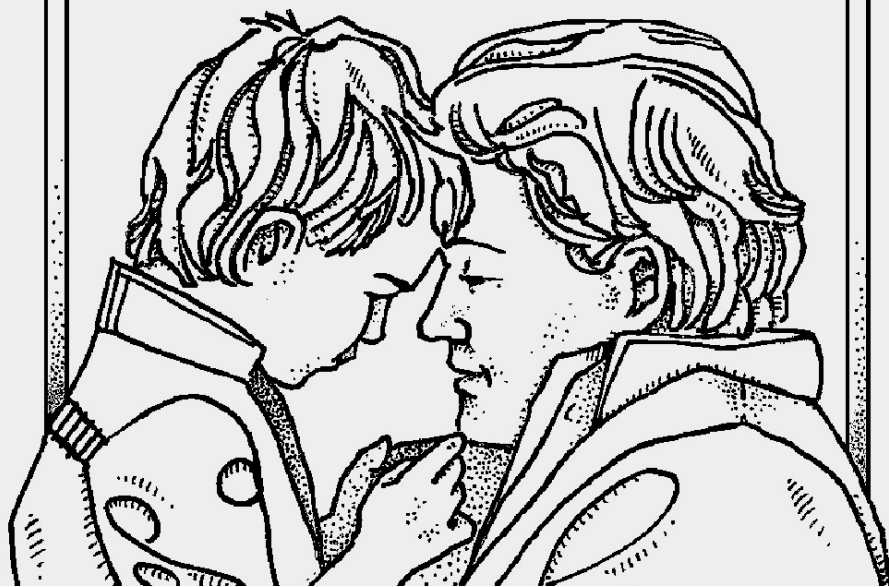


As a father has
compassion for his
children, so the Lord
has compassion for
those who fear him.

P s a l m 1 0 3 : 1 3



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As We Gather

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of our Lenten journey—a season of repentance, reflection, and renewal. Today, we remember a simple yet profound truth: we are dust, and to dust we shall return. This sobering reality humbles us, reminding us of our weakness, our mortality, and our desperate need for God’s mercy. But even as we acknowledge our frailty, we rejoice in the compassion of our heavenly Father, who remembers that we are dust. In His great love, He sent His Son to take on our weakness, to bear our sin, and to conquer death itself. As we gather in worship, may our hearts be drawn to the cross, where God’s mercy meets our need, and where dust is redeemed by grace.

✠ Preparation for Worship ✠

Hymn

17 – Oh, Worship the King

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Confession and Absolution

P As we gather on this solemn day of repentance, we remember the words spoken to Adam: “For dust you are, and to dust you shall return.” We are but dust—frail, sinful, and helpless apart from the mercy of our God. Through the prophet Joel, the Lord calls us: “Return to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning. So rend your heart, and not your garments.” Let us then come before our merciful Father in repentance, confessing our sins and pleading for His grace.

C Almighty and merciful God, we confess that we are sinful from birth, dust formed by Your hands yet corrupted by our own transgressions. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have sought our own ways, our own desires, and the fading treasures of this world. We have been slow to repent and quick to justify our sins. Yet You are compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in mercy. Have mercy on us, O Lord, according to Your unfailing love. Cleanse us from our sin, renew us by Your Spirit, and restore us to the joy of Your salvation. For the sake of Jesus Christ, Your Son, forgive us, renew us, and lead us. Amen.

P In His great mercy, God has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities. Instead, He has placed our sins upon His Son, Jesus Christ, who bore them on the cross. By His death and resurrection, He has won for us full and free forgiveness. As a called servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful. His steadfast love endures forever.

C Amen. Thanks be to God!

✠ The Service of the Word ✠

Salutation

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

P Let us pray...

... who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Old Testament Reading

Joel 2:12-19

¹² “Now, therefore,” says the LORD, “Turn to Me with all your heart, With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.” ¹³ So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the LORD your God, For He is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm. ¹⁴ Who knows if He will turn and relent, And leave a blessing behind Him— A grain offering and a drink offering For the LORD your God?

¹⁵ Blow the trumpet in Zion, Consecrate a fast, Call a sacred assembly;

¹⁶ Gather the people, Sanctify the congregation, Assemble the elders, Gather the children and nursing babes; Let the bridegroom go out from his chamber, And the bride from her dressing room. ¹⁷ Let the priests, who minister to the LORD, Weep between the porch and the altar; Let them say,

“Spare Your people, O LORD, And do not give Your heritage to reproach, That the nations should rule over them. Why should they say among the peoples, ‘Where is their God?’ ” ¹⁸ Then the LORD will be zealous for His land, And pity His people. ¹⁹ The LORD will answer and say to His people,

“Behold, I will send you grain and new wine and oil, And you will be satisfied by them; I will no longer make you a reproach among the nations.

Epistle Reading

2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

²⁰ We implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. ¹ We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. ² For He says: “In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you.” Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. ³ We give no offense in anything, that our ministry may not be blamed. ⁴ But in all things we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much patience, in tribulations, in needs, in distresses, ⁵ in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings; ⁶ by purity, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love, ⁷ by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, ⁸ by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true; ⁹ as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and yet not killed; ¹⁰ as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

Passion History Reading

Jesus’ Betrayal and Arrest

When Jesus had spoken these words, and when they had sung a hymn, He went to the Mount of Olives as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him. They went over the brook Kidron, and they came to a garden named Gethsemane. Then Jesus said to them, “All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: ‘I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’ But after I have been raised I will go before you to Galilee.”

But Peter answered and said to Him, “Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble.” Jesus said to him, “Assuredly I say to you that today, even this night, before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times.” But Peter spoke more vehemently: “Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!” And so said all the disciples.

When He came to the place, Jesus said to His disciples: “Sit here while I go and pray over there. Pray that you may not enter into temptation.” And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, James and John, and He was withdrawn from the others about a stone’s throw. And He began to be

sorrowful, troubled, and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.”

And He went a little farther, and He knelt down. He fell to the ground on His face, and prayed. He said: “Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Let this cup pass from Me; if it is Your will. Not My will, but Yours be done.” Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. And being in agony He prayed more fervently; and His sweat became like great drops of blood, falling down to the ground.

When He rose up from prayer, He came to His disciples and found them sleeping from sorrow. He said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch with Me one hour?” He said to them, “Rise, watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing and ready, but the flesh is weak.”

He went away again a second time and prayed, saying the same words, “O My Father, if this cup cannot pass from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done.”

And He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him. So He left them and went away again and prayed the third time, saying the same words once more. Then He came to His disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough. Behold, the hour has come; the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up, let us be going. He who betrays Me is at hand.” Now Judas, one of the twelve, who betrayed Jesus, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples. He received a detachment of troops and officers from the chief priests and the scribes and elders of the people, and came there with lanterns and torches, and weapons; swords and clubs. And while Jesus was still speaking, this great multitude came, and the one called Judas went before them. Now Judas had given them a sign, saying, “Whomever I kiss, He is the one; take Him, and lead Him away safely.”

Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, “Whom are you seeking?” They answered Him, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus said to them, “I am He.” Then, when He said to them, “I am He”, they went backward and fell to the ground. Then He asked them again, “Whom are you seeking?” And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus answered, “I told you that I am He; therefore if you seek Me, let these go their way”, that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, “Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none.”

Judas drew near to Jesus to kiss Him. He went up to Him, and said to Him, “Hail, Master!” and kissed Him. And Jesus said to him, “Friend, why have you come? Are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?”

When those who were around Jesus saw what was going to happen, they said to Him, “Lord, shall we strike with the sword?” Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him. And suddenly Simon Peter drew out his sword, and struck the high priest’s servant and cut off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus.

But Jesus answered and said, “Permit even this!” And He touched his ear and healed him. Then He said to Peter, “Put your sword into the sheath; for all who take the sword will die by the sword. Do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? But how then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus? Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?”

In that hour Jesus said to the chief priests and captains of the temple and elders who came to Him, “Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? I sat daily with you in the temple, teaching, and you did not lay hands on Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness.” All this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then the disciples forsook Him and fled.

Now a certain young man followed Him, having a linen cloth thrown around his naked body; and the young men laid hold of him. And he left the linen cloth and fled from them naked.

Confession of Faith

Luther’s Explanation of the Second Article

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord.

He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sin, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and His innocent suffering and death.

He did this that I should be His very own, live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in eternal righteousness, innocence, and joy; just as He is risen from death, lives and reigns in eternity.

This is most certainly true.

Hymn

166 – Savior, When in Dust to Thee

Sermon Text Psalm 103:13-14

¹³ As a father pities his children, So the LORD pities those who fear Him.

¹⁴ For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.



Sermon

Remember Dust

Offertory

TLH 179 – On My Heart Imprint Thine Image

On my heart im - print Thine im - age, Bless-ed Je - sus,
King of Grace, That life's rich - es, cares, and plea-sures
Have no pow'r Thee to ef - face. This the su - per -
scrip-tion be: Je - sus, cru - ci - fied for me, Is my Life, my
hope's Foun - da - tion, And my Glo - ry and Sal - va - tion.

General Prayer

The 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.

Benediction

- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.
- C** Amen.

Hymn

798 – God, We Praise You

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