

Ash Wednesday The Divine Service

Lutheran Service Book, Divine Service, Setting Three

A sincere welcome to everyone gathered here this evening! This solemn day begins the holy season of Lent, a time of repentance and renewal. Even the ashes themselves proclaim this.

For centuries, ashes have been an outward *sign of grief* and sorrow. Mourners would place ashes on their heads as a silent witness to their grief.

But for centuries, ashes have also been used in *cleansing*. They have been used in the production of various soaps and cleansers. Thus, ashes can also be a sign that the Lord has cleansed us through the blood of Christ!

The Holy Supper of our Lord

This evening we have the opportunity to receive God's forgiveness through the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. Repenting of our sin, and recognizing our need for forgiveness, we approach God's altar.

If you are not a member of a parish of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, please speak with the pastor prior to the Service. Joining others in receiving the Sacrament is a public witness to complete unity in teaching. So, in accordance with the ancient practice of the Church, we practice close communion.

Imposition of Ashes

[All who desire to do so, are invited to come forward for this ancient custom.]

Ashes remind us of our mortality. They are an outward sign that indeed, we are dust, and to dust shall we return. This custom is not to draw attention to ourselves, reveling in our piety. Rather, it is a witness to sorrow over sin, and a desire to seek God's forgiveness which He readily offers.]

Preparation

HYMN

"My Song of Love Unknown"

LSB 430

[Stand]

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

P: In the name of the Father and of the +Son and of the Holy Spirit,

C: Amen.

P: O Almighty God, merciful Father,

C: I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor sinful being.

P: Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Service of the Word

KYRIE

LSB 186

COLLECT OF THE DAY

LSB 189

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And with your spirit.

P: Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, our Father, because You hate nothing that You have made and You forgive the sins of all those who are penitent, create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain from You, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

[Sit]

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Joel 2:12-19 (ESV)

2 Peter 1:2-11 (ESV)

[Stand]

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 (ESV)

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