

In View of God's Mercy

A Series of Services for the Season of Lent

Ash Wednesday: Mercy in Ashes

Order of Service

*Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, ^[L]~~[S]~~slow to anger and abounding in
steadfast love. Joel 2:13*

Invocation and Call to Worship

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C Amen.

P Return to the Lord your God.

C Christ crucified, I come.

P Behold his miracle of mercy.

C Christ crucified, I come.

P Receive his gift of grace.

C Christ crucified, I come.

P Abide in his steadfast love.

C Christ crucified, I come.

P Rest in his unfailing faithfulness.

C Christ crucified, I come.

Hymn: *Drawn To The Cross* *LSB# 560*

Drawn to the cross, which thou hast blessed
with healing gifts for souls distressed
To find in thee my life, my rest,
Christ crucified, I come.

Thou knowest all my griefs and fears,
Thy grace abused, my misspent years;
Yet now to thee with contrite tears,
Christ crucified, I come.

Wash me and take away each stain;
Let nothing of my sin remain.
For cleansing, though it be through pain,
Christ crucified, I come.

And then for work to do for thee,
Which shall so sweet a service be
That angels well might envy me,
Christ crucified, I come.

Confession and Forgiveness

P “Yet even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments” (Joel 2:12-13). As our Lord summons us to return to him with repentant hearts, we confess our sins and sorrow over them.

C Almighty God, we are unclean before you. We are marred and marked by the filth of sin. We have turned away from you by disobeying your commandments. We have rebelled against you by seeking our own way rather than following your will. Forgive us.

P We cry out to you for mercy.

C Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

(Please silently reflect on the fact that though our sin is great, God’s mercy is greater.)

P Hear the good news! God’s Word declares that “he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love” (Joel 2:13). In the mercy of Almighty God, his Son Jesus was given to die for you to remove the stain of your sin. For Christ’s sake God forgives you all your sin and renews a right spirit within you. His mercy endures forever because his love for you is steadfast.

C Amen.

Imposition of Ashes

Old Testament Reading ... Joel 2:12-18

Epistle Reading ... 1 John 1:8-9

Gospel Reading ... Matthew 6:16-18

Hymn: *Today Your Mercy Calls Us* *LSB #915*

Today your mercy calls us to wash away our sin.
However great our trespass, whatever we have been.
However long from mercy our hearts have turned away,
Your precious blood can wash us and make us clean today.

Today your gate is open, and all who enter in
Shall find a Father's welcome and pardon for their sin.
The past shall be forgotten, a present joy be giv'n,
A future grace be promised, a glorious crown in heav'n.

Today our Father calls us; his Holy Spirit waits;
His blessed angels gather around the heav'nly gates.
No question will be asked us how often we have come;
Although we oft have wandered, it is our Father's home.

O all-embracing Mercy, O ever-open Door,
What should we do without you when heart and eye run o'er?
When all things seem against us, to drive us to despair,
We know one gate is open, one ear will hear our prayer.

Sermon

Offering

Prayers

P Almighty and merciful God, we approach your throne of grace today as sinners who require your cleansing.

C Lord, have mercy.

P Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love, according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

C Lord, have mercy.

P Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

C Lord, have mercy.

P Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

C Lord, have mercy.

P Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

C Lord, have mercy.

P Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

C Lord, have mercy.

P Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

C Lord, have mercy.

P Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.

C Lord, have mercy.

P Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

C Lord, grant me your grace both to will and to do what pleases you.

P All these things we pray in the name of Jesus, who cleanses us from all unrighteousness.

C Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Benediction

P May the merciful God, who is faithful and just to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness, empower you to live according to his good and gracious will, through Jesus Christ to whom be the glory forever.

C Amen.

Hymn: *Renew Me, O Eternal Light*

LSB #704

Renew me, O eternal Light, and let my heart and soul be bright,
Illumined with the light of grace that issues from your holy face.

Remove the pow'r of sin from me and cleanse all my impurity
That I may have the strength and will temptations of the flesh to still.

Create in me a new heart, Lord, that gladly I obey your Word.
Let what you will be my desire, and with new life my soul inspire.

Grant that I only you may love and seek those things which are above
Till I behold you face to face, O Light eternal, through your grace.