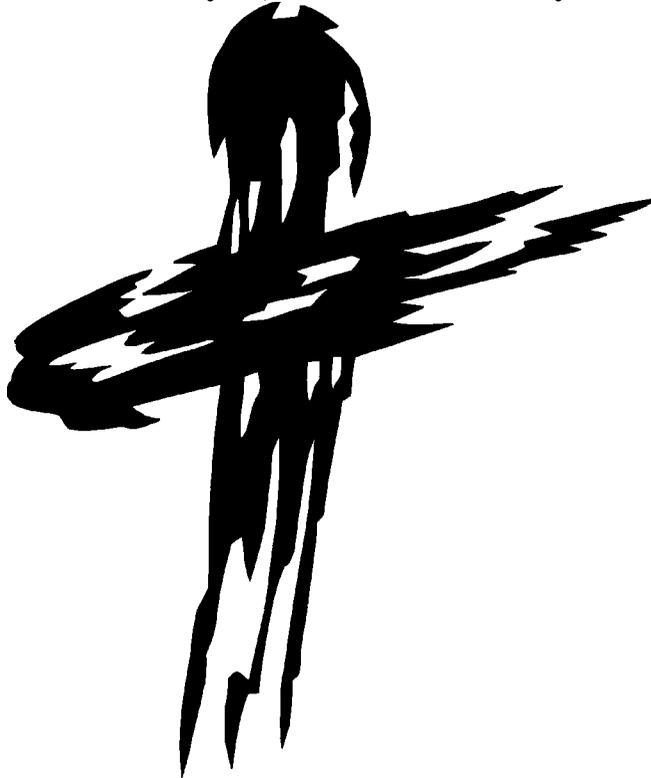


# ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

Lewistown, Montana

February 17, 2021 Ash Wednesday



Welcome to worship today!

In this season of pandemic, our congregation is following the guidelines of the Central Montana Health District and the Montana Synod.

If you have or recently had a fever, cough, or shortness of breath please do not worship in the church today.

Due to the rising number of active COVID cases in Fergus County **face coverings are required throughout the worship service.**

If any of these conditions is not possible for you, our worship services are available online: Zion Website: <http://www.zionlewisownelca.com/worship/video-services>

YouTube Channel: Zion Lutheran Church, Lewistown, MT

**Zion Lutheran Church (ELCA)  
February 17, 2021 Ash Wednesday**

(\*Stand)

**Introduction to the day**

*On Ash Wednesday we begin our forty-day journey toward Easter with a day of fasting and repentance. Marking our foreheads with dust, we acknowledge that we die and return to the earth. At the same time, the dust traces the life-giving cross indelibly marked on our foreheads at baptism. While we journey through Lent to return to God, we have already been reconciled to God through Christ. We humbly pray for God to make our hearts clean while we rejoice that “now is the day of salvation.” Returning to our baptismal call, we more intentionally bear the fruits of mercy and justice in the world.*

**GATHERING**

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

**\*GREETING**

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

**\*PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P Let us pray.

C **Almighty and ever-living God, you hate nothing you have made, and you forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and honest hearts, so that, truly repenting of our sins, we may receive from you, the God of all mercy, full pardon and forgiveness through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.**

**Amen.**

## WORD

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

### **FIRST READING: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17**

*Because of the coming day of the LORD, the prophet Joel calls the people to a community lament. The repentant community declares that God is gracious and asks God to spare the people lest the nations doubt God's power to save.*

A reading from Joel.

<sup>1</sup>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—

<sup>2</sup>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.

<sup>12</sup>Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with  
weeping, and with mourning;

<sup>13</sup>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.

<sup>14</sup>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?

<sup>15</sup>Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly;

<sup>16</sup>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.

<sup>17</sup>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?'" "

The word of the Lord.

**C      Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: Psalm 51:1-17 (Spoken responsively)**

<sup>1</sup>Have mercy on me, O God, according to your | steadfast love;  
in your great compassion blot out | my offenses.

<sup>2</sup>**Wash me through and through | from my wickedness,  
and cleanse me | from my sin.**

<sup>3</sup>For I know | my offenses,  
and my sin is ev- | er before me.

<sup>4</sup>**Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil | in your sight;  
so you are justified when you speak and right | in your judgment.**

<sup>5</sup>Indeed, I was born | steeped in wickedness,  
a sinner from my | mother's womb.

<sup>6</sup>**Indeed, you delight in truth | deep within me,  
and would have me know wisdom | deep within.**

<sup>7</sup>Remove my sins with hyssop, and I | shall be clean;  
wash me, and I shall be pur- | er than snow.

<sup>8</sup>**Let me hear | joy and gladness;  
that the body you have broken | may rejoice.**

<sup>9</sup>Hide your face | from my sins,  
and blot out | all my wickedness.

<sup>10</sup>**Create in me a clean | heart, O God,  
and renew a right spir- | it within me.**

<sup>11</sup>Cast me not away | from your presence,  
and take not your Holy Spir- | it from me.

<sup>12</sup>**Restore to me the joy of | your salvation  
and sustain me with your boun- | tiful Spirit.**

<sup>13</sup>Let me teach your ways | to offenders,  
and sinners shall be re- | stored to you.

<sup>14</sup>**Rescue me from bloodshed, O God of | my salvation,  
and my tongue shall sing | of your righteousness.**

<sup>15</sup>O Lord, o- | pen my lips,  
and my mouth shall pro- | claim your praise.

<sup>16</sup>**For you take no delight in sacrifice, or | I would give it.  
You are not pleased | with burnt offering.**

<sup>17</sup>The sacrifice of God is a | troubled spirit;  
a troubled and broken heart, O God, you will | not despise.

**SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 5:20b--6:2**

*The ministry of the gospel endures many challenges and hardships. Through this ministry, God's reconciling activity in the death of Christ reaches into the depths of our lives to bring us into a right relationship with God. In this way, God accepts us into the reality of divine salvation.*

<sup>20b</sup>We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup>For our sake he made himself to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

<sup>6:1</sup>As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. <sup>2</sup>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!

The word of the Lord.

**C Thanks be to God.**

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

*In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus commends almsgiving, prayer, and fasting, but emphasizes that spiritual devotion must not be done for show.*

P The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**C Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said to the disciples:] <sup>1</sup>“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.

<sup>2</sup>“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. <sup>3</sup>But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, <sup>4</sup>so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

<sup>5</sup>“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. <sup>6</sup>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.

<sup>16</sup>“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. <sup>17</sup>But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup>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.

<sup>19</sup>“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; <sup>20</sup>but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup>For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

P The gospel of the Lord.

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

## **SERMON**

## **MUSICAL OFFERING**

## **INVITATION TO LENT**

P Friends in Christ, today with the whole church we enter the time of remembering Jesus' passover from death to life, and our life in Christ is renewed.

We begin this holy season by acknowledging our need for repentance and for God's mercy. We are created to experience joy in communion with God, 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 love of God and neighbor. I invite you, therefore, to the discipline of Lent—self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love—strengthened by the gifts of word and sacrament. Let us continue our journey through these forty days to the great Three Days of Jesus' death and resurrection.

## **\*CONFESSION OF SIN**

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

C Most holy and merciful God,  
**we confess to you and to one another,  
and before the whole company of heaven,  
that we have sinned by our fault,  
by our own fault,  
by our own most grievous 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.**

P Have mercy on us, O God.

C **We have shut our ears 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.**

P Have mercy on us, O God.

C **Our past unfaithfulness, the pride, envy, hypocrisy, and apathy that have  
infected our lives, we confess to you.**

P Have mercy on us, O God.

C **Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people,  
we confess to you.**

P Have mercy on us, O God.

C **Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to share the faith that  
is in us, we confess to you.**

P Have mercy on us, O God.

C **Our neglect of human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice  
and cruelty, we confess to you.**

P Have mercy on us, O God.

C **Our false judgments, our uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and  
our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us, we confess to  
you.**

P Have mercy on us, O God.

C **Our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us, we confess to you.**

P Have mercy on us, O God.

Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us.

C **Hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.**

### **IMPOSITION OF ASHES**

P Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth.

May these ashes be a sign of our mortality and penitence, reminding us that only by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ are we given eternal life; through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C **Amen.**

*Worshippers are invited to receive the impositions of ashes. As the pastor moves through the pews, please look up to receive ashes on your forehead or keep your head bowed and she will pass by.*

P Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,

C **that we may show forth your glory in the world.**

P By the cross and passion of your Son, our Savior,

C **bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.**

P Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life.

C **Amen.**

## PRAYER

*We turn our hearts to God's kingdom and will.*

### \*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P Relying on the promises of God, we pray boldly for the church, the world, and all in need.

O God, you call your church to be ministers of reconciliation throughout the world. Inspire your church in its proclamation of the gospel and guide its ministries to build up the body of Christ. Lord, in your mercy,

**C hear our prayer.**

P O God, you created the earth and all its inhabitants and you declared that it is good. Protect mountains and valleys, animals and plants, and direct us to be good stewards of all you have made. Lord, in your mercy,

**C hear our prayer.**

P O God, you desire peace. Direct governments and leaders to work for the well-being of all people and raise up advocates to speak and serve on behalf of the downtrodden. Lord, in your mercy.

**C hear our prayer.**

P O God, you are our hope in the midst of despair, our help in the midst of sorrow, and our consolation in the midst of affliction. Grant comfort to all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit and support caregivers who attend to all in need. Lord, in your mercy,

**C hear our prayer.**

P O God, you are love, and you call us to love one another. Accompany with your grace those journeying toward baptism and call us all to repentance as we prepare to celebrate Christ's death and resurrection. Lord, in your mercy,

**C hear our prayer.**

P O God, you are our life and our salvation. We give you thanks for the righteous who have died in faith. Inspire us by their example to proclaim your steadfast love. Lord, in your mercy,

**C hear our prayer.**

P We entrust ourselves and all our prayers to you, O faithful God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C Amen.**

## OFFERING

### **Create in Me a Clean Heart**

*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.  
Restore unto me the joy of your salvation,  
and uphold me with your free Spirit.*

### **\*PRAYER**

**P** Let us pray.  
Merciful God, accompany our journey through these forty days. Renew us in the gift of baptism, that we may provide for those who are poor, pray for those in need, fast from self-indulgence, and above all that we may find our treasure in the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

### **\*LORD'S PRAYER**

**P** Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to 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.**

## SENDING

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

### \*BLESSING

P Almighty God, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C **Amen.**

### \*DISMISSAL

P Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness;  
be of good courage;  
hold fast to that which is good;  
render to no one evil for evil;  
strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak;  
help the afflicted; honor all people;  
love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

C **Thanks be to God.**

From [sundaysandseasons.com](http://sundaysandseasons.com).

Copyright © 2021 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.

Copyright © 2016 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg  
Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS007700.

New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of  
Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of  
Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Old Testament reading from *The Message* Copyright © 1993, 2002, 2018 by Eugene H. Peterson

Reprinted with permission from Onelicense.net A-725307 & CCLI

**Serving Us:**  
**Pr. Lynne Ogren**  
**Pianist: Meryl McKenna**  
**Ushers:**  
**Lector: Lloyd McKenna**  
**Disciples: All the Baptized**

**Welcome!** Before worship, you are invited to read and reflect.

**Ongoing Prayer Concerns:** Jessie Stewart, Kathie Bailey, Frieda Tyler, Debby Shobe

**Homebound Members:** LaVerna Conard, Mary Westburg, DeAnn Paulson, Dorothy Adcock, Don Pfau, Marv Mathison

**Social Concern of the Month: The Council on Aging** is serving between 3,200 and 4,000 lunches per month. Hot lunches are delivered on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Friday's and sack lunches on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Three vans deliver meal to the home bound and a drive-up service is also available. If you would like to donate to the Council on Aging please make your check out to Zion Lutheran and note "Council" on the memo line.

Serving on Staff:  
Secretary & BLAST Director: Falan Aanenson  
Bookkeeper: Lynn Franz  
Custodians: Kent & Nina Yunker

**Website:** [www.zionlewistownelca.com](http://www.zionlewistownelca.com)

**Phone:** 538-5082

**E-Mail:** [zionelca@midrivers.com](mailto:zionelca@midrivers.com)

**YouTube:** Zion Lutheran Church Lewistown MT.

**Facebook:** Zion Lutheran Church Lewistown