

LISTEN TO  
**HIM**  
LENT 2024

*Ash Wednesday*



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

E C C L E S I A S T E S 3 : 2 0

Ash Wednesday

February 14, 2024



# GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

## ***God's Word for the beginning of Lent***

Life is busy. So many things that compete for our attention! It's easy to think of religion as just another of many activities to cram into our schedules. Sometimes, perhaps, the schedule is just too crowded.

So, Jesus lovingly whispers into our ear, "Ashes to ashes. Dust to dust." Those are the words spoken as a dead body is planted in the ground. The reality is that our time in this world is so short. After comes eternity, spent in one of two very different places. Jesus wants us to grasp that somber truth so we rethink where He should fall among all our priorities. Death can come at any time. So now is the time to cling to Christ in true repentance. Not later. Now. There is no higher priority.

## ***Before Worship***

Take time for prayer and to review the lessons and the service notes.  
For personal preparation for Communion, see Red Hymnal: p.156.

## ***General Information***

The restrooms are located in the fellowship hall.  
Visitors – welcome, and please take a moment and sign the guestbook in the fellowship hall.  
If you need special assistance for communion, please notify an usher and/or the pastor.

## ***Serving in Worship***

Music: Rachel Halldorson  
Ushers: Mike Jensen, Kurt Knurr  
Pastor: Wayne Halldorson  
Pastor's Cell: 903-717-1922  
Pastor's Email: [grace.tx.pastor@gmail.com](mailto:grace.tx.pastor@gmail.com)

## ***Church Information***

Address: 6788 FM 115 - Scroggins, TX 75480  
Phone: 903-860-3749  
Website: [www.graceneartheLake.com](http://www.graceneartheLake.com)  
Email: [GraceNearTheLake@gmail.com](mailto:GraceNearTheLake@gmail.com)  
Facebook: [facebook.com/GraceNearTheLake1](https://facebook.com/GraceNearTheLake1)  
Prayer Requests: [prayers.grace.wels@gmail.com](mailto:prayers.grace.wels@gmail.com) / text to 520-236-9673

### ***T-Loop Hearing Assistance***

*If you have a hearing aid with a T-coil, you can connect it to the T-Loop device installed throughout the church building. Headsets are available for anyone needing hearing assistance. Personal ear-buds can also be used with a head set. See Kris Martinson if you need assistance.*



# ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP SERVICE WITH COMMUNION

## 654 *Jesus Sinners Does Receive*

CW 654 sts. 1–2



1 Je - sus sin - ners does re - ceive; oh, may all this  
2 We de - serve but grief and shame, yet his words, rich



say - ing pon - der who in sin's de - lu - sions live  
grace re - veal - ing, par - don, peace, and life pro - claim;



and from God and heav - en wan - der. Here is hope for  
here their ills have per - fect heal - ing who with hum - ble



all who grieve: Je - sus sin - ners does re - ceive.  
hearts be - lieve: Je - sus sin - ners does re - ceive.

Text: tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt.; Erdmann Neumeister, 1671–1756, abr.  
Tune: Neu-verfertigtes Darmstädtisches Gesang-Buch, Darmstadt, 1699  
Text and tune: Public domain

## ***Invocation***

We begin the season of Lent today in the name of the Father and of  
the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## ***Introduction to Lent***

In the far reaches of eternity the Son of God accepted His role in the divine plan to free human creatures from the power of Satan, sin, and death. God announced this plan at the closed gates of the Garden when He outlined the confrontation between the Seed and the serpent. God arranged for the plan as He selected a human ancestry for His Son and predicted the plan in the writings of the prophets. With this plan in mind, the God-man Jesus walked into the waters of the Jordan to be baptized and was led into the wilderness to face the devil's temptations. This was the plan He shared with his followers. When they confessed their faith in Him, "he then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again" (Mark 8:31). Although the disciples did not fully understand the plan, Jesus understood the plan perfectly and knew that the plan was central in His life and the life of the world. A week before His death, Jesus said, "Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour" (John 12:27).

Not until after the outpouring of the Spirit on Pentecost did Jesus' followers grasp the full meaning of the master's suffering, death, and resurrection. Then, fully understanding and firmly believing, they carried out the Savior's command to preach the gospel to every creature. Joined by Paul and many more, they proclaimed in temple courts and on dusty roads, in public squares and private homes, in palaces and prisons the forgiveness of sins gained by Jesus' passion and guaranteed by His resurrection.

## ***Confession & Absolution***

Brothers and sisters in Christ, God created us to know joy in fellowship with Him, to love all people, 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 forty days of Lent, we fix our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter 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.

Let us confess our sins, asking our Heavenly Father for forgiveness, and commit ourselves once again to this struggle.

Most holy and merciful Father,  
**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.**

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 the Holy Spirit.  
**Have mercy on us, Lord.**

We have placed our wants before your will.  
We have gratified the desires of our sinful nature.  
We have merited your punishment now and forever.  
**Have mercy on us, Lord.**

We confess to you, Lord, all our past unfaithfulness.  
The pride, hypocrisy, and impatience in our lives  
**we confess to you, O Lord.**

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, our manipulation of other  
people, our anger when our selfish aims are denied, and our envy of  
those more fortunate than ourselves  
**we confess to you, O Lord.**

Our love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonesty in daily  
life and work, our negligence in worship and prayer, and our failure to  
show the faith that is in us  
**we confess to you, O Lord.**

Forgive us, Lord, for the wrongs we have done. For our blindness to human need and suffering and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,  
**forgive us, Lord.**

For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward others, and for our prejudice and contempt for those who differ from us,  
**forgive us, Lord.**

For whatever we think or say or do that is at variance with your will,  
**forgive us, Lord.**

Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us.  
**Hear us, Lord, for your mercy is great.**

### **654 Jesus Sinners Does Receive**

CW 654 st. 4

4 I, a sin - ner, come to you with a pen - i -  
tent con - fes - sion. Sav - ior, show me mer - cy, too;  
grant for all my sins re - mis - sion. Let these words my  
soul re - lieve: Je - sus sin - ners does re - ceive.

The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below the notes. The first staff begins with a '4' indicating the time signature. The piece ends with a double bar line on the fourth staff.

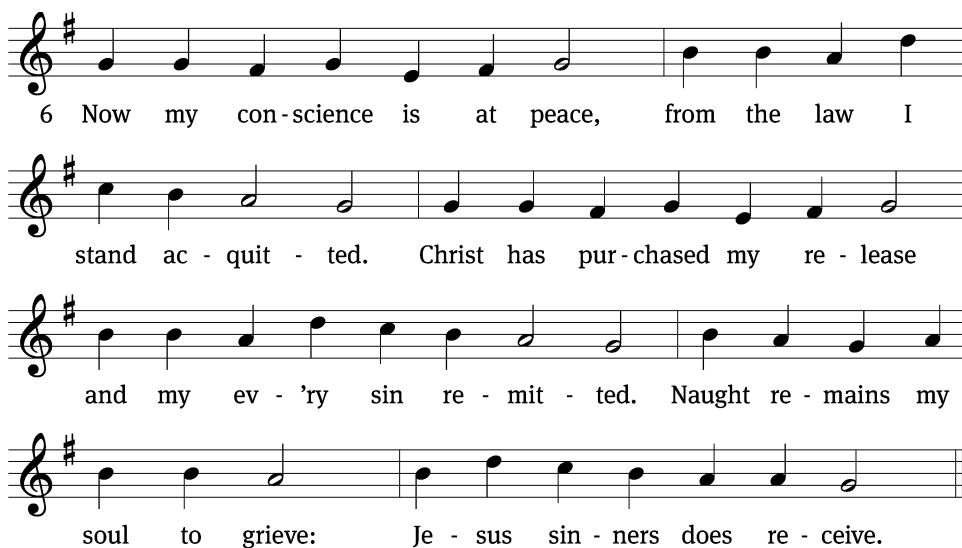
Text: tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt.; Erdmann Neumeister, 1671–1756, abr.  
Tune: Neu-verfertigtes Darmstädtisches Gesang-Buch, Darmstadt, 1699  
Text and tune: Public domain

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. He sent His Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins and for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

### **654 Jesus Sinners Does Receive**

CW 654 st. 6



6 Now my con-science is at peace, from the law I  
stand ac-quit-ted. Christ has pur-chased my re-lease  
and my ev-'ry sin re-mit-ted. Naught re-mains my  
soul to grieve: Je-sus sin-ners does re-ceive.

Text: tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt.; Erdmann Neumeister, 1671–1756, abr.  
Tune: Neu-verfertigtes Darmstädtisches Gesang-Buch, Darmstadt, 1699  
Text and tune: Public domain

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.

**Amen.**



The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

### ***Prayer of the Day***

Let us pray:

Almighty and merciful God, you never despise what you have made and always forgive those who turn to you. Create in us such new and contrite hearts that we may truly repent of our sins and obtain your full and gracious pardon; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **THE WORD**

### ***First Reading***

Joel 2:12–19

<sup>12</sup>“Even now,” declares the LORD,  
“return to me with all your heart,  
with fasting and weeping and mourning.”

<sup>13</sup>Rend your heart  
and not your garments.  
Return to the LORD your God,  
for he is gracious and compassionate,  
slow to anger and abounding in love,  
and he relents from sending calamity.

<sup>14</sup>Who knows? He may turn and relent  
and leave behind a blessing—

grain offerings and drink offerings  
for the LORD your God.

<sup>15</sup>Blow the trumpet in Zion,  
declare a holy fast,  
call a sacred assembly.

<sup>16</sup>Gather the people,  
consecrate the assembly;  
bring together the elders,  
gather the children,  
those nursing at the breast.

Let the bridegroom leave his room  
and the bride her chamber.

<sup>17</sup>Let the priests, who minister before the LORD,  
weep between the portico and the altar.

Let them say, "Spare your people, LORD.  
Do not make your inheritance an object of scorn,  
a byword among the nations.

Why should they say among the peoples,  
'Where is their God?' "

<sup>18</sup>Then the LORD was jealous for his land  
and took pity on his people.

<sup>19</sup>The LORD replied to them:

"I am sending you grain, new wine and olive oil,  
enough to satisfy you fully;  
never again will I make you  
an object of scorn to the nations.

## ***Psalm 51D God, Be Merciful to Me***



1 God, be mer - ci - ful to me, on your grace I  
4 Bro - ken, hum - bled to the dust by your wrath and  
5 Gra - cious God, my heart re - new, make my spir - it



rest my plea; your com - pas - sions o - ver - flow,  
judg - ment just, let my con - trite heart re - joice  
right and true; let me not a - ban - doned be,



blot out my trans - gres - sions now; wash me, make me  
and in glad - ness hear your voice; from my sins, O  
let your Spir - it dwell in me; your sal - va - tion's



pure with - in, cleanse, O cleanse me from my sin.  
hide your face, blot them out in bound - less grace.  
joy im - part, stead - fast make my will - ing heart.

## ***Second Reading***

Revelation 3:1–3

<sup>1</sup>“To the angel [pastor] of the church in Sardis write:

These are the words of him who holds the seven-Spirit of God [the Holy Spirit] and the seven stars. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. <sup>2</sup>Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have found your deeds unfinished in the sight of my God. <sup>3</sup>Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; hold it fast, and repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.

**Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God.**

**“Turn away from all your offenses,” declares the Sovereign LORD.**

**“I take no pleasure in the death of anyone. Repent and live!”**

***Gospel Reading***

Luke 12:13–21

<sup>13</sup>Someone in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.”

<sup>14</sup>Jesus replied, “Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?” <sup>15</sup>Then he said to them, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.”

<sup>16</sup>And he told them this parable: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. <sup>17</sup>He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’

<sup>18</sup>“Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. <sup>19</sup>And I’ll say to myself, “You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.” ’

<sup>20</sup>“But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’

<sup>21</sup>“This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.”



1 Je - sus, I will pon-der now on your ho - ly pas - sion;  
 4 Grant that I your pas-sion view with re - pent - ant griev - ing;  
 5 If my sins give me a - larm and my con-science grieve me,  
 6 Gra - cious - ly my faith re - new; help me bear my cross - es,



with your Spir - it me en - dow for such med - i - ta - tion.  
 let me not bring shame to you by un - ho - ly liv - ing.  
 let your cross my fear dis - arm, peace of con-science give me.  
 learn - ing hum - ble - ness from you, peace mid pain and loss - es.



Grant that I in love and faith may the im - age cher - ish  
 How could I re - fuse to shun ev - 'ry sin - ful plea - sure  
 Help me see for - give - ness won by your ho - ly pas - sion.  
 May I give you love for love! Hear me, O my Sav - ior,



of your suf - f'ring, pain, and death that I may not per - ish.  
 since for me God's on - ly Son suf - fered with - out mea - sure?  
 If for me he slays his Son, God must have com - pas - sion!  
 that I may in heav'n a - bove sing your praise for - ev - er.

### Sermon Text

John 17:24–26

<sup>24</sup>“Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

<sup>25</sup>Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. <sup>26</sup>I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.”

## ***Sermon***

John 17:24-26 *"It's ALL worth it!"*

### ***Nicene Creed***

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,  
begotten, not made, of one being with the Father.**

**Through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,  
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.**

**He suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.**

**He ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who in unity with the Father and the Son  
is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.**

**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

## ***Prayer of the Church***

Now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation. Let us pray for the people of God in Christ Jesus that, through repentance and faith in the gospel, we all may remain secure in your love.

Lord God, gracious Father, we thank you for setting your Son's sacrifice between us and sin's reward. By your Spirit work in us through the gospel, give us repentant hearts, make our faith firm in Christ, and enliven us to serve you faithfully.

**Have mercy upon us, Lord, according to your unfailing love.**

Lord God, almighty Father, renew your Church throughout the world that it may constantly look to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. Bless us with faithful ministers who always proclaim Christ's cross and resurrection for the salvation of the world.

**Have mercy upon us, Lord, according to your unfailing love.**

Lord God, loving Father, in your mercy you abundantly supply our needs of body and soul. Create in us the mind of Christ, that in humility and generosity—considering not only our own interests, but also the interests of others—we may be merciful to those in need. Direct our efforts to help poor, lonely, troubled, and ill people.

**Have mercy upon us, Lord, according to your unfailing love.**

Lord God, heavenly Father, comfort all who are mourning the death of people they loved. Lift their eyes to the cross where your Son defeated death and to the empty tomb where He assured us that we will live with Him forever. Teach us to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

**Have mercy upon us, Lord, according to your unfailing love.**

Lord God, heavenly Father, look with favor upon all sick, injured, and recovering people. If it be your will deliver them from their infirmities. Let them hear of your unfailing love.

**Have mercy upon us, Lord, according to your unfailing love.**

Hear us for the sake of Him who was crucified for us and always intercedes on our behalf, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Amen.**

*Offering*

## **THE SACRAMENT**

*Preface*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who brought the gift of salvation to all people by His death on the tree of the cross so that the devil, who overcame us by a tree, would in turn by a tree be overcome. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:



7 Je - sus sin - ners does re - ceive, e - ven I have  
 been for - giv - en. And when I this earth must leave,  
 I shall find an o - pen heav - en. Dy - ing, still to  
 him I cleave: Je - sus sin - ners does re - ceive.

### *Prayer of Thanksgiving*

We give thanks to you, O God, through your dear Son, Jesus Christ, whom you sent to be our Savior, our Redeemer, and the messenger of your grace. Through Him you made all things; in Him you are well pleased. He is the incarnate Word, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. To fulfill your promises, He stretched out His hands on the cross and released from eternal death all who believe in you.

As we remember Jesus' death and resurrection, we thank you that you have gathered us together to receive your Son's body and blood. Send us your Spirit, unite us as one, and strengthen our faith so that we may praise you in your Son, Jesus Christ. Through him, we glorify and honor you, O God our Father, with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## ***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.**

## ***Words of Institution***

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  $\dagger$  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  $\dagger$  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."

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

## 420 Jesus, I Will Ponder Now

CW 420 sts. 2-3



2 Make me see your great dis - tress, an - guish, and af - flic - tion,  
3 Yet, O Lord, not thus a - lone make me see your pas - sion,



bonds and stripes and wretch - ed - ness and your cru - ci - fix - ion;  
but its cause to me make known and its ter - mi - na - tion.



make me see how scourge and rod, spear and nails did wound you,  
Ah! I al - so and my sin wrought your deep af - flic - tion;



how for them you died, O God, who with thorns had crowned you.  
this in - deed the cause has been of your cru - ci - fix - ion.

Text: tr. August Crull, 1845-1923, alt.; Sigmund von Birken, 1626-1681  
Tune: Melchior Vulpius, c. 1570-1615  
Text and tune: Public domain

### **Distribution**

*Grace Lutheran Church follows the practice of close communion. This means that all our members are in agreement with the teachings of our church body. We welcome members of our church synod, the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod to partake of the Lord's Supper with us today. We respectfully and lovingly ask that other visitors speak with our pastor after the service if there are any questions about this practice.*

## Closing Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

Amen.

## 717 What Is the World to Me

CW 717 sts. 1, 4

1 What is the world to me with all its vaunt-ed plea - sure  
4 What is the world to me! My Je - sus is my trea - sure,  
when you and you a - lone, Lord Je - sus, are my trea - sure!  
my life, my health, my wealth, my friend, my love, my plea - sure,  
You on - ly, dear - est Lord, my soul's de - light shall be;  
my joy, my crown, my all, my bliss e - ter - nal - ly.  
you are my peace, my rest. What is the world to me!  
Once more then I de - clare: What is the world to me!

### Acknowledgments

Setting Five from Christian Worship

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