

Lutheran Church of the Holy Comforter

• 216 N. Main Street • Belmont, NC 28012 •

Ash Wednesday

February 26, 2020

Micah Kearney
Pastor

Greg Cline
Organist/Choirmaster



WELCOME/GATHERING

PRELUDE: *Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross.* Handbell Choir

INVITATION TO LENT

Lent begins with a solemn call to fasting and repentance as we begin our journey to the baptismal waters of Easter. As we hear in today's readings, now is the acceptable time to return to the Lord. During Lent the people of God will reflect on the meaning of their baptism into Christ's death and resurrection. The sign of ashes suggests our human mortality and frailty. What seems like an ending is really an invitation to make each day a new beginning, in which we are washed in God's mercy and forgiveness. With the cross on our brow, we long for the spiritual renewal that flows from the springtime Easter feast to come.

PROCESSION: *Bless the Lord My Soul* Church Choir sings 1st,
Congregation repeats

Bless the Lord My Soul
And Bless His Holy name.
Bless the Lord My Soul,
He Rescues me from death...

CONFESSION OF SIN.

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, who gathers us in the wilderness to redeem us, anoint us, and make us new.

C Amen.

P In these forty days, let us be honest, confess our sin, and receive God's promise of mercy.

The assembly kneels or sits. Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

**Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
have mercy on us.**

For self-centered living,
and for failing to walk with humility and gentleness:
**Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
have mercy on us.**

For longing to have what is not ours,
and for hearts that are not at rest with ourselves:
**Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
have mercy on us.**

For misuse of human relationships,
and for unwillingness to see the image of God in others:
**Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
have mercy on us.**

For jealousies that divide families and nations,
and for rivalries that create strife and warfare:
**Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
have mercy on us.**

For reluctance in sharing the gifts of God,
and for carelessness with the fruits of creation:
**Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
have mercy on us.**

For idleness in witnessing to Jesus Christ,
and for squandering the gifts of love and grace:
**Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal,
have mercy on us.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. Through the Holy Spirit God cleanses us and gives us the power to proclaim the mighty acts of the one who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father,

and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

*People may come forward to receive the ashes.
Ministers mark the forehead of each person with a cross of ashes, saying:*

P Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

*After those who desire ashes have received them,
all may kneel or sit and the minister continues.*



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 Savior,

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

P Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life.

C Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

Almighty and ever-living God, you hate nothing you have made, and you forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and honest hearts, so that, truly repenting of our sins, we may receive from you, the God of all mercy, full pardon and forgiveness through 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.

FIRST READING

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

A reading from the second chapter of Joel.

Because of the coming Day of the Lord, the prophet Joel calls the people to a community lament. The repentant community reminds God of his gracious character and asks God to spare the people, lest the nations doubt God's power to save.

¹Blow 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—
²a 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.

¹²Yet even now, says the Lord,
 return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
 ¹³rend 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.
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;
 sanctify a fast;
call a solemn assembly;
 ¹⁶gather 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.

¹⁷Between 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?'"

A The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING

2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10

A reading from the fifth and sixth chapters of 2 Corinthians.

The ministry of the gospel endures many challenges and hardships. Through this ministry, God's reconciling activity in the death of Christ reaches into the depths of our lives to bring us into a right relationship with God. In this way, God accepts us into the reality of divine salvation.

Chapter 5

²⁰We entreat 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.

Chapter 6

As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain.

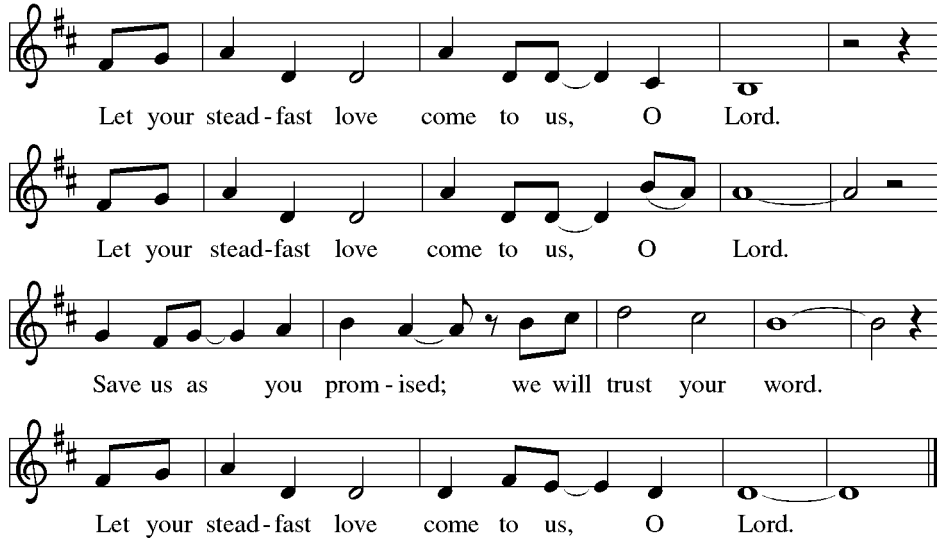
²For he says,

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

A The word of the Lord. C **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord.

Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord.

Save us as you prom-ised; we will trust your word.

Let your stead-fast love come to us, O Lord.

The musical notation is written on four staves in G major (one sharp). The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4-G4 (beamed eighth notes), F#4 (quarter), E4 (half). The second staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4-G4 (beamed eighth notes), F#4 (quarter), E4 (half). The third staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4-G4 (beamed eighth notes), F#4 (quarter), E4 (half). The fourth staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4-G4 (beamed eighth notes), F#4 (quarter), E4 (half).

GOSPEL

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the sixth chapter.

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus commends almsgiving, prayer, and fasting, but emphasizes that spiritual devotion must not be done for show.

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.

²So 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. ³But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

⁵And 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. ⁶But 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.

¹⁶And 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. ¹⁷But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸so 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.

¹⁹Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

P The Gospel of the Lord.
C Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON Pastor Micah

Silence is Kept for Reflection.

HYMN OF THE DAY: *Jesus, Priceless Treasure* All Stand & Sing



1 Je - sus, price-less trea - sure, source of pur - est plea - sure,
 2 In thine arm I rest me; foes who would mo - lest me
 3 Hence, all fears and sad - ness, for the Lord of glad - ness,



tru - est friend to me: ah, how long I've pant - ed, and my heart has
 can-not reach me here. Though the earth be shak - ing, ev - 'ry heart be
 Je - sus, en - ters in. God, who dear-ly loves us, from all tri - al



faint - ed, thirst - ing, Lord, for thee! Thine I am, O spot - less Lamb;
 quak - ing, Je - sus calms my fear. Light-nings flash and thun - ders crash;
 saves us, gives sweet peace with-in. I have borne this world - ly scorn;



no - thing in this world can hide thee, naught I ask be - side thee.
 yet, though sin and hell as - sail me, Je - sus will not fail me.
 still in thee lies pur - est plea - sure: Je - sus, price-less trea - sure!

Text: Johann Franck, 1618–1677; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.
 Music: JESU, MEINE FREUDE, Johann Crüger, 1598–1662

THE PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Turning our hearts to God who is gracious and merciful, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Merciful God, refresh the hearts of your faithful people across all lands and generations. Rescue your church from affliction, hardship, or persecution. Remove all obstacles standing in the way of our witness to your grace, mercy, and everlasting love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Renewing God, bless all wilderness places and all inhabitants of the land. Protect untouched ecosystems, satisfy parched places, and strengthen roots and seeds beneath the soil that await their time to flourish. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Restoring God, rebuild and repair nations ravaged by war or famine. Humble the hearts of governments and authorities, that they loose the bonds of injustice and liberate the oppressed. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Generous God, provide bread for the hungry, shelter for the homeless, and protection for the vulnerable. Listen to the cries of all who are abused, imprisoned, and who suffer due to pain, anxiety, or illness (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Faithful God, renew our practices of devotion and discipleship. Make us generous in giving, steadfast in prayer, and attentive to your grace amid many distractions. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Redeeming God, you raise us from the dust of death and mark us with the cross of salvation. Strengthen us by the faithfulness of the saints. Restore our joy and lead us by your bountiful grace. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

According to your steadfast love, O God, hear these and all our prayers as we commend them to you; through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM: *What Wondrous Love Is This* Church Choir

OFFERTORY RESPONSE: *Restore in Us, O God* All Stand & Sing
Restore in us, O God, the splendor of your love;
Renew your image in our hearts, and all our sins remove.

O Spirit wake in us the wonder of your pow'r;
From fruitless fear unfurl our lives like springtime bud and flow'r.

Bring us, O Christ to share, the fullness of your joy;
Baptize us in the risen life that death cannot destroy.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944
Music: BAYLOR, Hal H. Hopson, b. 1933
Text © 1989 Hope Publishing Company.

OFFERING PRAYER

P Let us pray.

C Generous God, you feed us with the harvest of the land, and you provide for our every need. Receive our gifts of money, imagination, and labor, and transform them into a feast that welcomes all, in Jesus Christ, our host and our guest. Amen.

DIALOGUE

The presiding minister greets the assembly and invites all present to give thanks.

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 our thanks and praise.

PREFACE *“we praise your name and join their unending hymn:”*

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,

ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,

heav-en and earth are full, full of your glo - ry.

Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

The musical score is written for a two-part setting (Soprano and Bass) in G-flat major (three flats) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with the lyrics 'Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.' written below the notes. The bass line provides a steady harmonic accompaniment.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

As we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is ris'n. Christ will come a - gain.

The musical score is written for a two-part setting (Soprano and Bass) in G-flat major (three flats) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with the lyrics 'Christ has died. Christ is ris'n. Christ will come a - gain.' written below the notes. The bass line provides a steady harmonic accompaniment.

We praise you O God blessed and Holy Trinity, now and forever:

A - men, a - men, a - men. A - men, a - men.

The musical score is written for a two-part setting (Soprano and Bass) in G-flat major (three flats) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with the lyrics 'A - men, a - men, a - men. A - men, a - men.' written below the notes. The bass line provides a steady harmonic accompaniment.

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, forever and ever. Amen.



INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Christ has prepared the feast. Come to the table where all are welcomed home.

C Thanks be to God.

The assembly is seated.

Je - sus, Lamb of God, have mer - cy on us.

Je - sus, bear - er of our sins, have mer - cy on us.

Je - sus, re - deem - er, re - deem - er of the world,

grant us peace, grant us peace.

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION *In the Storm So Long* Chamber Choir

COMMUNION BLESSING

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

C Amen.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

A Compassionate God,

C you have fed us with the bread of heaven. Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage: may our fasting be hunger for justice, our alms, a making of peace, and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

BLESSING

P God, who fills the creation with abundance, Christ, who spreads his arms in forgiveness, Holy Spirit, who draws ever near to us, ✚ bless you and bring you to life everlasting.

C Amen.

RECESSIONAL HYMN: *O Light Whose Splendor Thrills* All Stand & Sing

The musical score is written for a three-part choir (Soprano, Alto, and Tenor/Bass) in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is primarily in the Soprano part, with the Alto and Tenor/Bass parts providing harmonic support. The lyrics are arranged in three lines, with the first line corresponding to the first staff and the second line to the second staff. The lyrics are: 1 O Light whose splendor thrills and gladdens, 2 As twilight hovers near at sunset, 3 In all life's brilliant, time-less moments, with radiance brighter than the sun, and lamps are lit, and children nod, let faithful voices sing your praise.

1 O Light whose splendor thrills and gladdens
2 As twilight hovers near at sunset,
3 In all life's brilliant, time-less moments,

with radiance brighter than the sun,
and lamps are lit, and children nod,
let faithful voices sing your praise,

pure gleam of God's un - end - ing glo - ry,
in eve - ning hymns we lift our voic - es
O Son of God, our life - be - stow - er,


O Je - sus, blest A - noint - ed One:
to Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son, one God.
whose glo - ry light - ens end - less days.

Text: Greek hymn, 3rd cent.; para. Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944
Music: ST. CLEMENT, Clement C. Scholefield, 1839–1904
Text © 1989 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

DISMISSAL

A Marked with the cross of Christ, go forth to love and serve the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return. 

ASSISTING MINISTERS:

ACOLYTES & CRUCIFERS:

Volunteers

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS: Team B

Donna Bean (lead), Sherry Alexander,
Jill Cassel

LECTOR: Volunteer

EUCCHARIST PRESENTORS:

Volunteers

ALTAR GUILD: (Team 3)

Tracy Nault (Co-Captain)
Deb Williams (Co-Captain)
Jill Leitner

GREETER: Volunteer

USHERS: Volunteers



Welcome to Our Lenten Program

Our Lenten service will begin next Wednesday, March 4th and will continue each **Wednesday night** through April 1st. Remember, our Lenten suppers begin at 6:00 pm and our worship service begins at 6:45 pm with the ***Holden Evening Prayer*** as our theme.

- March 4
- March 11
- March 18
- March 25
- April 1

Our humble **thanks** to all the musicians of Holy Comforter who assisted with the service of worship this evening.