

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
1100 EAST SUPERIOR STREET, DULUTH, MN

February 17, 2021

6:00 p.m.

ASH WEDNESDAY



On Ash Wednesday we begin our forty-day journey toward Easter. The invitation to the season of Lent reminds us that we enter this season together “with the whole church.” We are created for communion with God, to love one another, and to live in harmony with creation. Though many common Lenten practices rightly invite us to individual acts of “repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love,” Lent is also a time for the deepening of community. As we mark our foreheads with dust, we acknowledge that we, all of us, die and return to the earth. We confess and acknowledge that we are on this journey together in need of God and one another. The cross is a reminder of death and our participation in the communion of saints but also a reminder of our baptism into life and into the community of Christ. We are created for beloved community.

GATHERING

WELCOME

GATHERING HYMN *Return to God* congregation sings refrain; cantor sings verses



Re - turn to God with all your heart, the Source of grace and



mer-cy; Come, seek the ten-der faith-ful-ness of God.

1. Now the time of grace has come, the day of salvation;
come and learn now the way of our God. **Refrain**
2. I will take your heart of stone and place a heart within you,
a heart of compassion and love. **Refrain**
3. If you break the chains of oppression, if you set the prisoner free,
if you share your bread with the hungry, give protection to the lost,
give a shelter to the homeless, clothe the naked in your midst,
then your light shall break forth like the dawn. **Refrain**

APOSTOLIC GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Gracious God, out of your love and mercy you breathed into dust the breath of life, creating us to serve you, your creation, and our neighbors. Call forth our prayers, acts of kindness and work for justice that in serving you, we may be renewed and filled with hope for this day into eternity. Through Christ who is our treasure. **Amen.**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



We are turn - ing, Lord, to hear you; you are mer - ci - ful and kind -



slow to an - ger, rich in bless - ing, and with love to us in - clined.

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

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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.”

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

HOMILY

Pastor Dianne O. Loufman

INVITATION TO LENT

We are invited to trust that we belong to God

God of dust and galaxies, of heaven and earth, we gather with your church around the world this holy day to be marked with ashes—to be reminded of our connection to the earth and to the saints who have gone before, to be reminded of our oneness with those near and far, to be reminded that though we die with Christ so shall we be raised up with Christ as the beloved community of God. Holy One, be with us on our journey, bear with us as we stray, and bring us always back to you.

Amen.

CONFESSION OF SIN

God of tender mercy, forgive us,
We are preoccupied with ourselves.

We treat your creation as though it belongs to us,
But You have woven us together into a web of life.

We forget those who have gone before us,
But You have knit us together into the communion of saints.

We think we can or should make it on our own,
But You have created us for community.

We neglect our neighbors and those too easy to ignore,
But You came to seek the lost and bid us to do the same.

We prefer to take the easy way,
But You have called us to your way of the cross.

For following our own path and not yours,
For failing to trust that Your way leads to life.

Have mercy on us, Lord Jesus.

Knit us, weave us together into your beloved community,
That we might be one in and with you. **Amen.**

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

We burn the palms we wave with hosannas on Palm Sunday to make the ashes we mark ourselves with today.

Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.
In life and in death, I belong to God.

As a family, you are invited to mark one another's forehead with a cross of ashes. If you live alone, we invite you to stand before a mirror, and mark your own forehead. As you make the cross, say these words:

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

During the imposition of ashes, you are invited to join in singing:

MUSIC FROM TAIZE *Bless the Lord*

The image shows two systems of musical notation for the song 'Bless the Lord'. Each system consists of a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The music is in 4/4 time and the key signature has one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are: 'Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's ho - ly name.' and 'Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me in - to life.' The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line with chords and some melodic movement.

After those who desire ashes have received them, the minister continues:

We are marked with life and life everlasting,
as individuals and as community, as what we are: one body in Christ.
Amen.

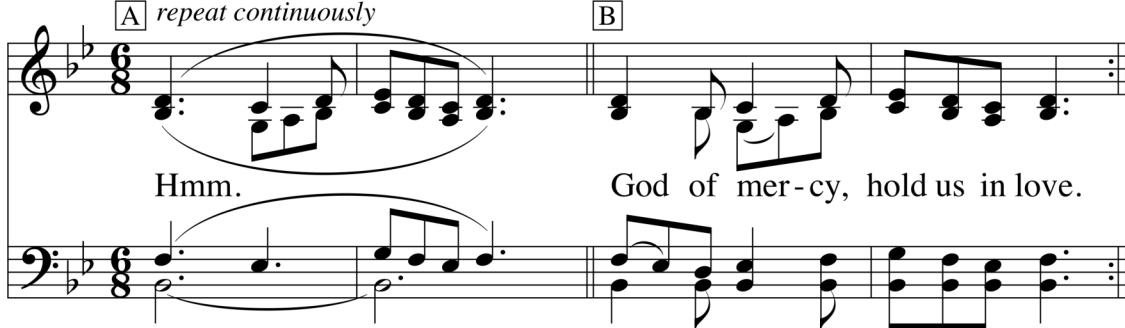
OFFERING FOR WORLD HUNGER

During this season of Lent, we remember the millions across the world who go hungry by gathering an offering for world hunger. Set aside a bowl to use on Wednesdays in Lent as we ask God to make of us a beloved community.

*You are also invited to use our digital offering plate. Simply send a text to **218-325-9525** with contribution amount followed by the word **hunger**. Enter a simple number (with no decimal). You'll be sent a text with a link to register. Click on the link and enter your card information. Thank you for supporting God's mission through FLC.*

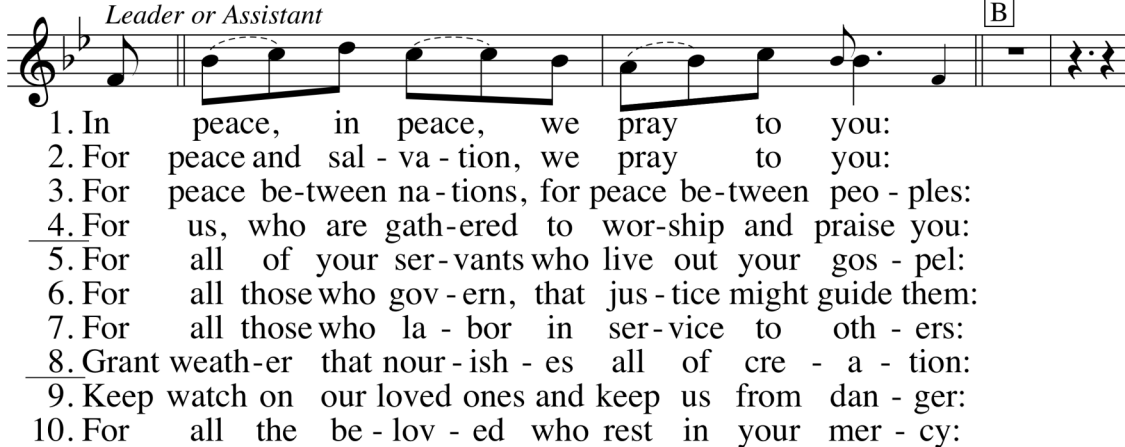
HOLDEN EVENING PRAYER LITANY

All
A *repeat continuously* B



Hmm. God of mer-cy, hold us in love.

A *Leader or Assistant* B



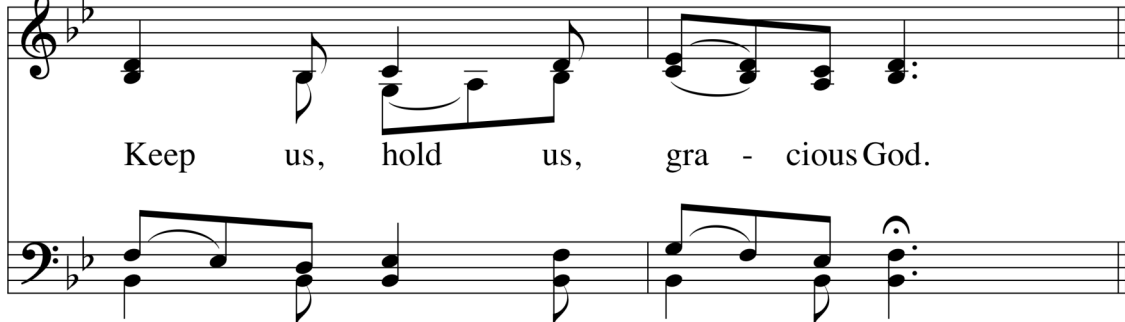
1. In peace, in peace, we pray to you:
2. For peace and sal - va - tion, we pray to you:
3. For peace be-tween na-tions, for peace be-tween peo - ples:
4. For us, who are gath-ered to wor-ship and praise you:
5. For all of your ser-vants who live out your gos - pel:
6. For all those who gov - ern, that jus - tice might guide them:
7. For all those who la - bor in ser-vice to oth - ers:
8. Grant weath-er that nour - ish - es all of cre - a - tion:
9. Keep watch on our loved ones and keep us from dan - ger:
10. For all the be - lov - ed who rest in your mer - cy:

A *Leader or Assistant*



Help us, com-fort us, all of our days:

All



Keep us, hold us, gra - cious God.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

THE LORD'S PRAYER

As we journey with Jesus to the cross, we pray:

**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.**

BLESSING

The presiding minister proclaims God's blessing.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN #328 *Restore in Us, O God*



1 Re - store in us, O God, the splen - dor of your love; re -
2 O Spir - it, wake in us the won - der of your pow'r; from
3 Bring us, O Christ, to share the full - ness of your joy; bap -
4 Three - per - soned God, ful - fill the prom - ise of your grace, that



new your im - age in our hearts, and all our sins re - move.
fruit - less fear un - furl our lives like spring - time bud and flow'r.
tize us in the ris - en life that death can - not de - stroy.
we, when all our search - ing ends, may see you face to face.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, marked as the beloved community of God

Thanks be to God.

MINISTERS All People of First Lutheran Church
PASTOR The Rev. Dianne O. Loufman
PASTORAL INTERN Logan McLean Strike
PROGRAM STAFF Ann Beck, Pastoral Associate
 Karen Sande, Director of Music
 Michael Fuchs, Director of Choral Activities
 Bryan Gatten, Director of Contemporary Worship
MUSICIANS Liz Raduege, Aine Miller, Brad Anderson, Glen Backman and Michael Fuchs, singers
VIDEO TEAM Shania Krause, David Sproat, Sam Weston
DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER Stacie Curnow

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Please join us for upcoming Wednesday services, livestreamed at 6:00 p.m., followed by zoom conversation “Acting Against Racism” at 6:30 p.m.:

- Wed, Feb. 24 ~ In Community with Creation (Reflection from the Rova family)
- Wed, March 3 ~ In Community with all the Saints (Colleen Birt)
- Wed, March 10 ~ In Community with our Neighbor (Denise Scheer)
- Wed, March 17 ~ In Community with those on the Margins (Cindy Monroe)
- Wed, March 24 ~ In Community with Christ (Brian Peterson & Paul Anderson)

FLC Community Conversations on Racism and Justice - Wednesdays from 6:30-7:00 p.m.

Immediately following each service at 6:30 pm will be an FLC community discussion via zoom, using the articles & conversation guide Acting Against Racism published by Christian Century. Please join in this important conversation as we learn and grow together!

The Zoom discussion group begins following the services at 6:30 pm. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88382398856?pwd=SkE4RkFJa1FPQ1lrVUUtIRXJPdlkxZz09>

Link to the *Acting Against Racism* document: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mrYOqNXABKJFrvnNJ-rZIjir5mKEwwBl/view?usp=sharing>

Article Reading & Discussion schedule

- Feb 17 - "Becoming less defensive about White privilege"
- Feb. 24 - "James Baldwin reminds us not to be surprised by this"
- March 3 - "I believe racism is wrong. So what?"
- March 10 - "How do we know Black lives matter to God?"
- March 17 - "Why are so many White Americans standing up for racial justice?"
- March 24 - "Wearing down structural evil with the ministry of erosion"

*The Sanctuary is open for quiet prayer and reflection each Wednesday from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
 Use the Superior St. entrance door leading directly into the Sanctuary.*

First Lutheran Church, dedicated to the mission of Jesus Christ, welcomes YOU into this community of faith, where we share life in its entirety, with all its joys and sorrows. We believe all people are created in the image of God and are offered God's love, grace, and forgiveness, regardless of religious tradition, age, gender identity, race, education, economic status, sexual orientation, family structure, mental or physical abilities. We acknowledge the indigenous culture of this land.
We extend a special welcome in Christ's love.

faithlovecommunity
First Lutheran Church

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