

Resurrection Lutheran Church

New Life in the Living Word + For Now + Forever

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GATHERING PSALM: Psalm 51:1-12

¹Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.

- ²Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin!
- ³For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.
- ⁴Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight,
so that you may be justified in your words
and blameless in your judgment.
- ⁵Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
and in sin did my mother conceive me.
- ⁶Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being,
and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.
- ⁷Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
- ⁸Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones that you have broken rejoice.
- ⁹Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.
- ¹⁰Create 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.
- ¹²Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit.

ASH WEDNESDAY ADMONITION

P: Friends in Christ, today with the whole Christian church we enter a holy season of acknowledging our need for repentance and God's mercy. We were created by God to experience joy in communion with Him, 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 the love of God and neighbor. Because tonight is about sin, we confess to both God and to one another our offenses. 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 God's

Word and draws from it life and hope. Let us pray, therefore, 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.

PRAYER OF THE NIGHT

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray. Almighty and Everlasting God,

C: We thank you this day for facing our sin on the cross for us. Help us during this Lenten season to keep facing your cross as we confess our sins to you. Open our eyes to see both the depth of our disobedience and the generosity of your love and forgiveness. Turn us away from the sin in our lives this sacred season and turn our hearts to you each and every day. In the name of your Son, our crucified and risen Savior, Jesus Christ our Lord we pray. Amen.

FIRST READING: Joel 2:12-17 (ESV)

True repentance, proclaimed the prophet, comes from a contrite heart, not from outward signs of grief such as the tearing of garments. God calls Israel to return to him who is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love for all generations.

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?’”

R: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10 (ESV)

Paul explained to the Corinthians how they became “ambassadors” for Christ. It was not through their own doing, rather it was through Christ who, though he was perfect, took human sin upon himself. Righteous for sin, and sin for righteousness, through Christ alone.

²⁰Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. 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.

R: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

GOSPEL READING: Luke 18:9-14 (ESV)

P: The Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke, the 18th Chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord!

⁹He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: ¹⁰“Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other

a tax collector. ¹¹The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹²I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.' ¹³But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' ¹⁴I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

P: This is the Gospel of our Lord!

C: Praise to you, O Christ!

SERMON

HYMN: Savior, When In Dust to You.....RECLAIM No. 134

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS OF SIN

P: When the days drew near for him to be taken up, Jesus set his face to go to Jerusalem and die on the cross for us.

C: So we set our faces to the cross of Christ, and there we face our sin.

P: In this holy season the Son of God humbles himself so that we receive mercy.

C: Humble me once again, O God, that my life would be pleasing to you.

P: We are justified by God's grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. Mindful of this we meditate on and make confession of our sins:

Silence for self-reflection and examination

P: Most merciful God...

C: We confess that our very nature is sinful. The root of our sin is pride, and pride has made us love ourselves more than we love you or others. We face our faults this day. We have sinned against you by speaking selfish words, by thinking selfish thoughts, and by taking selfish actions. We have failed to love others more than

ourselves. We have failed to love you above all else. Have mercy on us.

P: Since we cannot justify ourselves, our God sent his one and only Son to live a perfect life and die the death we deserve. Because of his generous mercy your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES

P: To remind us to face the cross this Lenten season and to remind us that on the cross Jesus faced our sins for us, those who wish may come forward to receive a cross of ashes on your forehead. Reminiscent of the ancient Israelites, we enact our sorrow by marking our forehead in this way, as with Job we repent in dust and ashes. For we are dust, and to dust we shall return, but in the cross of Christ, we have a future. We think ahead to our own funerals: "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." The ashes on our foreheads trace the precise spot where the water of our baptism began our life in Christ. We bear the name of God and the cross of Christ on our brow.

The imposition of ashes is optional to worshippers this evening.

Those who wish to participate are invited to come forward at the direction of the ushers and receive an ashen cross on their forehead or hand, hearing the words, "Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

BLESSING AND SENDING

P: May God the Father, who does not despise the broken spirit, give to you a contrite heart. May Christ, who bore our sins in his body on the tree, heal you by his wounds. May the Holy Spirit, who leads us into all truth, speak to you words of pardon. Let us go forth into the Lenten season before us in peace.

C: In the name of Christ. Amen.

HYMN: Lord Jesus, Think on Me.....RECLAIM No. 178

POSTLUDE

You are invited back for the next five Wednesday evenings for our midweek Lenten series. Soup suppers will begin in the fellowship hall at 6:15pm to be followed by a brief worship service at 7:00pm.