



The Liturgy of Ash Wednesday

All stand as the ministers enter. The Celebrant begins

+ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The Lord be with you. **And with thy spirit.**

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. **Amen.**

All sit.

The Reading

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?'"

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

*Remain seated. The congregation says the verses in **bold**.*

The Gradual

Psalm 103:8-14

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.

All stand.

The Holy Gospel

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St Matthew.
Glory be to thee, O Lord.

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."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise be to thee, O Christ.**

After the homily, all remain seated. The Celebrant addresses the congregation, saying

Brothers and sisters in Christ: since early days, Christians have observed with great devotion the time of our Lord's passion and resurrection and prepared for this by a season of penitence and fasting. By carefully keeping these days, Christians take to heart the call to repentance and the assurance of forgiveness proclaimed in the Gospel, and so grow in faith and in devotion to our Lord.

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; 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.

All kneel. Silence is then kept for a time. The Celebrant blesses ashes.

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.**

If you wish to receive ashes, come forward to the chancel step at the direction of the usher. The ashes are imposed with the following words,

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

*All kneeling, the Celebrant and People then say together **Psalm 51.***

**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.**

Celebrant: Most holy and merciful Father,

All: **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.**

The Celebrant continues

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.
Have mercy upon us, Lord.

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. **Have mercy upon us, Lord.**

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

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people,
We confess to you, Lord.

Our anger at our own frustration, and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,
We confess to you, Lord.

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

Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,
We confess to you, 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 your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us,
Accept our repentance, Lord.

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

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

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

The Celebrant stands and, facing the people, says

Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desires not the death of a sinner, 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.**

All stand.

The Peace

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

All sit while the Altar is prepared in silence. When the Celebrant turns to face the people, all stand.

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spirit.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up unto the Lord.

Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

It is meet and right so to do.

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,

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts:

Heaven and earth are full of thy Glory.

Glory be to thee, O Lord Most High.

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

All kneel.

All glory be to thee, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for that thou of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of 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, he brake 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 ye all of this; for this is my Blood of the New Testament, 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, according to the institution of thy dearly beloved Son our Savior Jesus Christ, we, thy humble servants, do celebrate and make here before thy divine Majesty, 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; rendering unto thee most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same.

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us; and of thy almighty goodness, vouchsafe to bless and sanctify, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine; that we, receiving them according to thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching thee to grant that, by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we, and all thy whole Church, may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion.

And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee that we, and all others who shall be partakers of this Holy Communion, may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him.

And although we are unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offenses, through Jesus Christ our Lord; By whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

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

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.

Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
Therefore let us keep the feast.

Then, all say

**O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world: have mercy upon us.
O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world: have mercy upon us.
O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world: grant us thy peace.**

Communion is administered at the altar rail. Please move at the direction of the ushers.

All kneel.

The Prayer after Communion *Said by the Celebrant*

Let us pray. O Lord and heavenly Father, who has given unto thy people the true bread which comes down from heaven, even thy Son, Jesus Christ: Grant that throughout this Lent, our souls may so be fed by him that we may continually live in him and he in us; and that day by day, we may be renewed in spirit by the power of his endless life; who gave himself for us, and now lives and reigns with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The Blessing and Dismissal

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

All stand as the ministers depart.

Services in Lent and Holy Week 2026

Sundays - Eucharist at 8am (said) and 10am (sung)

Wednesdays at 7.15am

*Beginning 25 February through 25 March (five weeks)
Holy Communion, followed by a light breakfast*

Thursdays at 12.10pm

Holy Communion

Tuesday, 10 March at 7pm

Stations of the Cross

Palm Sunday, 29 March - Services at 8am and 10am

Tuesday in Holy Week, 31 March -- Holy Communion at 7pm

Wednesday in Holy Week, 1 April – Stations of the Cross at 7pm

Maundy Thursday, 2 April – Liturgy at 7pm

Good Friday, 3 April – Liturgy at 12.10pm

Easter Day, 5 April – Eucharists at 8am (said) and 10am (sung)

Bethesda Episcopal Church

The Reverend Charles Wallace, *Rector*

Parish Office
178 Elm Street, Suite 5
Saratoga Springs NY 12866

Office Email: office@bethesdachurch.org

Office Telephone: (518) 584-5980

Website: bethesdachurch.org