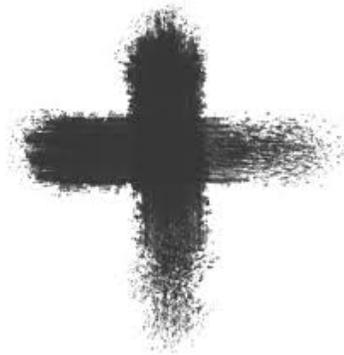


“Remember you are dust...”

ASH WEDNESDAY

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
TOWER GROVE, MO

FEBRUARY 17, 2021,
6:00 P.M.



THE GREETING.

Presider Blessed be the God of our Salvation.

People **Who bears our burdens and forgives our sins.**

Presider God is with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Let us pray.

The Presider then prays the collect for Ash Wednesday.

Almighty and merciful God, you hate nothing that you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent; create in us new and contrite hearts, so that when we turn to you and confess our sins we may receive your full and perfect forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer.

People **Amen.**

THE FIRST READING

Lector: A reading from the Book of Joel (*Joel 2:1-2, 12-17*)

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?'"

At the end of each reading the reader says

Reader Hear what the Holy Spirit is telling God's people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 103:8-14

V. You are full of compassion and mercy, slow to anger and of great kindness.

R. **You will not always accuse us, nor will you keep your anger for ever.**

V. You have not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our wickedness.

R. **For as the heavens are high above the earth, so is your mercy great upon those who fear you.**

V. As far as the east is from the west, so far have you removed our sins from us.

R. **As parents care for their children, so do you, O Lord, care for those who fear you.**

V. For you yourself know whereof we are made;

R. **you remember that we are but dust.**

THE SECOND READING

Lector: A reading from the second letter of Paul to the Corinthians (2 Paul 5:20b-6:10)

We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says,

"At an acceptable time I have listened to you,
and on a day of salvation I have helped you."

See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see~ we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

At the end of each reading the reader says

Reader Hear what the Holy Spirit is telling God's people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

SEQUENCE HYMN

LEAD ME, GUIDE ME

LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING No. 194

Refrain



Lead me, guide me, a-long the way, For if you



lead me, I can - not stray. Lord, let me walk each



day with thee. Lead me, oh Lord, lead me.

Verses



- 1. I am weak and I need thy strength and pow'r to
- 2. Help me tread in the paths of right - eous - ness, Be my
- 3. I am lost if you take your hand from me, I am



help me o - ver my weak - est hour. Help me through the
aid when Sa - tan and sin op - press. I am put - ting
blind with - out thy Light to see, Lord, just al - ways



dark-ness thy face to see, Lead me, oh Lord, lead me.
all my trust in thee. Lead me, oh Lord, lead me.
let me thy ser - vant be. Lead me, oh Lord, lead me.

Text: Doris M. Akers, b.1922
Tune: Doris M. Akers, b.1922, harm. by Richard Smallwood
© 1953, Doris M. Akers, All rights administered by Unichappell Music, Inc.

THE GOSPEL

Deacon: The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ, according to Matthew (*Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21*)

Jesus said, "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."

At the end of the reading the Presider says

Presider The Gospel of the Lord.

People ***Praise to you, O Christ.***

SERMON

The Rt. Rev. Deon Johnson

Presider Dear People of God: The first Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church to prepare for them by a season of penitence and fasting. This season of Lent provided a time in which converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism. It was also a time when those who, because of notorious sins, had been separated from the body of the faithful were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to the fellowship of the Church. Thereby, the whole congregation was put in mind of the message of pardon and absolution set forth in the Gospel of our Savior, and of the need which all Christians continually have to renew their repentance and faith.

Presider I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word. And, to make a right beginning of repentance, and as a mark of our mortal nature, let us now kneel before the Lord, our maker and redeemer.

Silence is then kept for a time.

BLESSING OF ASHES

The Presider blesses the Ashes to be imposed.

Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth: Grant that these ashes may be to us a sign of our mortality and penitence, that we may remember that it is only by your gracious gift that we are given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

PENITENTIAL PSALM: PSALM 51

Presider Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindness; in your great compassion blot out my offenses.

People **Wash me through and through from my wickedness and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight. And so you are justified when you speak and upright in your judgment. Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth, a sinner from my mother's womb. For behold, you look for truth deep within me, and will make me understand wisdom secretly.**

Presider Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure; wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.

People **Make me hear of joy and gladness, that the body you have broken may rejoice. Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities. 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. Give me the joy of your saving help again and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.**

Presider I shall teach your ways to the wicked, and sinners shall return to you.

People **Deliver me from death, O God, and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness, O God of my salvation. Open my lips, O Lord, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise. Had you desired it, I would have offered sacrifice, but you take no delight in burnt-offerings. The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. Be favorable and gracious to Zion, and rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Then you will be pleased with the appointed sacrifices, with burnt-offerings and oblations; then shall they offer young bullocks upon your altar.**

THE LITANY OF PENANCE

Presider Most holy and merciful God: We confess to you and to one another, and to the whole communion of saints in heaven and on earth, that we have sinned by our own 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.

People **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Presider We have been deaf 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.

People **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Presider We confess to you, Lord, all our past unfaithfulness: the pride, hypocrisy, and impatience of our lives,

People **We confess to you, O God.**

Presider Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people,

People **We confess to you, O God.**

Presider Our anger at our own frustration, and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,

People **We confess to you, O God.**

Presider Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonesty in daily life and work,

People **We confess to you, O God.**

Presider Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,

People **We confess to you, O God.**

Presider Accept our repentance, Lord, for the wrongs we have done: for our blindness to human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,

People **Accept our repentance, O God.**

Presider For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us,

People **Accept our repentance, O God.**

Presider For our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us,

People **Accept our repentance, O God.**

Presider Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us;

People **Favorably hear us, for your mercy is great.**

Presider Accomplish in us the work of your salvation,

People **That we may show forth your glory in the world.**

Presider By the cross and passion of your Son our Lord,

People **Bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.**

The Presider, stands and, facing the people, prays

Presider Almighty God, the Abba of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desires not the death of sinners, but rather that they may turn from their wickedness and live, has given power and commandment to ministers to declare and pronounce to God's people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins. The Almighty pardons and absolves all those who truly repent, and with sincere hearts believe the holy Gospel. Therefore we beseech Almighty God to grant us true repentance and the grace of the Holy Spirit, that those things may be pleasing which we do on this day, and that the rest of our life hereafter may be pure and holy, so that at the last we may come to God's eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE PEACE

Presider The peace of Christ be always with you.

People ***And also with you.***

Then the Ministers and the People may greet one another in the name of the God.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Agape Meal

The Officiant and People give thanks for the gift of our daily bread.

Officiant Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe.

People **You bring forth bread from the earth; we long for the day when we may once again partake of the bread of life, the Body of your Son Jesus Christ. As grain scattered upon the earth is gathered into one loaf, so gather your Church in every place into the kingdom of your Son. Glory to you for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Officiant and People give thanks for the gift of wine.

Officiant Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe.

People **You create the fruit of the vine; we long for the day when you will once again refresh us with the cup of salvation in the Blood of your Son Jesus Christ. Glory to you for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Officiant and People give thanks for the gift of food.

Officiant Blessed are you, O Lord our God, Ruler of the universe.

People **You have blessed the earth to bring forth food to satisfy our hunger. Let this food strengthen us in the Eucharistic fast that is before us, that following our Savior in the way of the cross, we may come to the joy of his resurrection. Glory to you for ever and ever. Amen.**

Officiant And now, as Jesus taught us, let us pray:

People **Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

Officiant God of all creation, we gather on this evening and remember the resurrection of Christ, your Son. In the waters of baptism we were buried with him so that we might also rise with him and so share his victory over sin and death.

People **You have transformed our lives into the living stones that form your Church with Christ as the foundation stone. Strengthen our community's bond of communion and peace and deepen our solidarity with your Church throughout the world.**

Officiant Rekindle within us the vision of your kingdom so that our daily concerns and labor may find their proper perspective.

People **Fill our homes with the spirit of the Gospel and give us the grace to see the face of Christ in the people with whom we live. We raise our voices in praise and thanksgiving to you, O God; that we who have celebrated Christ's resurrection this day share in his eternal glory where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

THE SOLEMN PRAYERS OVER THE PEOPLE

Deacon Bow your hearts before the Lord our God.

Silence is kept for a time.

Presider Grant most merciful Lord, to your faithful people pardon and peace, that they may be cleansed from all their sins, and serve you with a quiet mind; through Christ our Lord.

Deacon Our worship is ended, our service in the world begins. Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Imposition of Ashes

Officiant: Almighty and merciful God, you hate nothing you have made, and forgive the sins of all who are penitent; create in us new and contrite hearts, so that when we turn to you and confess our sins and acknowledge our need, we may receive your full and perfect forgiveness, through Jesus Christ our Redeemer.
Amen.

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