

Ash Wednesday

March 5, 2025

Ash Wednesday (Year C)

The lessons for Ash Wednesday encourage us as followers of Christ to turn from sin and live more fully into the grace and mercy of the one who claims us as his own. The Lenten journey, which begins today, is one of reflection, sacrifice, and repentance. Even as we examine our own mortality, we are blessed beyond measure by the promise of God who vows to offer us his steadfast and eternal love.



THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Lesson: Joel 2:12-19

Return to the Lord

True repentance, proclaimed the prophet, comes from a contrite heart, not from outward signs of grief such as the tearing of garments. God calls Israel to return to him who is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love for all generations.

Psalm 51:1-13 (14-19)

Create in Me a Clean Heart

David repented of his disobedience after being confronted by Nathan the prophet. The king cried out to the Lord to create in him a new and right spirit. He begged God not to turn away from him because of his sin, but instead to forgive him and transform him, granting him renewed joy in the Lord's presence.

Second Lesson: 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

Jesus Became Our Sin

Paul explained to the Corinthians the means by which they became "ambassadors" or emissaries for Christ. It was not through their own doing, rather it was through Christ who, though he was perfect, took human sin upon himself so that we might be saved. Luther called this the "Happy Exchange." Righteous for sin, and sin for righteousness, through Christ alone. Such benefits we receive from our Lord!

Gospel Lesson: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Serve and Pray in Secret

Jesus taught his followers to do works in his name hidden from the eyes of others. God will see our faithful acts and reward them, but a person who displays their good work for all to see has already received the reward of praise from his friends. We seek to please the Lord and receive his blessing, not a half blessing from others.

Suggestions for the Day:

- The liturgical color is purple.
- The Kyrie may be used in Lent.
- Use the Apostles' Creed.

Lent is a good time to offer individual confession and forgiveness to people. This can be a wonderful time for pastor and person to sit one on one and talk about the spiritual life. It need not be intimidating at all, rather it can be comforting and uplifting. A sample of individual confession can be found on the Hymns and Services page.

- Consider using the hymn "What Has God Required of Us" from the Music and Hymns page of SOWeR. It is sung to the tune of *Lasst uns Erfreuen* (All Creatures of Our God and King). Alternate lyrics written by Rev. Mark Ryman.

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
Lord Jesus Think on Me	309	---	610	599	178	178
Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness	302	---	563	---	---	web
O Lord, Throughout These Forty Days	99	---	418	319	---	---
What Has Our God Required of Us?	---	---	---	---	---	web
Come Down, O Love Divine	508	---	501	804	---	---
Just As I Am, Without One Plea	296	---	570	592	193	193
Savior, When in Dust to You	91	---	419	601	134	134
Abide With Me	272	---	878	629	62	62
Today Your Mercy Calls Us	304	---	915	---	---	web
Softly and Tenderly, Jesus is Calling	---	734	---	608	177	177

The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW = Lutheran Book of Worship, WOV = With One Voice, ELW = Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB = The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC = The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home, and *** means you can find it on SOWeR at "Hymns and Music."

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles

Change My Heart O God
(CCLI# 1565)
Only By Grace
(CCLI# 190579)
Amazing Love
(CCLI# 192553)
Just As I Am
(CCLI# 23206)
Create in Me a Clean Heart
(CCLI# 106855)

The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.