

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH
1123 Washington St. Gloucester, MA 01930
www.stpaulcapeann.org 978-283-6550
Rev. LaDonna E. Thomas, Pastor
Ted Stoddard, Music Director
Anne Wheeler, Office Administrator
Bill Maki, Building Manager
office@stpaulcapeann.org

Ash Wednesday - March 2, 2022 - 12:00 and 7:00 p.m.

THANK YOU for joining us in our efforts to gather in safe and healthy ways by sanitizing your hands upon entry and maintaining social distance from those not in your household. Masks are recommended, except when eating or drinking.

HOLY COMMUNION is celebrated in this worship service. All who desire to receive God's gifts of love, forgiveness, and grace through the presence of Jesus in bread and wine are welcome to participate. At the direction of an usher, proceed to receive the bread and continue to the tray of cups filled with wine (red) or grape juice (white). Place the empty cup in the available basket as you return to your seat by the side aisle.



OFFERINGS to support the mission and ministry of St. Paul Lutheran Church may be placed in the offering plate at the back of the church as you enter or leave. Electronic giving is also available at this link: <https://bitly.com/>

ORDER OF WORSHIP

**Indicates congregation is to stand*

Bold Print = Congregational Responses

INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

On Ash Wednesday we begin our forty-day journey toward Easter with a day of fasting and repentance. Marking our foreheads with dust, we acknowledge that we die and return to the earth. At the same time, the dust traces the life-giving cross indelibly marked on our foreheads at baptism. While we journey through Lent to return to God, we have already been reconciled to God through Christ. We humbly pray for God to make our hearts clean while we rejoice that “now is the day of salvation.” Returning to our baptismal call, we more intentionally bear the fruits of mercy and justice in the world.

PRELUDE

Prelude on ‘Old 124th’

Healey Willan

*GATHERING HYMN

Eternal Lord of Love, Behold Your Church

ELW 321

*GREETING

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

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. Amen.

FIRST READING:

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

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?' "

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL**

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

The holy gospel according to St. Matthew.
Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹"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.

²"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. 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.

⁵"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. 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.

¹⁶"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. 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.

¹⁹“Do 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.”

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

The Rev. LaDonna Thomas

CONFESSION OF SIN

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most holy and merciful God,
we confess to you and to one another, and before the whole company of heaven, that we have sinned by our fault, by our own fault, by our own most grievous fault, 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, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven. We have shut our ears 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, O God.

We confess to you, O God,
Our past unfaithfulness, the pride, envy, hypocrisy, and apathy that have infected our lives, we confess to you.

We confess to you, O God,
Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people.

We confess to you, O God,
Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to share the faith that is in us.

We confess to you, O God,
Our neglect of human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty.

We confess to you, O God,
Our false judgments, our uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us.

We confess to you, O God,
Our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us.

Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us.
Hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

(Those who desire to receive the imposition come forward to the pastor. Using a Q-tip, A cross of ashes is traced on the forehead with these words: "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.")

After all have returned to their places, the congregation stands, and the service continues:

Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,
that we may show forth your glory in the world.
By the cross and passion of your Son, our Savior,
bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.

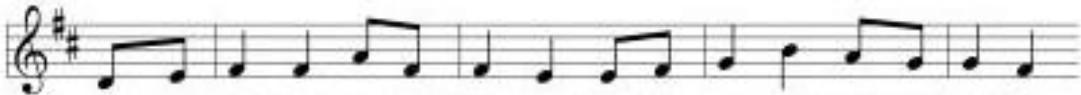
Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. **Amen.**

*HYMN OF THE DAY

Heal This Old Heart

(ASG 16)

Heal This Old Heart



1 Heal this old heart; it is break-ing. Make it new, Lord, spir - it wak-ing.
2 Lord, have mer - cy, love un - fail - ing; with com - pas - sion touch the ail - ing.
3 Sac - ri - fic - ing? I would bring it. But I of - fer bro - ken spir - it.



Cast me not, Lord, from your pres-ence; Ho - ly Spir - it, fill my es - sence.
Wash a - way, Lord, things de - struc - tive and all e - vil, that I may live.
I am yours, Lord, for the tak - ing. Heal this old heart; it is break-ing.

Text: Rusty Edwards, based on Psalm 51

Music: TRYGGARE KAN INGEN VARA, Swedish folk tune

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*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Drawn close to the heart of God, we offer these prayers for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Renew your church, O God. When we have drifted from our call to proclaim repentance and to guide your people toward justice, lead us back to you. Encourage believers who hold the church's doors open to those who have felt excluded. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Renew your creation, O God. Transform parched places into watered gardens and preserve every creature that awaits the arrival of spring. Turn each of us from practices of environmental exploitation to become responsible stewards of all you have made. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Renew our civic life, O God. Teach those in authority to advocate for the liberation of all who are oppressed and grant them courage to make difficult decisions. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Renew our lives, O God. Spare your people from diseases of the body, mind, or spirit and send healing to those overcome by illness or grief especially those on our prayer list and those we hold dear in our hearts. Restore to us the joy of your salvation. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Renew this congregation, O God. During these forty days of Lent, confirm our sense of mission and expand our imagination for ministry. Deepen our faith, increase our love, and draw us into your unfolding work of healing and restoration. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

As we mark ashes on our foreheads, we give you praise, O God, for all the saints who died and yet are alive with you. Receive us with them into your eternal embrace. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Accept the prayers we bring, O God, on behalf of a world in need, for the sake of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

***OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray.

God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

*THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth. In mercy for our fallen world you gave your only Son, that all those who believe in him should not perish but have eternal life.

We give thanks to you for the salvation you have prepared for us through Jesus Christ. Send now your Holy Spirit into our hearts, that we may receive our Lord with a living faith as he comes to us in his holy supper.
Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

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

After supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

***LORD'S PRAYER**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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**

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

COMMUNION

***PRAYER**

Let us pray.

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**

Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

***DISMISSAL**

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.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Jesus, I Will Ponder Now

Paul Manz