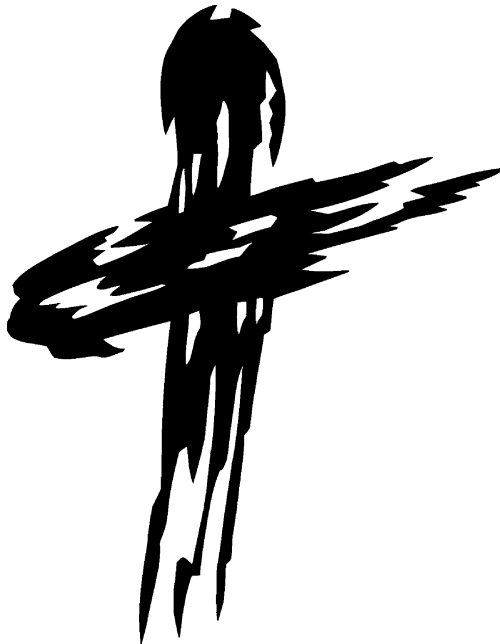


# Ash Wednesday Service

February 17, 2021

7:00pm



St. Mark's Episcopal Church  
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(413) 525-6341

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## THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

*Officiant*            The Lord be with you.

*People*                **And also with you.**

*Officiant*            Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all 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 you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

## FIRST READING: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

A Reading from the book of the prophet 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?’ ”

*Reader*                The Word of the Lord.

*People*                **Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM: 103: 8-14

<sup>1</sup>Bless the LORD, O my soul, \*  
and all that is within me, bless his holy Name.

<sup>2</sup>Bless the LORD, O my soul, \*  
and forget not all his benefits.

<sup>3</sup>He forgives all your sins \*  
and heals all your infirmities;

- <sup>4</sup>He redeems your life from the grave \*  
and crowns you with mercy and loving-kindness;
- <sup>5</sup>He satisfies you with good things, \*  
and your youth is renewed like an eagle's.
- <sup>6</sup>The LORD executes righteousness \*  
and judgment for all who are oppressed.
- <sup>7</sup>He made his ways known to Moses \*  
and his works to the children of Israel.
- <sup>8</sup>The LORD is full of compassion and mercy, \*  
slow to anger and of great kindness.
- <sup>9</sup>He will not always accuse us, \*  
nor will he keep his anger forever.
- <sup>10</sup>He has not dealt with us according to our sins, \*  
nor rewarded us according to our wickedness.
- <sup>11</sup>For as the heavens are high above the earth, \*  
so is his mercy great upon those who fear him.
- <sup>12</sup>As far as the east is from the west, \*  
so far has he removed our sins from us.
- <sup>13</sup>As a father cares for his children, \*  
so does the LORD care for those who fear him.
- <sup>14</sup>For he himself knows whereof we are made; \*  
he remembers that we are but dust.

## **SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 5:20b--6:10**

A Reading from Paul's Second letter to the Church in Corinth.

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.

Reader The Word of the Lord.  
People Thanks be to God.

**SEQUENCE HYMN 572**

1 Be - fore thy throne, O God, we kneel: give us a con - science  
2 Search out our hearts and make us true; help us to give to  
3 For sins of heed - less word and deed, for pride am - bi - tious  
4 Let the fierce fires which burn and try, our in - most spi - rits

quick to feel, a rea - dy mind to un - der - stand the  
all their due. From love of plea - sure, lust of gold, from  
to suc - ceed, for craft - y trade and sub - tle snare to  
pu - ri - fy: con - sume the ill; purge out the shame; O

mean - ing of thy chas - tening hand; what - e'er the pain and  
sins which make the heart grow cold, wean us and train us  
catch the sim - ple un - a - ware, for lives be - reft of  
God, be with us in the flame; a new - born peo - ple

shame may be, bring us, O Fa - ther, near - er thee.  
with thy rod; teach us to know our faults, O God.  
pur - pose high, for - give, for - give, O Lord, we cry.  
may we rise, more pure, more true, more no - bly wise.

**GOSPEL: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21**

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

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.

*People*            **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

## **HOMILY AND MEDITATION**

Rev. Sandi Albom

### **LENTEN INVITATION**

*After the Sermon, all stand, and the Celebrant or Minister appointed 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 period of time.*

*The people place their hands upon the vessel containing their written prayers and notes, and/or their ashes, as available.*

*Officiant*            The Lord be with you.

*People*                **And also with you.**

*Officiant*            Let us pray together

**All**        **Lord, bless the prayers and confessions of our hearts, as they are set before you, that we may be penitent and in true desire for a holy Lent. Pardon our sins and keep us faithful to your ways and your truth, for you do not desire our death, but for us to rise to live with the risen Christ who reigns with you for ever and ever. Amen.**

*If ashes are available, they may be sprinkled on the head or placed on the back of the hand, with these words:*

*Officiant*            Remember that we are dust, and to dust we will return.

**All**                    **Remember that we are dust, and to dust we will return.**

*Silence is kept for a period of time.*

**PSALM 51** (*The psalm is chanted by Sue Schneider & Alan Druckenmiller*)



<sup>1</sup>Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-**kindness**; \*  
in your great compassion blot out my **offenses**.

<sup>2</sup>Wash me through and through from my **wickedness** \*  
and cleanse me from my **sin**.

<sup>3</sup>For I know my **transgressions**, \*  
and my sin is ever **before me**.

<sup>4</sup>Against you only have I **sinned** \*  
and done what is evil in your **sight**.

<sup>5</sup>And so you are justified when you **speak** \*  
and upright in your **judgment**.

<sup>6</sup>Indeed, I have been wicked from my **birth**, \*  
a sinner from my mother's **womb**.

<sup>7</sup>For behold, you look for truth deep **within me**, \*  
and will make me understand wisdom **secretly**.

<sup>8</sup>Purge me from my sin, and I shall be **pure**; \*  
wash me, and I shall be clean **indeed**.

- <sup>9</sup>Make me hear of joy and **gladness**, \*  
that the body you have broken may **rejoice**.
- <sup>10</sup>Hide your face from my **sins** \*  
and blot out all my **iniquities**.
- <sup>11</sup>Create in me a clean heart, O **God**, \*  
and renew a right spirit **within me**.
- <sup>12</sup>Cast me not away from your **presence** \*  
and take not your holy Spirit **from me**.
- <sup>13</sup>Give me the joy of your saving **help again** \*  
and sustain me with your bountiful **Spirit**.
- <sup>14</sup>I shall teach your ways to the **wicked**, \*  
and sinners shall return to **you**.
- <sup>15</sup>Deliver me from death, O **God**, \*  
and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness, O God of my **salvation**.
- <sup>16</sup>Open my lips, O **Lord**, \*  
and my mouth shall proclaim your **praise**.
- <sup>17</sup>Had you desired it, I would have offered **sacrifice**, \*  
but you take no delight in burnt-**offerings**.
- <sup>18</sup>The sacrifice of God is a troubled **spirit**; \*  
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not **despise**.

## LITANY OF PENITENCE

*The Officiant and People together, all kneeling as able*

**Most holy and merciful Father: 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 Officiant 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 on 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 on 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.***

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 God's people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins. God pardons and absolves all those who truly repent, and with sincere hearts believe his holy Gospel. Therefore we beseech God to grant us true repentance and the Holy Spirit, that those things may please God which we do on this day, and that they rest of our life hereafter may be pure and holy, so that at the last we may come to eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **PEACE**

*Officiant*            The peace of the Lord be always with you.

*People*                **And also with you.**

## **OFFERTORY “Wilt thou Forgive”**

Rev. Sandi Albom / Sue Matsui

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

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

*People and Officiant*



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,  
 forever and ever. Amen.

## PRAYERS / INTERCESSIONS (VIRTUAL & PRAYER LIST)

### CONCLUDING PRAYER

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. Amen.

### BLESSING

#### CONCLUDING HYMN 142



1 Lord, who through-out these for - ty days for us didst fast and pray,  
 2 As thou with Sa - tan didst con - tend, and didst the vic - tory win,  
 3 As thou didst hun - ger bear and thirst, so teach us, gra - cious Lord,  
 4 And through these days of pen - i - tence, and through thy Pas - sion - tide,  
 5 A - bide with us, that so, this life of suf - fering o - ver - past,



1 teach us with thee to mourn our sins, and close by thee to stay.  
 2 O give us strength in thee to fight, in thee to con - quer sin.  
 3 to die to self, and chief - ly live by thy most ho - ly word.  
 4 yea, ev - er - more, in life and death, Je - sus! with us a - bide.  
 5 an Eas - ter of un - end - ing joy we may at - tain at last!

## **DISMISSAL**

*Deacon*

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.

*People*

**Thanks be to God.**

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## PEOPLE IN OUR PRAYERS

- ***For those who are homebound:*** Mary Jane, William & Barbara, Melissa, Lucy, Fran, and Sandy Moore
- ***For those who are in need of God's healing and protection:*** Donea, Chris & Ashling, Gail, Sheila, Guss III, Dolly, Travis & Jaylin, Irene, Beth & Ethan, Winn, Maggie, Matthew Briggs, Rick Buckley, Fred S. Allan, Manny, Ryan, Sue, Chris, Maggie, Doreen, Dusty, Charlie, Barbara Volker & Dick, Beth Miner and her family Luis (Louis) & Hooper.

For Tom, in hospice and for his family.

For those residing and working in nursing homes and hospitals.

For protection of Ryan & all the students at UMASS.

For protection of Christopher as he travels to Mexico on business.

For COVID victims around the world and for those who mourn.

- ***For those who have died; may they rest in peace and rise in glory:***

Cecile and for her family.

Duane and for his family

George Savaria and for his wife Cyndy.

