



Ash Wednesday



February 14, 2018 – 7:00 P.M.

St. Peter Lutheran Church, Afton, Minnesota

Living Lent: “The Fox Reveals a Homeless Savior”

Fasting and putting on sackcloth and ashes have been symbols of repentance for centuries. These outward signs are like prayers seen by God, accompanying our prayers that are heard by God. They are saying, “God, hear my cry! Help!” To which prayers, offered in Jesus’ name, He replies, “I have heard your prayer and the plea you have made before Me.”

A LENTEN OPENING.....Melody: “O Sacred Head” (Stand.)

Remember, earth-born mortal, the dust from which you came,
And know that life’s last portal returns you to the same!
Let ashes tell the story, from dust its lesson learn:
Beyond life’s fleeting glory to dust you shall return!

Like flow’rs cast in the furnace, our lives are quickly spent.
To dust, O God, You turn us and call us to repent:
“Turn back, O mortals, grieving o’er your iniquity,
That, steadfast love receiving, you may My mercy see.”

For You, O gracious Father, want not the sinner’s death,
But that we, turning, rather may breathe the Spirit’s breath.
Let true repentance holy our daily lives employ,
That we may trust You solely and find in You our joy.

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

C Amen.

P “Even the stork in the sky knows her appointed season, and the dove, the swift and the thrush observe the time of their migration. But my people do not know the requirements of the Lord.”

C Because of our sin, “the land mourns, and all who live in it waste away; the beasts of the field, the birds of the air and the fish of the sea are dying.”

P Let us therefore confess our sins to God, sincerely repent of them and seek His mercy.

C Holy God, even the fox has his den, but Your Son Jesus Christ had no place to lay His head. To feed the hungry, clothe the naked and shelter the homeless is to do these things for Jesus. Yet I have done little. You have made me Your child, but I have broken Your laws in thought, word and deed. I claim to be Your disciple but avoid paying the cost. I have made excuses for my sin and blamed others. God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

P *“Even now,” declares the Lord, “return to Me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning. Rend your hearts 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.”*

(The Imposition of Ashes occurs here.) (Be seated.)

P *May these ashes be an outward symbol of true repentance, calling you to faith in Jesus Christ, whose death and resurrection takes away all sin and grants eternal life.*

C **Amen.**

HYMN VERSE.....Melody: “O Sacred Head”

Accomplish Your salvation in us, most gracious Lord,
Through Jesus’ Cross and Passion, according to Your Word.
Let us show forth Your favor while in the world we live,
And with Your saints forever eternal life receive.

P *Lift up your hearts and rejoice! God has heard your cry for mercy and seen your sorrow for sin. His own word promises that “he who believes and is baptized shall be saved,” and “that if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.” By the command of my Lord Jesus Christ and in His stead, I therefore announce to you the forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Now, go, and bring forth fruit in keeping with repentance.*

C **“Is not this the kind of fasting the Lord has chosen: to loose the chains of injustice, and untie the cords of the yoke, to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter. And when you see the naked to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?” May this be the fruit the Lord works in me!**

PSALM 32 Gethsemane 77 77 77

(In this styling, phrases of the hymn interrupt the reading of the Psalm. The tune is introduced before the reader’s first line. The final chord of each phrase is held softly over the spoken words.)

P *Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Happy are those to whom the Lord imputes no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.*

Those whose sins are known, confessed,
By the Lord are surely blessed.

P *When I did not confess my sins, I was worn out from crying all day. Day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer.*

Those who turn to God in love

Find forgiveness from above.

P *Then I acknowledged my sin to You, and I did not hide my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," and You forgive the guilt of my sin.*

Let the righteous raise their voice,
In the Lord, their God, rejoice.

HOLY GOSPELMatthew 8:18-20 (*Stand.*)

Pastor: ¹⁸ *Now when Jesus saw a crowd around Him, He gave orders to go over to the other side.* ¹⁹ *And a scribe came up and said to Him, "Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go."* ²⁰ *And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."*

(Be seated.)

THEME HYMNMelody: Erhalt uns, Herr

Within her den the fox, secure, takes her repose and rests assured
That evil will not reach her nest. But Christ can find no place to rest.

O gracious Lord, how far You roam from light and life in heav'n, Your home.
Now homeless You have come to stay to grant all sinners endless day.

Grant us, O Christ, such faithful hearts and gracious, as Your love imparts,
To offer care and comfort true to neediest souls as if to You.

HOMILY: The Fox Reveals a Homeless Savior

OFFERING

(Note to our visitors: You are our guests this evening! Please do not feel the need to make a contribution to our Offering. We would ask all visitors and members to sign the Register Pad as the Offering is being collected. Also, Prayer Cards are available in the pew racks for special intercessions during the time of congregational prayer.)

(Stand.)

OFFERING PRAYER.....Melody: Dunstan

Create in me a heart that's pure. Renew my spirit, steadfast, sure.
Deliver me from sin's allure. Accept the gifts I bring.

Forgive me all my shameful wrong. Restore to me salvation's song,
That I may join the grateful throng. Accept the gifts I bring.

Then I shall see Christ's glorious face, alive forever by His grace,
Dwelling in that most holy place. Accept the gifts I bring.

PRAYERS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

LORD'S PRAYER

WORD'S OF INSTITUTION



THE DISTRIBUTION (*Be seated.*)

FOR ALL WHO DESIRE TO RECEIVE THE LORD'S SUPPER

*We believe that Christ's Body and Blood is present in, with and under the bread and wine for the forgiveness of sins. In this sacred meal Jesus gives Himself in love to His Church to build us up in faith, hope and love. Since Christ is truly present, the Sacrament is not to be received in a careless or indifferent manner. St. Paul writes: "Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. **Examine yourselves, and only then eat of the bread and drink of the cup.**" (1 Corinthians 11.27-28)*

We believe that such self-examination necessarily includes the following points: 1) Do I believe that the only true God is the Triune God, Three Divine Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, within One Divine Being? 2) Do I humbly acknowledge before God that I am indeed a sinner in need of His grace? 3) Do I believe that Jesus Christ the Son of God is my personal Lord and Savior? 4) Do I believe that in this Sacrament Christ is truly present for me for the forgiveness of my sins? 5) Do I have a sincere desire, with God's help, to live a life that is pleasing to Him?

For those who can answer these questions in the affirmative, we welcome you to join us at the Lord's Table. For those who have a different religious understanding, or are unclear as to the points listed above, we ask that you talk to the pastor before receiving the Sacrament.

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

"Abide, O Dearest Jesus"

LSB 919

"Glory Be to Jesus"

LSB 433

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (*Stand.*)

THE BENEDICTION

P Ask the animals, and they will teach you. Let every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them say,

C To Him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, forever and ever.

P The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

C Amen.

CLOSING VERSEMelody: Erhalt uns, Herr

The animals the story tell. Teach us, O Lord, to learn it well,
And lead us, as our days are spent, to live in love while living Lent.

(Be seated.)