

*Return
to the*

LORD
your **God.**

Joel 2:13

**February 17, 2021
Ash Wednesday
7:00 PM Worship**

First Lutheran Church
709 5th Ave. – P.O. Box 218
Washburn, North Dakota 58577
www.flcwashburn.com

PRELUDE AND BELLS
WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Psalm 51

- 1 Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your unfailing love;
according to your great compassion
blot out my transgressions.**
- 2 Wash away all my iniquity
and cleanse me from my sin.**
- 3 For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is always before me.**
- 4 Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight;
so you are right in your verdict
and justified when you judge.**
- 5 Surely I was sinful at birth,
sinful from the time my mother conceived me.**
- 6 Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb;
you taught me wisdom in that secret place.**
- 7 Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean;
wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.**
- 8 Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones you have crushed rejoice.**
- 9 Hide your face from my sins
and blot out all my iniquity.**
- 10 Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.**
- 11 Do not cast me from your presence
or take your Holy Spirit from me.**
- 12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation
and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.**
- 13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
so that sinners will turn back to you.**
- 14 Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God,
you who are God my Savior,
and my tongue will sing of your righteousness.**
- 15 Open my lips, Lord,
and my mouth will declare your praise.**
- 16 You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it;
you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.**

- 17 **My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart
you, God, will not despise.**
- 18 **May it please you to prosper Zion,
to build up the walls of Jerusalem.**
- 19 **Then you will delight in the sacrifices of the righteous,
in burnt offerings offered whole;
then bulls will be offered on your altar.**

HYMN..... “O Lord, throughout These Forty Days”

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O Lord, throughout These Forty Days

1 O Lord, through-out these for - ty days You prayed and kept the fast;
2 You strove with Sa - tan, and you won; Your faith - ful - ness en - dured;
3 Though parched and hun - gry, yet you prayed And fixed your mind a - bove;
4 Be with us through this sea - son, Lord, And all our earth - ly days,

In - spire re - pen - tance for our sin, And free us from our past.
Lend us your nerve, your skill and trust In God's e - ter - nal Word.
So teach us to de - ny our - selves That we may know God's love.
That when the fi - nal Eas - ter dawns, We join in heav - en's praise.

© Text: based on *Claudia F. Hernaman, 1838–1898; para. Gilbert E. Doan, b. 1930*
Tune: *Psalter, Edinburgh, 1635*

CAITHNESS
C.M.

CALL TO WORSHIP

P: Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love. (Joel 2:13)

C: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

P: Brothers and sisters, our Lord Jesus said: “If any would come after me, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.” (Mark 8:34)

C: Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me. (Psalm 23:4)

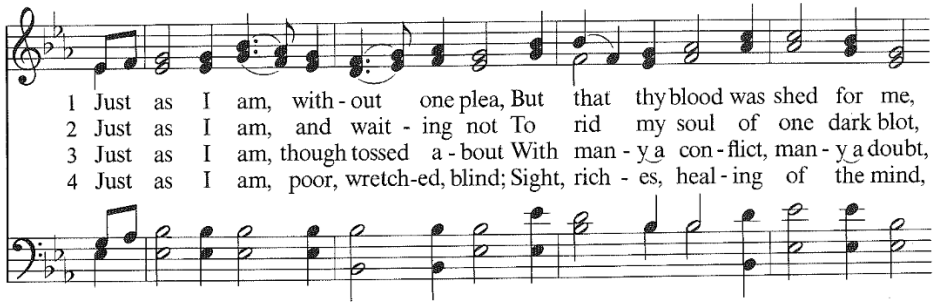
P: Let us lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus — the pioneer and perfecter of our faith — who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:1-2)

C: Lord, we believe; help us in our unbelief. (Mark 9:24)

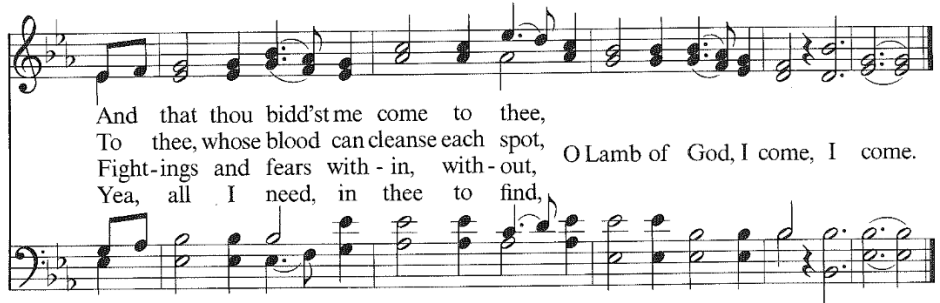
HYMN....."Just as I Am"

Just as I Am, without One Plea

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1 Just as I am, with - out one plea, But that thy blood was shed for me,
2 Just as I am, and wait - ing not To rid my soul of one dark blot,
3 Just as I am, though tossed a - bout With man - y a con - flict, man - y a doubt,
4 Just as I am, poor, wretch - ed, blind; Sight, rich - es, heal - ing of the mind,



And that thou bidd'st me come to thee,
To thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.
Fight - ings and fears with - in, with - out,
Yea, all I need, in thee to find,

5 Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

6 Just as I am; thy love unknown
Has broken ev'ry barrier down;
Now to be thine, yea, thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

PRAYERS OF CONFESSION AND REPENTANCE

P: Let us draw near to God with an honest heart, confessing our sins to God the Father, and appealing to him, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to grant us forgiveness.

Silence is observed for reflection and self-examination.

P: Almighty God,

C: We confess to you that we are by nature sinful and unclean, and that we have sinned against you 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; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.

P: We have received your many blessings with a lack of gratitude; and have failed to be good stewards of your Creation.

C: Have mercy on us, Lord.

P: We have followed our own selfish will and ways, and have failed to be your trusting and obedient servants.

C: Have mercy on us, Lord.

P: We have not forgiven others, as we have been forgiven, and have failed to be your witnesses in the world.

C: Have mercy on us, Lord.

P: We confess to you, Lord, all our unfaithfulness — our fear, our anger, our pride, and our trust in our own righteousness.

C: Accept our repentance, Lord.

P: We confess to you, Lord, our lack of concern for the needs of others, and our sense of entitlement to all we possess.

C: Accept our repentance, Lord.

P: We confess to you, Lord, our negligence in worship, and our rejection of your Word in our lives.

C: Accept our repentance, Lord.

P: Create in us a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within us.

C: Cast us not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from us. Give us the joy of your saving help again, and sustain us with your bountiful Spirit. Amen.

THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES

P: As children of a fallen humanity, each of us shares in the consequences of human sin. In the words that the Lord first spoke to Adam, he now reminds us all: “By the sweat of your brow you shall eat bread, until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” (Genesis 3:19)

Therefore, face-to-face, in the presence of God, we offer our confession in the spirit of our ancestor Job, who prayed:

C: I had heard you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you; therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes. (Job 42:5-6)

P: As a sign of repentance, all may come forward to receive the mark of the cross in ashes on their brow.

As worshipers come forward, the minister marks the sign of the cross in ashes on the forehead of each individual, saying:
Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.

During the imposition of ashes, the congregation may observe silence, and meditate on Psalm 90.

¹ Lord, you have been our dwelling place
throughout all generations.

² Before the mountains were born
or you brought forth the whole world,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

³ You turn people back to dust,
saying, “Return to dust, you mortals.”

⁴ A thousand years in your sight
are like a day that has just gone by,
or like a watch in the night.

⁵ Yet you sweep people away in the sleep of death—
they are like the new grass of the morning:

⁶ In the morning it springs up new,
but by evening it is dry and withered.

⁷ We are consumed by your anger
and terrified by your indignation.

⁸ You have set our iniquities before you,
our secret sins in the light of your presence.

⁹ All our days pass away under your wrath;
we finish our years with a moan.

- ¹⁰ Our days may come to seventy years,
or eighty, if our strength endures;
yet the best of them are but trouble and sorrow,
for they quickly pass, and we fly away.
- ¹¹ If only we knew the power of your anger!
Your wrath is as great as the fear that is your due.
- ¹² Teach us to number our days,
that we may gain a heart of wisdom.
- ¹³ Relent, Lord! How long will it be?
Have compassion on your servants.
- ¹⁴ Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love,
that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.
- ¹⁵ Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us,
for as many years as we have seen trouble.
- ¹⁶ May your deeds be shown to your servants,
your splendor to their children.
- ¹⁷ May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us;
establish the work of our hands for us—
yes, establish the work of our hands.

The dialog below follows immediately after.

THE PROMISE OF CHRIST

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 Lord,

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

P: In the mercy of Almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for you, and for his sake, God forgives you all your sins. By his Holy Spirit, may he grant you true repentance, that you may live with him in righteousness and purity forever; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC..... Jeff, Ava & Olivia Schmidt
"Softly and Tenderly"

FIRST READING.....Joel 2:12-19

(Real repentance is not simply going through religious motions or rituals. The heart must accompany the outer action for them to be acceptable to the Lord. This is what the first part of the greatest commandment teaches us. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart..." (Matt 22:36-40) Loving the Lord with all your heart and soul is what drives loving neighbor and all other obedience to the Law and Prophets.)

¹²"Yet even now," declares the Lord, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; ¹³and rend your hearts and not your garments." Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster. ¹⁴Who 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? ¹⁵Blow the trumpet in Zion; consecrate a fast; call a solemn assembly; ¹⁶gather the people. Consecrate the congregation; assemble the elders; gather the children, even nursing infants. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her chamber. ¹⁷Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep and say, "Spare your people, O Lord, and make not your heritage a reproach, a byword among the nations. Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'" ¹⁸Then the Lord became jealous for his land and had pity on his people. ¹⁹The Lord answered and said to his people, "Behold, I am sending to you grain, wine, and oil, and you will be satisfied; and I will no more make you a reproach among the nations."

SECOND READING..... 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

(Today is the day! No matter what else may be happening to you, this day is favorable for salvation. It is not to be taken lightly, for so much has been done to make salvation acceptable. Jesus died so that you may live. "Be reconciled to God" while it is still today.)

^{20b}We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. ¹Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. ²For he says, "In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of

salvation. ³We put no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, ⁴but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, ⁵beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; ⁶by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; ⁷by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; ⁸through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; ⁹as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; ¹⁰as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.

GOSPEL READINGMatthew 6:1-6, 16-21
(Do not simply practice righteousness; be righteous in your practice. Righteousness begins as a secret thing—an affair of the heart. If your treasure is the Father's approval, your reward will be great, though no one but you and God may know the reason. Whether praying or fasting or giving, do these acts of righteousness privately and the Lord will reward you.)

¹{Jesus said,} “Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. ²Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ³But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. ⁵And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ⁶But when 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.

¹⁶“And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ¹⁷But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, ¹⁸that your fasting

may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. ¹⁹Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

SERMON Pastor Chuck Mann

HYMN - (vs. 1 & 2)..... On last page
“Chief of Sinners though I Be”

THE APOSTLES’ CREED

I believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

OFFERTORY PRAYER (In unison)

God of love, you have provided for our every need from your abundant bounty. Grant us grateful hearts that we may give generously to those in need and thereby show your love to the world around us. Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right and salutary...we praise your name and join their unending hymn saying:

C: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow'r and might: Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna. Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosana in the highest.

COMMUNION LITURGY

LORD'S PRAYER

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 DISTRIBUTION

(Single Aisle Station – one side at a time, social distancing)

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C: Amen

CONCLUDING PRAYER

P: 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.

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.**

HYMN (vs. 3, 4 & 5)..... On last page
“Chief of Sinners though I Be”

THE PREDICTION OF THE PASSION

The prediction of the Passion (based on Mark 10:33-34) recalls the determination of Christ in his journey to Jerusalem and the cross.

P: Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem...
And the Son of man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes, who will condemn him to death...
And they will hand him over to the Gentiles who will mock him and scourge him, and finally, they will crucify him...
But on the third day, he will rise.

(the congregation exits in silence)

Today’s Worship Leaders & Volunteers – Thank You!

- PASTOR Pastor Chuck Mann
- COMMUNION ASSISTANT..... Melanie Beckman
- READER..... Steph Mann
- ORGANIST Theresa Petersen
- USHERS/GREETERS..... Ardee Kurle & Emily Retterath
- ALTAR GUILD Peggy Moran & Donna Kroll
- SERVICE GROUP COORDINATORS Evangelism Committee

Our Mission

“Working hand in hand to know Christ and make Christ known through Worship, Christian Education, Evangelism, Fellowship, Caring Ministries, and Service.”

Welcome to all who have come to worship.

The prophet Joel invites us: “Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful” (2:13). Welcome to Ash Wednesday worship.

Visitors

We welcome all visitors to First Lutheran today and ask that you sign a green pew card with your name and address. Please place it in the offering plate.

Holy Communion

All are welcome to receive the Lord's Body and Blood who are baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and believe that Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, is truly present in, with and under the forms of bread and wine for the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. Receive the bread into your open, flat palm. Ask if you wish to receive grape juice or a gluten free wafer. Alert an usher if you, or someone you know, needs communion served in the pew. **Our members and guests are reminded to register their communion participation using the green pew cards for accurate record keeping.**

Deborah Bible Study

Deborah Bible Study will meet this Thursday, February 18th, at 9:30 am at the church. Val Swanson & Sonja Bergstedt host. Study will be Episode 1, lesson 3 and film.

Newsletter Deadline

Deadline for the March newsletter is this Friday, February 19th, at noon. Because of a short month, articles not received by then more than likely will not be included in the March newsletter. Crunch time this month!!!

The Marriage Course

The Marriage Course begins this Saturday, February 20 and goes through April 3, from 6-8 pm (depending on discussion time) each Saturday. This is a free 7-week course. There will be a mixture of short films and study journals that couples will work through together privately at their tables. This is open to couples married at least 1 year and up to 70, 80 or however many years you are married. If you are interested in investing in your marriage and would like to sign-up for the course, please email Pastor Chuck (pastorchuck@westriv.com) or Jeannette (flc@westriv.com). There is still room for more couples. Questions or concerns, please contact Pastor Chuck by email or cell (701-891-9443). More information can be found in the February newsletter.

Lenten Meals & Worship

Lenten meals will begin on February 24th. Serving will be from 5:30 – 6:45 pm. FLCW will be serving soup and bread. Free-will offering. Money will be used for camperships for First Lutheran youth going to Camp of the Cross this summer. Join us after the meal for our Lenten Worship drama series, “How to be a Disciple: The Reflections of a Contemporary Twelve” at 7:00 pm.

Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

February 17, 2021 — Ash Wednesday

“Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.” – Psalm 51:1-2 –

Each year, the season of Lent poses the ultimate question, “How is it with your soul?” And we, who like to be in control, are given a smudge on our forehead to remind us that we are not. This smudge is a reminder that my bank account, my reputation, my skill, my good health, my acts of devotion – none of these can remove the specter of death from my life. See, you and I have this tendency, not only to deny death, but through our transgressions, we deny life with amazing regularity. This season of Lent calls us to examine our hearts, that we might compare ourselves, not to friends or neighbors or fellow disciples, but to Jesus Christ.

Psalm 51 is King David’s attempt to come to terms with his enemy – not some neighboring tribe or some invading nation, but himself. He is dealing with an inner battle of right and wrong, sin and guilt. Much like the battles you and I fight every day, and for David, it’s a losing battle.

David lost his battle with lust when he saw the beautiful Bathsheba bathing on the rooftop. He lost a second battle as lust gave way to adultery, and he lost again when adultery gave way to murder and the death of Bathsheba’s innocent husband. The prophet Nathan confronts David with his sin, and now David must ask, “How is it with your soul?”

The dust of guilt blows hard against him, stinging his conscience and making his life a gritty mess. In his selfish pursuit of pleasure, David has travelled far down a path which has taken him from God. He knows he cannot continue this painful road, so he turns around, turns back to God in an act of repentance. He pleads with God, “Blot out my transgressions. Wash away my iniquity.”

Ash Wednesday reminds us that we have a problem – we are sinners. But Ash Wednesday is also a promise, because that smudge of ash on our foreheads is in the sign of the cross, the sign of life and hope. We sing in worship, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right Spirit within me.” We do so because we know we cannot do better on our own stream. It’s why we need a Savior. It’s why Jesus died. For you. For me. The ability to receive this great love is a gift, that enables us to answer, “It is well.”

Chief of Sinners though I Be

1 Chief of sin - ners though I be, Je - sus shed his blood for me,
 2 Oh, the height of Je - sus' love! High - er than the heav'ns a - bove,
 3 On - ly Je - sus can im-part Balm to heal the wound-ed heart,
 4 Chief of sin - ners though I be, Christ is All - in - All to me;

Died that I might live on high, Lives that I might nev - er die.
 Deep - er than the depths of sea, Last - ing as e - ter - ni - ty.
 Peace that flows from sin for - giv'n, Joy that lifts the soul to heav'n,
 All my wants to him are known, All my sor - rows are his own.

As the branch is to the vine, I am his, and he is mine.
 Love that found me—won - drous thought— Found me when I sought him not.
 Faith and hope to walk with God In the way that E - noch trod.
 He sus - tains the hid - den life Safe with him from earth - ly strife.

5 O my Savior, help afford
 By your Spirit and your Word!
 When my wayward heart would stray,
 Keep me in the narrow way;
 Grace in time of need supply
 While I live and when I die.