

BETHESDA EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Washington Street near Broadway

Saratoga Springs, New York 12866



THE FIRST DAY OF LENT:

ASH WEDNESDAY

26 FEBRUARY 2020

An Introduction to Lent

Lent may originally have followed Epiphany, just as Jesus' sojourn in the wilderness followed immediately after his baptism, but it soon became firmly attached to Easter, as the principal occasion for baptism and for the reconciliation of those who had been excluded from the Church's fellowship for apostasy or serious faults. This history explains the characteristic notes of Lent – self-examination, penitence, self-denial, study, and preparation for Easter, to which almsgiving has traditionally been added.

As the candidates for baptism were instructed in Christian faith, and as penitents prepared themselves, through fasting and penance, to be readmitted to communion, the whole Christian community was invited to join them in the process of study and repentance, the extension of which over forty days would remind them of the forty days that Jesus spent in the wilderness, being tested by Satan.

Ashes are an ancient sign of penitence; from the Middle Ages it became the custom to begin Lent by being marked in ash with the sign of the cross. The calculation of the forty days has varied considerably in Christian history. It is now usual in the West to count them continuously to the end of Holy Week (not including Sundays), so beginning Lent on the sixth Wednesday before Easter, Ash Wednesday. Liturgical vesture is the simplest possible. Churches are kept bare of flowers and decoration. *Gloria in excelsis* is not used. The Fourth Sunday of Lent, *Laetare* (Refreshment or Mothering Sunday), was allowed as a day of relief from the rigor of Lent, when rose-colored vestments and flowers were permitted and still are.

As Holy Week approaches, the atmosphere of the season darkens, and the readings begin to anticipate the story of Christ's suffering and death. *The Lord is full of compassion and mercy: come, let us adore him.*

Times and Season, Common Worship

The Liturgy of Ash Wednesday

*Please switch off all cellular telephones and other electronic devices before the liturgy begins.
Thank you.*

Organ – *From the Depths of Woe, I Cry to Thee* Friedrich Zachow (1663-1712)

The Entrance Rite

All stand as the Celebrant and Assisting Ministers enter the church.

At the Sung Eucharist the choir sings the

Introit – *Hide Not Thy Face*

Hide not thou thy face from us,
O Lord, and cast not off thy servant in thy displeasure;
for we confess our sins unto thee,
and hide not our unrighteousness.
For thy mercy's sake deliver us from all our sins.

Words: *Psalm 27:12, 32:6*
Music: Richard Farrant (1530-1580)

At said celebrations, the Liturgy begins here.

The Collect of the Day

<i>Celebrant</i>	The Lord be with you.
<i>People</i>	And with thy spirit.
<i>Celebrant</i>	Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made and dost 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 of thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The Liturgy of the Word

The people sit.

The First Lesson – *A Reading from the Book of Joel*

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?'" (2:1-2, 12-17)

Lector The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

Gradual – *Miserator et misericors Dominus*

The LORD is full of compassion and mercy, *
slow to anger and of great kindness.
He will not always accuse us, *
nor will he keep his anger for ever.
He has not dealt with us according to our sins, *
nor rewarded us according to our wickedness.
For as the heavens are high above the earth, *
so is his mercy great upon those who fear him.
As far as the east is from the west, *
so far has he removed our sins from us.
As a father cares for his children, *
so does the LORD care for those who fear him.
For he himself knows whereof we are made; *
he remembers that we are but dust.

Words: *Psalm 103:8-14*

Music: Samuel Wesley (1766-1837)

The Second Lesson – *A Reading from the Second Letter of Paul to the Corinthians*

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. (5:20b-6:10)

After the Sermon, all stand, and the Celebrant invites the people to the observance of a holy Lent, saying

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.

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, all kneeling.

The Celebrant now blesses ashes as follows

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

The ashes are imposed with the following words

Remember that thou art dust, and unto dust shalt thou return.

The following is then said or sung, the people kneeling

Miserere mei, Deus

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your
loving-kindness; *
in your great compassion blot out my offenses.
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.
Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure; *
wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.
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.
I shall teach your ways to the wicked, *
and sinners shall return to you.
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.

Words: *Psalm 51:1-18*
Music: Gregorio Allegri (1582-1652)

Litany of Penitence

The Celebrant and People together, all kneeling

Most holy and merciful Father:
We confess to thee 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.

The Celebrant continues

We have not loved thee 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.

Have mercy upon us, Lord.

We have been deaf to thy call to serve, as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved thy Holy Spirit.

Have mercy upon us, Lord.

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

We confess to thee, Lord.

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

We confess to thee, Lord.

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

We confess to thee, Lord.

Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonesty in daily life and work,
We confess to thee, Lord.

Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,
We confess to thee, Lord.

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,
Accept our repentance, Lord.

For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us,
Accept our repentance, Lord.

For our waste and pollution of thy creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us,
Accept our repentance, Lord.

Restore us, good Lord, and let thy anger depart from us;
Favorably hear us, for thy mercy is great.

Accomplish in us the work of thy salvation,
That we may show forth thy glory in the world.

By the cross and passion of thy Son our Lord,
Bring us with all thy saints to the joy of his resurrection.

The Priest stands and, facing the people, says

Almighty God, the Father 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 his ministers to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins. He pardons and absolves all those who truly repent, and with sincere hearts believe his holy Gospel.

Therefore we beseech him to grant us true repentance and his Holy Spirit, that those things may please him 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 his eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The Peace

All stand. The Celebrant says

Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given us access to his grace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People And with thy spirit.

All may exchange a sign of Christ's peace.

Greetings

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Celebrant begins the Offertory with a sentence of Scripture.

The choir then sings this

Anthem -Wash Me Thoroughly

Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness, and forgive me all my sin.
For I acknowledge my faults and my sin is ever before me.

Words: *Psalm 51:2-3*

Music: Samuel Sebastian Wesley (1810-1876)

Then all stand and sing this

Hymn 143

Eucharistic Prayer II

The people remain standing.

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People And with thy spirit.

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People We lift them up unto the Lord.

Celebrant Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

People It is meet and right so to do.

The Celebrant proceeds

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God.

Who dost bid thy faithful people cleanse their hearts, and prepare with joy for the Paschal feast; that, fervent in prayer and in works of mercy, and renewed by thy Word and Sacraments, they may come to the fullness of grace which thou hast prepared for those who love thee.

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and saying,

Sanctus & Benedictus qui venit

Celebrant and People



Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly Lord God of hosts,
Hea-ven and earth are full of thy glo-ry: Glo-ry be to thee, O Lord Most High.
Bless-ed is he that com-eth in the Name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the High-est.

Words: Traditional
Music: *Missa Simplex*

The people kneel, then the Celebrant continues

All glory be to thee, O Lord our God, for that thou didst create heaven and earth, and didst make us in thine own image; and, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to take our nature upon him, and to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption. He made there a full and perfect sacrifice for the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks to thee, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink this, all of you; for this is my Blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me."

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, we thy people do celebrate and make, with these thy holy gifts which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; and looking for his coming again with power and great glory.

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us, and, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, to bless and sanctify these gifts of bread and wine, that they may be unto us the Body and Blood of thy dearly-beloved Son Jesus Christ.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, whereby we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies. Grant, we beseech thee, that all who partake of this Holy Communion may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, and be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction; and also that we and all thy whole Church may be made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord;

By whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. *AMEN.*

And now, as our Savior Christ hath taught us, we are bold to say,

Celebrant, and People

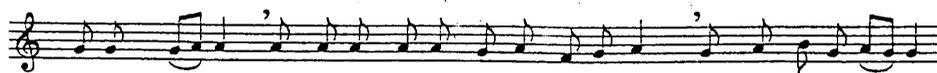
Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.

A period of silence is kept.

Then all say or sing

Agnus Dei



O Lamb of God, that ta-kest a - way the sins of the world, have mer-cy up-on us.



O Lamb of God, that ta-kest a - way the sins of the world, have mer-cy up-on us.



O Lamb of God, that ta-kest a - way the sins of the world, grant us thy peace.

Words: Traditional
Music: *Missa Simplex*

Facing the people, the Celebrant says the following Invitation

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

The Sacred Ministers receive the Sacrament in both kinds, and then immediately deliver it to the people

The Bread and the Cup are given to the communicants with these words

The Body of Christ, the bread of heaven. *Amen.*
The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation. *Amen.*

During the Ministration of Holy Communion, the choir sings this

Motet – *Turn thy face from my sins*

Turn thy face from my sins,
and put out all my misdeeds.
Make me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from thy presence,
and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.

Words: *Psalm 11: 9-11*
Music: Arthur Sullivan (1842- 1900)

The Concluding Rite

Celebrant Let us pray.

All kneel. The Celebrant continues

Almighty God, who hast given thy only Son to be unto us both a sacrifice for sin and also an example of godly life: Give us grace that we may always most thankfully receive that his inestimable benefit, and also daily endeavor ourselves to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Prayer over the People

Deacon Bow down before the Lord.

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. *Amen.*

All stand.

Deacon Let us bless the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

Hymn 142

Organ – *Kyrie, God Our Father, Evermore*

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

THE PARISH STAFF

The Very Reverend Marshall J. Vang

The Reverend Paul F. Evans

Barbara Latzko

Farrell Goehring

Doctor Kathleen Slezak

Robert E. Bullock

Interim Rector

Assisting Priest

Parish Administrative Assistant

Organist & Director of Music

Choral Director

Verger