

Welcome

Welcome to the Lord's House this Ash Wednesday evening for Divine Service. Tonight, we begin the penitential season of Lent in the traditional fashion. The season of Lent is:

- a time in which God's baptized people cleanse their hearts through the disciplines of repentance, prayer, fasting, and almsgiving;
- a time in which God's people prepare with joy for the paschal feast of Easter;
- a time in which God renews His people's zeal in faith and life;
- a time in which we pray that we may be given the fullness of grace that belongs to the children of God.

Ash Wednesday begins the season with a call to participation in the Lenten journey. It is a day when the congregation laments the sins of God's people and commits itself as a unified group to assist each member in preparing for a godly celebration of the death and resurrection of Christ in both liturgy and life. In order to set the tone for the Lententide that begins today, there are some characteristics to the Service which are different than usual, such as:

- the congregation entering and departing the nave in silence; the absence of music before and after the Service; the omission of the Hymn of Praise; the black paraments and vestments, symbolizing our sinfulness and need to repent thereof; the absence of altar flowers; the inclusion of the Ash Wednesday Rite, consisting of the Ash Wednesday Address, the Litany, and the Imposition of Ashes.

However, in the midst of the solemnity and reverence of the Service, there is also reason to rejoice, for the Lord comes to us here in this place to give us His gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation through His Holy Word and Sacraments. We pray the Lord's richest blessings upon you as you receive these Divine gifts. The Lord be with us in Divine Service this morning and throughout this Lententide, that we may be led to truly repent of our sins and trust solely in the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

Holy Communion Practice

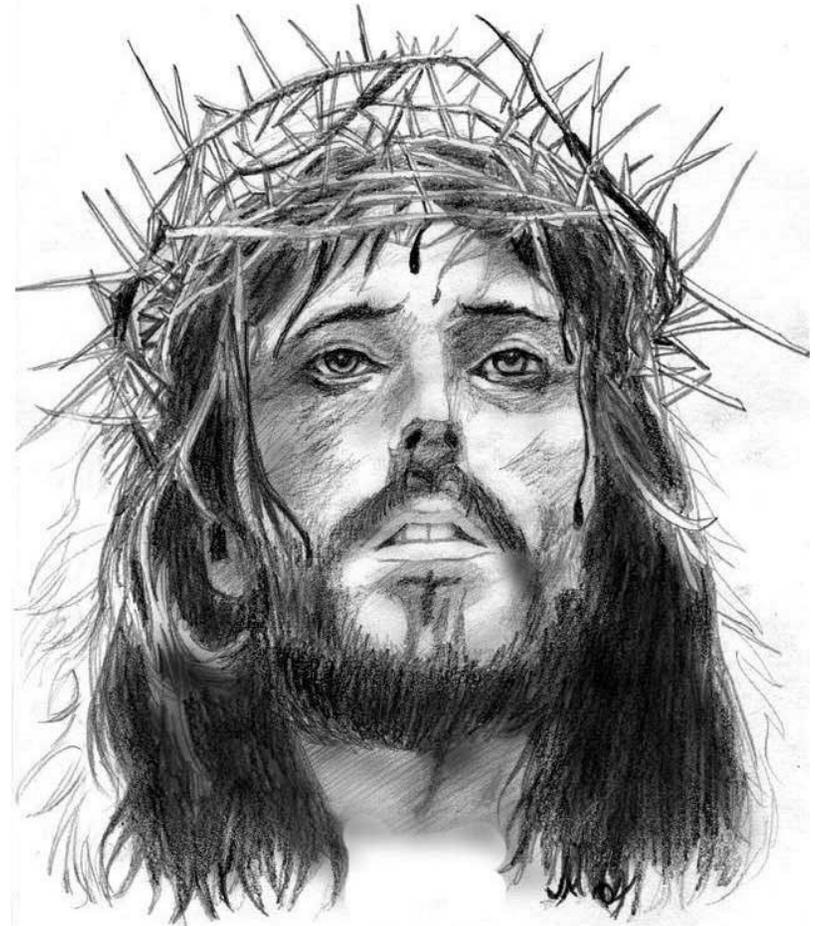
- The Lord's Supper is celebrated at this congregation in the confession and glad confidence that, as He says, our Lord gives into our mouths not only bread and wine, but His very Body and Blood to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with Him and with one another. In preparation for receiving this blessed Sacrament, you may refer to Martin Luther's "Christian Questions with Their Answers" found on pages 329-330 in *LSB*.
- Communicants at this altar are to be in full confessional fellowship with the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Any who are not yet instructed, in doubt, or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and the LCMS are asked, out of love and Christian responsibility, to refrain from partaking with us this morning. If you have any questions regarding Holy Communion, you are invited and encouraged to speak with the pastor before or after the Service.
- See Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20; 1 Cor. 11:17-34.

Our Mission Statement

The mission of Peace Lutheran Church is to welcome all people into the fellowship of God's love by proclaiming the forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ and to nurture our members with God's Holy Word and Sacraments.

Ash Wednesday

25 February Anno † Domini 2009 ~ 7:00 p.m.



*"Sacred Head, Now Wounded" Lenten Series
Part 1: "A Wounded Savior for a Wounded People"*

Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church

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LSB DIVINE SERVICE 1, PAGE 151

The Service of Preparation & Ash Wednesday Rite

The Congregation Assembles in Silence

The Prelude and Ringing of the Bells are omitted this evening. The congregation stands and faces the processional cross as it enters the nave. It is customary to continue facing the cross as it is processed in, and to bow your head and make the sign of the cross in reverence and admiration to the Lord as it passes your pew.

The Processional Hymn:

418 “O Lord, throughout These Forty Days”

The Ash Wednesday Address:

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 (pp. 288-289)

The Imposition of Ashes

At the direction of the ushers, the congregants come before the altar and kneel. The pastor marks the cross on each person’s forehead with the ashes. As this is done, the pastor says to each individual, “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” After receiving the ashes, each person may make the sign of the † cross and return to his/her place in silence. After all have received the ashes, the congregation stands for the Confession and Absolution.

The Confession and Absolution (p. 151)

From the Explanation of Martin Luther’s Small Catechism

272. Who are to be forgiven (absolved)?

Those who repent and ask for forgiveness are to be forgiven.

“Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord” (Acts 3:19).

273. Who receives the forgiveness given in absolution?

Only repentant believers receive the forgiveness.

“I acknowledged my sin to You and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, ‘I will confess my transgressions to the Lord’ - and You forgave the guilt of my sin” (Ps. 32:5).

274. Who are repentant believers?

Repentant believers are those who are sorry for their sins (contrition) and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior (faith).

“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise” (Ps. 51:17).

“Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved” (Acts 16:31).

Note: Secretly unrepentant sinners (hypocrites) reject the forgiveness which the absolution truly offers them.

275. Who are not to be forgiven?

Unrepentant sinners, that is, those who are not sorry for their sins and do not believe in Jesus Christ, are not to be forgiven as long as they do not repent.

“If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector” (Matt. 18:17).

276. What is the necessary result of repentance?

“Then good works, which are the fruits of repentance, are bound to follow” (Augsburg Confession XII 6).

“Produce fruit in keeping with repentance” (Matt. 3:8).

“Go now and leave your life of sin” (John 8:11).

Bible narrative: Zacchaeus the tax collector (Luke 19:1-10)

277. How does the church publicly exercise the Office of the Keys?

The Christian congregation by the command of Christ calls pastors to carry out the Office of the Keys publicly in His name and on behalf of the congregation. The pastoral office is a divine institution.

“It was He (Christ) who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers” (Eph. 4:11).

“Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers” (Acts 20:28).

“Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God” (1 Cor. 4:1)

“What I have forgiven . . . I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake” (2 Cor. 2:10).

The Prayer of Thanksgiving (p. 161)

The Words of Our Lord (p. 162)

The Proclamation of Christ (p. 162)

The Lord's Prayer (pp. 162-163)

The Pax Domini (p. 163)

The Agnus Dei (P. 163)

Communicants are invited to pray the following:

Before receiving the Sacrament:

Dear Savior, at Your gracious invitation I come to Your table to eat and drink Your holy body and blood. Let me find favor in Your eyes to receive this holy Sacrament in faith for the salvation of my soul and to the glory of Your holy name; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Thanksgiving after receiving the Sacrament:

Almighty and everlasting God, I thank and praise You for feeding me the life-giving body and blood of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Send Your Holy Spirit that, having with my mouth received the holy Sacrament, I may by faith obtain and eternally enjoy Your divine grace, the forgiveness of sins, unity with Christ, and life eternal; through Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen.

Distribution Hymns:

617 "O Lord, We Praise Thee"

419 "Savior, When in Dust to Thee"

843 "Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive"

570 "Just as I Am, without One Plea"

614 "'As Surely as I Live,' God Said"

The Post-Communion Cantic: Nunc Dimittis (p. 165)

The Post-Communion Collect (p. 166)

The Benediction (p. 166)

The Closing Hymn: 609 "Jesus Sinners Doth Receive"

The Congregation Departs in Silence

(There is no postlude this evening; you may depart anytime after the conclusion of the closing hymn. Please refrain from conversation until after you have departed the nave to allow any who wish to remain and pray, on this sacred day as we begin this holy season, the opportunity to do so in silence)

Soli Deo Gloria!

The Service of the Word

The Introit

Ps. 57:1-3a, c; antiphon: Liturgical Text



You have mercy on | all, O Lord,*
and abhor nothing | you have made.

You look past the sins of men that they | may repent.*

You spare them all because you are our | Lord, our God.

Be merciful to me, O God, be merci- | ful to me,*
for in you my soul takes | refuge;

in the shadow of your wings I will take | refuge,*
till the storms of destruction | pass by.

I cry out to | God Most High,*

to God who fulfills his pur- | pose for me.

He will send from heaven and | save me.*

God will send out his steadfast love and his | faithfulness!

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.

You have mercy on | all, O Lord,*

and abhor nothing | you have made.

You look past the sins of men that they | may repent.*

You spare them all because you are our | Lord, our God.

The Kyrie (pp. 152-153)

Hymn of Meditation: 470 "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded" (*stanza 1*)

The Salutation and Collect of the Day (p. 156)

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.

The 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.

The Gradual

Ps. 57:1a, 3a

Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me,*
for in you my soul takes refuge.

He will send from heaven and save me;*

he will put to shame him who tramples on me.

The Epistle

2 Peter 1:2-11

²May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. ³His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, ⁴by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. ⁵For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, ⁶and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, ⁷and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. ⁸For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. ¹⁰Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. ¹¹For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The Lenten Verse (p. 157)

The Holy Gospel

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

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. ²Thus, 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. ⁵And 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 . . . ¹⁶And 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."

The Hymn of the Day: 607 "From Depths of Woe I Cry to Thee"

The Sermon: "A Wounded Savior for a Wounded People" (Joel 2:12-19)

The Apostles' Creed (p. 159)

The Prayer of the Church (p. 159)

The Offering is gathered for the Lord's work (p. 159)

The Offertory (pp. 159-160)

The Service of the Sacrament

(Please read the statement regarding Holy Communion on the back of the bulletin)

The Preface and Proper Preface (pp. 160-161)

The Sanctus (p. 161)