poor, then the pocketbook comes out and we give more to ELCA World Hunger.

However, Jesus' teaching on this point is precisely the opposite. Jesus says, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." So if you keep hoping your heart will be less attracted to material things or drawn deeper into a cause, then you need to start by putting your treasure where you want your heart to eventually wind up. Want to be more committed to your church? Increase your giving. Want to be more involved in advocacy for refugees and immigrants? Then donate time or money to the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service. Want to be less worried about your home and less invested in it? Then sell it and buy a less expensive house.

This insight applies at every level, all the way down. It's a guarantee that if we buy a new iPad, our heart will be in that iPad. We protect and value the things we have spent money on. So Jesus invites us to reprioritize by first putting our money where we want our hearts to be.

At the same time, we do well to remember Jesus' warnings against practicing our piety so that others will notice (and he specifically mentions almsgiving). Our heart will follow our treasure, but where we put each is between us and God. On this Ash Wednesday, where is the Spirit prompting you to redirect your treasure so that your heart may begin its Lenten journey?

From *Sundays and Seasons.com*. Copyright 2013 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.  
Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #26493.

*New Revised Standard Version Bible*, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.