



# Ash Wednesday

TO DUST WE  
SHALL RETURN

...

## VIDEO “What is Lent?”

### WELCOME

#### OPENING SENTENCES and INVOCATION

P: “Yet, even now,” declares the Lord, “return to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;”

**C: “Rend your hearts and not your garments.”**

P: Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful,

**C: slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love. [Joel 2:12-13]**

P: What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?

**C: By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?**

P: Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus –

**C: were baptized into His death?**

P: We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death –

**C: in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. [Romans 6:1-4]**

P: I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live,

**C: but Christ lives in me.**

P: The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God,

**C: who loved me and gave Himself for me. [Galatians 2:20]**

P: In your baptism, you received the sign of the cross on your forehead and on your heart to mark you as one redeemed by Christ, the crucified.

**C: The sign of the cross always reminds us who we are and to Whom we belong.**

P: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**C: We are marked with God's name, and we now live under the sign of the cross!**

#### OPENING HYMN “My Song is Love Unknown” [3 Verses]

## CONFESSION and ABSOLUTION *from Psalm 51*

P: Let us confess our sins to God, our Father:

**C: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindness; in your great compassion blot out my offenses. Wash me through and through from my wickedness and cleanse me from my sin.**

P: For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

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

P: And so you are justified when you speak and upright in your judgment

**C: Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth, A sinner from my mother's womb.**

P: For behold, you look for truth deep within me,  
and will make me understand wisdom secretly.

**C: Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure;  
wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.**

P: Make me hear of joy and gladness,  
that the body you have broken may rejoice.

**C: Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities.**

P: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

**C: Cast me not away from your presence and take not your holy Spirit from me.**

P: Give me the joy of your salvation and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.

**C: I shall teach your ways to the wicked, and sinners shall return to you.**

P: Deliver me from death, O God, and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness,  
O God of my salvation.

**C: Open my lips, O Lord, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

P: Had you desired it, I would have offered sacrifice;  
but you take no delight in burnt-offerings.

**C: The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit;  
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.**

P: May the almighty and merciful God, who desires not the death of a sinner but that we turn from wickedness and live, accept your repentance, forgive your sins, and restore you by the Holy Spirit to newness of life.

**C: Amen.**

## **HYMN of RESPONSE “My Song is Love Unknown” [3 Verses]**

### **OLD TESTAMENT READING Numbers 22:21-35 [NIV]**

<sup>21</sup>Balaam got up in the morning, saddled his donkey and went with the Moabite officials. <sup>22</sup>But God was very angry when he went, and the angel of the LORD stood in the road to oppose him. Balaam was riding on his donkey, and his two servants were with him. <sup>23</sup>When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD standing in the road with a drawn sword in his hand, it turned off the road into a field. Balaam beat it to get it back on the road.

<sup>24</sup>Then the angel of the LORD stood in a narrow path through the vineyards, with walls on both sides. <sup>25</sup>When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, it pressed close to the wall, crushing Balaam’s foot against it. So he beat the donkey again. <sup>26</sup>Then the angel of the LORD moved on ahead and stood in a narrow place where there was no room to turn, either to the right or to the left. <sup>27</sup>When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, it lay down under Balaam, and he was angry and beat it with his staff. <sup>28</sup>Then the LORD opened the donkey’s mouth, and it said to Balaam, “What have I done to you to make you beat me these three times?”

<sup>29</sup>Balaam answered the donkey, “You have made a fool of me! If only I had a sword in my hand, I would kill you right now.” <sup>30</sup>The donkey said to Balaam, “Am I not your own donkey, which you have always ridden, to this day? Have I been in the habit of doing this to you?” “No,” he said. <sup>31</sup>Then the LORD opened Balaam’s eyes, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the road with his sword drawn. So he bowed low and fell facedown.

<sup>32</sup>The angel of the LORD asked him, “Why have you beaten your donkey these three times? I have come here to oppose you because your path is a reckless one before me. <sup>33</sup>The donkey saw me and turned away from me these three times. If it had not turned away, I would certainly have killed you by now, but I would have spared it.” <sup>34</sup>Balaam said to the angel of the LORD, “I have sinned. I did not realize you were standing in the road to oppose me. Now if you are displeased, I will go back.” <sup>35</sup>The angel of the LORD said to Balaam, “Go with the men, but speak only what I tell you.” So Balaam went with Balak’s officials.

**P:** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C:** **Thanks be to God!**

## **SERMON “UNICORNS & MERMAIDS”**

### **OFFERING**

“Glory Be to Jesus”

arr. John Behnke

*Organ*

## WORDS of CONSECRATION

P: This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

Happy are those called to His supper.

**C: We do not presume to come to Your table, O merciful Lord,  
trusting in our own righteousness, but in Your manifold and great mercies.**

**We are not worthy to gather up the crumbs under Your table.**

**But You are the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy.**

**Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord,**

**so to eat the flesh of Your dear Son Jesus Christ, and so to drink His blood,  
that we may evermore dwell in Him and He in us. Amen.**

## IMPOSITION OF ASHES

*Note: As you come forward for communion, you will receive the ashes on your forehead with these words, "From dust you've come, to dust you shall return." You may receive ashes without communing or commune without receiving ashes. Please talk to children with you about their baptism and invite them to receive the ashes if they are willing. Wash the ashes later tonight with the words: "I am baptized. I am forgiven. I am washed clean."*

## DISTRIBUTION MUSIC

**"What Is This Bread" [LSB 629]**

**"My Faith Looks Up to Thee" [LSB 702]**

**"Just As I Am, Without One Plea" [LW 359]**

**"When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" [LW 115]**

## POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

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 Lord,

**C: Bring us with all Your saints to the joy of His resurrection.**

## THE LORD'S PRAYER *The Family Prayer of the People of God*

## THE PEACE

### CLOSING PRAYER

P: God of compassion, through Your Son Jesus Christ,  
You reconciled Your people to Yourself.

**C: Following His example of prayer and fasting,  
May we obey You with willing hearts,  
And serve one another in holy love,  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine on you  
and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favor  
and ✠ give you peace. [*Numbers 6:24-26*]

**C: We are marked with God's name,  
And we now live under the sign of the cross! Amen.**

### CLOSING RESPONSE “Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God”

POSTLUDE “Postlude in D Minor”

Heinrich Scheidemann

SERMON: *Rev. James L. Mueller*  
LITURGIST: *Rev. Morgan Hamilton*

