

# **HIS FINAL STEPS**

**LED TO A FIG TREE**

Ash Wednesday

# **ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH | Bangor, WI**

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*February 22, 2023*

## **WELCOME TO WORSHIP**

In the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, we welcome you to St. Paul's. We especially welcome our guests who have joined us today. We pray that your soul will be strengthened by the good news of God's forgiveness through Jesus.

## **ASH WEDNESDAY**

Ash Wednesday begins the Christian's Lenten journey with a reminder of our mortality and a call to repentance. The ancient practice of imposing ashes on the foreheads of Christians gives Ash Wednesday its name; the church father Tertullian (c. 160-215 AD) writes of the practice as a public expression of repentance and of our human frailty that stands in need of Christ. Repentance over sin and our need for forgiveness are the primary emphases of worship on Ash Wednesday. This focus is distinct from the other midweek services offered during Lent, which focus on the historical account of Jesus' suffering and death.

## **PRAYER IN PREPARATION FOR TODAY'S WORSHIP**

Almighty and merciful God, work in me as I walk the final steps with my Savior on his journey to the cross. Create in me such a new and contrite heart that I may truly repent of my sins and obtain your full and gracious pardon. Remind me tonight that I am but dust and ashes without my Savior Jesus. In his name I pray. Amen.

## **FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN**

Children's activity sheets are available near the entrance to the sanctuary. The church basement is also available with a live feed of the worship service along with a Kids' Corner for parents with children to utilize during the service if needed.

## **THANK OFFERING**

You may leave your offering in the plate in the lobby. The QR code to the right will provide the link to our online giving option. If you're visiting with us today you are welcome to give an offering, but don't feel compelled by guilt or embarrassment to do so. God wants all offerings to be made freely and with joy.



# HIS FINAL STEPS

*In our Lenten services, we will walk with our Savior on the final steps of his journey to the cross. How humbling and comforting to learn that Jesus knew exactly what lay ahead. Yet Jesus took his final steps to the cross for you and for me.*

## OPENING HYMN

*Enslaved by Sin and Bound in Chains | 102 (1,3,5)*



1 En - slaved by sin and bound in chains, Be - neath its  
2 Nor gold nor gems could buy our peace, Nor all the  
3 Je - sus, the Lord, the might - y God, An all - suf -  
4 Je - sus the sac - ri - fice be - came To res - cue  
5 A - maz - ing good - ness! Love di - vine! Oh, may our



dread - ful ty - rant sway, And doomed to ev - er -  
world's col - lect - ed store Suf - fice to pur - chase  
fi - cient ran - som paid. O match - less price! His  
guilt - y souls from hell; The spot - less, bleed - ing,  
grate - ful hearts a - dore The match - less grace nor



last - ing pains We wretch - ed, guilt - y cap - tives lay.  
our re - lease; A thou - sand worlds were all too poor.  
pre - cious blood For vile, re - bel - lious trai - tors shed.  
dy - ing Lamb Be - neath a - veng - ing jus - tice fell.  
yield to sin Nor wear its cru - el fet - ters more!

*please stand*

## INTRODUCTION TO LENT

M: Brothers and sisters in Christ, God created us to know joy in communion with him, to love all humanity, and to live in harmony with all creation. But sin separates us from God, our neighbors, and creation, and so we do not enjoy the life our Creator intended for us. By our sin we grieve our Father, who does not desire us to come under his judgment but to turn to him and live. Therefore, God in his mercy has

sent our Lord Jesus Christ to take our place under the law, to suffer for us, and to die the death we deserve. God made Jesus, who had no sin, to be sin for us so that in him, we might become the righteousness of God.

During the 40 days of Lent, we fix our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfector of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of God. The time of Lent reminds us that to know Christ and the power of his resurrection, we must also know the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death. As disciples of the Lord Jesus, we are called to struggle against everything that leads us away from love of God and neighbor.

I invite you, therefore, to confess your sins, ask our Father for forgiveness, and commit yourselves to this struggle. Let us be silent. Let us be still. Let us pause now for a time of reflection and self-examination. *(silent self-examination)*

## CONFESSION

M: Most holy and merciful Father,

**C: We confess to you and to one another that we have sinned by our own fault, by our own grievous fault in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.**

M: We have not loved you with our whole heart and mind and strength.

**C: We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

M: We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven.

**C: Have mercy on us, Lord.**

M: We have been deaf to your call to serve as Christ served us.

**C: We have not been true to the mind of Christ.**

M: We have grieved the Holy Spirit.

**C: Have mercy on us, Lord.**

M: We confess to you, Lord, all our past unfaithfulness.

**C: The pride, hypocrisy, and impatience in our lives –**

M: We confess to you, Lord, our self-indulgent appetites and ways, our manipulation of other people,

**C: Our anger when our selfish aims are denied and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves.**

M: We confess to you, Lord, our love of worldly goods and comforts,

**C: Our dishonesty in daily life and work,**

M: We confess to you, Lord, our failure to show the faith that is in us,

**C: Our negligence in worship and prayer,**

M: Forgive us, Lord, for the wrongs we have done.

**C: For our blindness to human need and suffering and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,**

M: Forgive us, Lord, for all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward others,

**C: For our prejudice and contempt for those who differ from us,**

M: Forgive us, Lord, for what we think, say, or do that is at variance with your will,

**C: For failure to think, say, or do as you have commanded us,**

M: Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us.

**C: Hear us, Lord, for your mercy is great.**

M: Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, does not desire the death of sinners but rather that they turn from their wickedness and live. Therefore, in the name of the Father, Son ✚ and Holy Spirit, I forgive you all your sins. You are a new creation!

During these days of Lent, let us implore God to give us renewal and his Holy Spirit. May we continue to abide in the true faith and at the last be received by him through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

*be seated*

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# *The Word*

## **FIRST LESSON**

*Isaiah 59:12-20*

- <sup>12</sup>Yes, our rebellious deeds are many before you,  
and our sins testify against us.  
Our rebellious deeds are with us,  
and as for our guilty deeds, we are aware of them.
- <sup>13</sup>Those deeds are rebellion and treachery against the Lord.  
We turn back from following our God.  
We incite oppression and apostasy.  
We conceive and mutter deceitful words from our hearts.
- <sup>14</sup>Justice is turned back,  
and righteousness stands far away,  
for truth stumbles in the city square,  
and honesty cannot enter it.
- <sup>15</sup>The truth is missing,  
and anyone who turns from evil makes himself prey.  
The Lord looked and saw something evil—  
there was no justice.
- <sup>16</sup>He saw that there was no one.  
He was appalled that there was no one who could intervene.  
So his own arm worked salvation for him,  
and his own righteousness supported him.
- <sup>17</sup>He clothed himself with righteousness like armor  
and wore a helmet of salvation on his head.  
He dressed in garments for vengeance,  
and he wrapped himself with zeal like a cloak.
- <sup>18</sup>He will repay in full what they have earned,  
namely, wrath to his foes and full payment to his enemies.  
He will repay even the distant coastlands.
- <sup>19</sup>From the west they will fear the Lord's name,  
and from the rising of the sun they will fear his glory,  
for he will come like a raging river,  
driven by the Spirit of the Lord.

<sup>20</sup>Then a redeemer will come for Zion  
and for those in Jacob who turn from rebellion.  
This is the declaration of the Lord.

## PSALM OF THE DAY

*Psalm 51a, p.86*



Have mercy on me, O God,\*  
according to your unfailing love.

Wash away all my iniquity,\*  
and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions,\*  
and my sin is always before me.

### ***Refrain***

Against you, you only, have I sinned\*  
and done what is evil in your sight.

Surely I was sinful at birth,\*  
sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

Hide your face from my sins,\*  
and blot out all my iniquity.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation,\*  
and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

**Glory be 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.**

### ***Refrain***

## SECOND LESSON

*2 Corinthians 7:8-13a*

<sup>8</sup>For even if I caused you sorrow with my letter, I do not regret it (even though I did regret it, for I see that my letter caused you sorrow—yet only for a little while).

<sup>9</sup>Now I rejoice, not because you were made to feel sorrow, but because this sorrow resulted in repentance. Yes, you were made sorry in a godly way. So you were not harmed in any way by us. <sup>10</sup>In fact, godly sorrow produces repentance, which leads to salvation, leaving no regret. On the other hand, worldly sorrow produces death.

<sup>11</sup>Yes, look what godly sorrow produced in you: what diligence, what eagerness to clear yourself, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what zeal, what correction! In every way you proved yourselves to be pure in this matter. <sup>12</sup>So although I wrote to you, it was not because of the one who did what was wrong, or because of the one who was harmed by it. I wrote instead so that your genuine concern for us would be revealed to you in the sight of God. <sup>13</sup>For that reason we have been comforted.

*please stand*

## GOSPEL

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

<sup>1</sup>“Be careful that you do not do your righteous works in front of people, so that they will notice. If you do, you have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

<sup>2</sup>So whenever you perform acts of mercy, do not sound a trumpet for yourself, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets to be praised by people.

Amen I tell you: They have received their reward. <sup>3</sup>Instead, when you perform acts of mercy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. <sup>4</sup>Then your acts of mercy will be in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.

<sup>5</sup>“Whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites. They love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by people.

Amen I tell you: They have received their reward. <sup>6</sup>But whenever you pray, go into your private room, close your door, and pray to your Father who is unseen. And your Father, who sees what others cannot see, will reward you.

<sup>16</sup>“Whenever you fast, do not make yourself look sad like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces to show everyone that they are fasting. Amen I tell you: They have received their reward. <sup>17</sup>But when you fast, anoint your head and wash



your face, <sup>18</sup>so that it is not apparent to people that you are fasting, but only to your Father who sees what is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

<sup>19</sup>"Do not store up treasures for yourselves on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup>But store up treasures for yourselves in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup>Because where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

## HYMN OF THE DAY

*In Adam We Have All Been One* | 396



1 In Ad - am we have all been one, One  
 2 We fled our God, and los - ing him, We  
 3 But your strong love, it sought us still And  
 4 O Sav - ior, when we loved you not, You  
 5 Send us your Spir - it; teach us truth To



huge re - bel - lious man; We all have fled that  
 lost our broth - er too. Each sin - gly sought and  
 sent your on - ly Son That we might hear his  
 loved and saved us all; O great good Shep - herd  
 purge our van - i - ty. From fan - cied wis - dom,



eve - ning voice That sought us as we ran.  
 claimed his own; Each man his broth - er slew.  
 shep - herd - voice And, hear - ing him, be one.  
 of man - kind, Oh, hear us when we call.  
 self - sought ways, O Sav - ior, set us free.

6 Then shall our song united rise  
 To your eternal throne,  
 Where with the Father evermore  
 And Spirit you are one.

### His Final Steps Led to a Fig Tree

<sup>12</sup>The next day, after they had set out from Bethany, Jesus was hungry. <sup>13</sup>When he saw a fig tree in leaf in the distance, he went to see if he might find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, since it was not the season for figs. <sup>14</sup>Jesus said to it, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again!" And his disciples were listening.

<sup>20</sup>As they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered down to the roots. <sup>21</sup>Peter remembered and said, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered."

<sup>22</sup>Jesus replied, "Have faith in God. <sup>23</sup>Amen I tell you: Whoever says to this mountain, 'Be lifted up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. <sup>24</sup>Therefore I tell you, everything that you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. <sup>25</sup>Whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins."

### CONFESSION OF FAITH

*The Second Article of the Apostles' Creed*

**All: I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

M: What does this mean?

**All: 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 creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver but with his holy, precious blood and with his innocent suffering and death. All this he did that I should be his own, and live under him in his kingdom, and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as he has risen from death and lives and rules eternally. This is most certainly true.**

## OFFERING

*"The one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly. The one who sows generously will also reap generously. Each one should give as he has determined in his heart, not reluctantly or under pressure, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor 9:6,7).*

*please stand*

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## The Sacrament

*Our Lord Jesus has given us a holy supper in which we receive his true body and blood for the forgiveness of sins and the strengthening of our faith. In this supper we also bear witness to the fellowship we share as confessors of the truth, and we proclaim his death until he returns. See p.156 in the hymnal for preparation.*

M: Our compassionate and almighty God calls us in mercy to repentance and renewal this Lenten season. The gospel is the source and power of that renewal. Therefore, with recognition of our need for forgiveness and God's gracious gift of the gospel in the body and blood of his Son in the Sacrament, we approach his table with repentant and thankful hearts.

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

M: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C: Amen.**



## O CHRIST, LAMB OF GOD

(no musical intro)

C: O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;

have mer - cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God,

you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.

O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;

grant us your peace. A - men.

*be seated*

## DISTRIBUTION

*"The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a communion of the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a communion of the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one bread" (1 Corinthians 10:16,17).*

*Please follow the directions of the ushers during distribution.*



# DISTRIBUTION HYMN

*Come to Calvary's Holy Mountain* | 106



1 Come to Cal-v'ry's ho - ly moun-tain, Sin - ners, ru - ined  
 2 Come in pov - er - ty and mean-ness, Come de - filed, with -  
 3 Come in sor - row and con - tri - tion, Wound-ed, par - a -  
 4 He that drinks shall live for - ev - er; 'Tis a soul - re -



by the fall; Here a pure and heal - ing foun - tain  
 out, with - in; From in - fec - tion and un - clean-ness,  
 lyzed, and blind; Here the guilt - y, free re - mis - sion,  
 new - ing flood. God is faith - ful; God will nev - er



Flows to you, to me, to all, In a full, per -  
 From the lep - ro - sy of sin, Wash your robes and  
 Here the trou - bled, peace may find. Health this foun - tain  
 Break his cov - e - nant of blood, Signed when our Re -



pet - ual tide, O - pened when our Sav - ior died.  
 make them white; You shall walk with God in light.  
 will re - store; He that drinks shall thirst no more.  
 deem - er died, Sealed when he was glo - ri - fied.



# DISTRIBUTION HYMN

*Christ, the Life of All the Living* | 114



1 Christ, the Life of all the liv - ing, Christ, the Death of  
2 Thou, ah, thou hast tak - en on thee Bonds and stripes, a  
3 Thou hast borne the smit - ing on - ly That my wounds might  
4 Heart - less scof - fers did sur-round thee, Treat - ing thee with  
5 Thou hast suf - fered men to bruise thee That from pain I



death, our foe, Who, thy - self for me once giv - ing  
cru - el rod; Pain and scorn were heaped up - on thee,  
all be whole; Thou hast suf - fered, sad and lone - ly,  
cru - el scorn, And with pierc - ing thorns they crowned thee.  
might be free; False - ly did thy foes ac - cuse thee—



To the dark - est depths of woe— Through thy suf-f'rings,  
O thou sin - less Son of God! Thus didst thou my  
Rest to give my wea - ry soul; Yea, the curse of  
All dis - grace thou, Lord, hast borne That as thine thou  
Thence I gain se - cu - ri - ty. Com - fort - less thy



death, and mer - it I e - ter - nal life in - her - it.  
soul de - liv - er From the bonds of sin for - ev - er.  
God en - dur - ing, Bless - ing un - to me se - cur - ing.  
might - est own me And with heav'n - ly glo - ry crown me.  
soul did lan - guish Me to com - fort in my an - guish.



Thou - sand, thou - sand thanks shall be, Dear - est Je - sus, un - to thee.  
Thou - sand, thou - sand thanks shall be, Dear - est Je - sus, un - to thee.  
Thou - sand, thou - sand thanks shall be, Dear - est Je - sus, un - to thee.  
Thou - sand, thou - sand thanks shall be, Dear - est Je - sus, un - to thee.  
Thou - sand, thou - sand thanks shall be, Dear - est Je - sus, un - to thee.

6 Thou has suffered great affliction  
And hast borne it patiently,  
Even death by crucifixion,  
Fully to atone for me.  
Thou didst choose to be tormented  
That my doom should be prevented.  
Thousand, thousand thanks shall be,  
Dearest Jesus, unto thee.

7 Then, for all that wrought my pardon,  
For thy sorrows deep and sore,  
For thine anguish in the garden,  
I will thank thee evermore,  
Thank thee for thy groaning, sighing,  
For thy bleeding and thy dying,  
For that last triumphant cry,  
And shall praise thee, Lord, on high.

## DISTRIBUTION HYMN

*Savior, When in Dust to You* | 124

*as needed*



1 Sav - ior, when in dust to you Low we bow in  
2 By your help - less in - fant years, By your life of  
3 By your hour of dire de - spair, By your ag - o -  
4 By your deep ex - pir - ing groan, By the sad se -



hom - age due, When, re - pen - tant, to the skies  
want and tears, By your days of deep dis - tress  
ny of prayer, By the cross, the nail, the thorn,  
pul - chral stone, By the vault whose dark a - bode



Scarce we lift our weep - ing eyes; Oh, by all your  
In the sav - age wil - der - ness, By the dread, mys -  
Pierc - ing spear, and tor - turing scorn, By the gloom that  
Held in vain the ris - ing God, Oh, from earth to



pains and woe Suf - fered once for us be - low, Bend - ing  
te - rious hour Of th' in - sult - ing tempt - er's pow'r, Turn, oh,  
veiled the skies O'er the dread - ful sac - ri - fice, Lis - ten  
heav'n re - stored, Might - y, re - as - cend - ed Lord, Bend - ing



from your throne on high, Hear our pen - i - ten - tial cry!  
turn a fav - 'ring eye, Hear our pen - i - ten - tial cry!  
to our hum - ble sigh, Hear our pen - i - ten - tial cry!  
from your throne on high, Hear our pen - i - ten - tial cry!

*please stand*

## **PRAYER**

M: O God, as you called the Israelites to repent of their sins, you have now called us once again to renewal. Never let us lose our way. Guide us on our Lenten journey that we may arrive at the celebration of the resurrection of your Son, ready once more to rejoice in our passage with Christ from death to life, from despair to hope, trusting solely in the mercies of Christ, our Lord, in whose name we join to pray:

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

**C: 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.**

## **BLESSING**

M: May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine on us.

**C: May God bless us still so that all the ends of the earth will fear him. Amen.**

*be seated*





1 Glo - ry be to Je - sus, Who in bit - ter pains  
 2 Grace and life e - ter - nal In that blood I find;  
 3 Blest through end - less a - ges Be the pre - cious stream  
 4 A - bel's blood for ven - geance Plead - ed to the skies,  
 5 Oft as earth ex - ult - ing Lifts its praise on high,



Poured for me the life - blood From his sa - cred veins.  
 Blest be his com - pas - sion, In - fi - nite - ly kind.  
 Which from end - less tor - ments Did the world re - deem.  
 But the blood of Je - sus For our par - don cries.  
 An - gel hosts re - joic - ing Make their glad re - ply.

6 Lift we, then, our voices,  
 Swell the mighty flood;  
 Louder still and louder  
 Praise the precious blood!



YOU ARE  
DUST  
AND TO  
DUST  
YOU SHALL  
RETURN





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## **SERVING IN WORSHIP**

**Presiding Minister**  
**Accompanist**

Pastor Brock Groth  
Irene Bakken

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