

My Time. After a long, hard week, TGIF - Thank God It's Friday. After a week of working for others - now it's "My Time." Vacation - after weeks and months of "Their Time," vacation means now it's "My Time." You get the promotion you've been working for. For years you've been answering to someone else, now it's "My Time." You retire. After years of your time belonging to someone else, now it's "My Time." "My Time" - sounds good, doesn't it?

Think of Jesus saying: "My Time." What do you think Jesus would call "My Time"? When he stepped into world history at Christmas with the angels singing? No. When he stepped into history with his first miracle, changing water into wine? No, that time it was: "Not yet my time." When he was taking center stage healing the sick, casting out demons, even raising the dead? When he was taking center stage with thousands coming to see him, cheer him, follow him? No. How about this? After Judas, one of his 12 disciples, had gone over to the enemy and settled on a price to betray Jesus? Yes. When his enemies were gathering and getting their forces ready to arrest Jesus, to have him killed? Yes. When God his Father was gathering, gathering the guilt of this world, and getting ready to curse and crush his Son Jesus? Yes. For Jesus that was "My Time."

Not "My Time" to rest and relax. Not "My Time" to soak in "me, myself, and I." Not "My Time" to take care of "Me, Myself, and I." But "My Time" to take center stage, to take the center cross, as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. It was time for Jesus' perp walk - Jesus paraded, shamed as guilty before the world - mocked, ridiculed, spit on, slandered. It was time for judgment; not just the unjust, lying judgment of this world, but the just judgment of God that would have Jesus crying out: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" It was time for Jesus to take his place as the Passover Lamb.

You remember the Passover lamb. Go back to 1440 something BC. God's people are in Egypt, being crushed as slave labor. They cry out to the LORD; he steps in with Moses - "Let my people go!" But Pharaoh says, "no." God turns the pressure up with plague after plague. Pharaoh relents,

but then he hardens his heart against God. God counts to 10. It was time for the 10th plague - God would send an angel of death to strike down the first-born males across Egypt. But God also provided a way out - the blood of the Passover lamb - a special lamb chosen for a special meal. The blood of the Passover lamb, painted on the doorpost, would have the angel of death pass over; with the blood of the lamb God's people would be spared. Every year Israel was to repeat that meal and remember: "We have a God who saves!"

But the Passover meal wasn't just a reminder of the past - "We have a God who saved." The Passover meal was an Old Testament pointer to the future, an Old Testament pointer to our New Testament reality - "We have a God who saves." Isaiah put it this way: **"We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth."** Now was the time - for Jesus to take our place as guilty, for Jesus to take his place as the Passover Lamb.

But first, Jesus would celebrate the Passover with his disciples. John tells us about that night. Jesus knew that the time had come. It was Jesus Time; so what does he do? He gets down on his hands and knees and washes his disciples' feet. The holy evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke, and the Apostle Paul tell us about that same night - with the bread and wine of the Passover meal, Jesus gives us his Lord's Supper - "My body given for you. My blood of the covenant poured out for you for the forgiveness of your sins."

Amazing, isn't it? Jesus has the weight of the world on his heart, but he doesn't complain about his time being taken from him; he doesn't complain about his time being ruined. No, he makes the best of his time - for us. He makes his time about us, for us. He gets down on his hands and knees and shows his disciples what love does; he shows his love for us. Even though it's his time, he doesn't expect to be served; instead, he serves. In his Supper, he points ahead to the cross and gives his love, and not just his love, he gives himself to his disciples; he points us to the cross and gives himself to us.

Think about it - what is Jesus' Time about? Not Jesus soaking in or looking out for "Me, Myself, and I," but Jesus looking out for you and yours with love and forgiveness. Not Jesus living for self, but Jesus living and giving his life so that you can have life with God.

Sounds good, doesn't it? So why am I so jealous for My Time, and willing to put off Jesus' Time? Why do I so often live like My Time for My Life is more important than Jesus' Time and Jesus' Life? Why is that? Why do we think that My Time and what I want is more important than Jesus' Time and what Jesus wants? That sounds so like Judas - ready to give Jesus up, for what?

There is another time Jesus talks about time. He says: "Now is the time." Time for what? Jesus says: "**Repent and believe the Good News.**" Now is the time to repent. Now - not tomorrow or some time later. Now - not I'll repent after I've done my thing with My Time. Now - not I'll repent later when life is better. Now, not later, after they repent. Now, not later is the time to repent. That's right. Now is the time to unclench my fist and let go my hold on "My Time." Now is the time to rethink "My Time" to be Jesus' Time. And not just think it - now is the time to live My Time as Jesus' Time. I get to put that even stronger, don't I? Now is the time to crush, drown, put to death "My Time" and to live a life devoted to Jesus' Time.

What does that look like? A life devoted to Jesus' time looks a lot like that window behind me - sheep looking to be close to Jesus. Jesus' Time looks like his disciples looking to be close at his table. Jesus' Time looks like Jesus on his hands and knees washing his disciples' feet, serving others. And Jesus' Time sounds like Jesus praying: "Not my will, but thy will be done." Jesus' time sounds like Jesus on the cross: "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit ... Yes, Father, into your hands I commit me!" And some day, Jesus' Time will look and sound like what? A great family reunion in heaven - you and me and the rest of Jesus' family together with Jesus in heaven celebrating Jesus' Time forever. Thank God for Jesus' Time. Amen.

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

Ash Wednesday



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WELCOME TO ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

WE WELCOME OUR GUESTS and pray that all who are with us today are given an encouraging and warm welcome and are blessed by the message of God's Word that we have in our lessons and hymns. Our worship service is designed to focus us on Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The Holy Spirit does that by exposing our need for Christ and by showing us the wonders of God's grace in Christ - forgiveness and peace, help and hope for life in this world, and life forever with God in heaven. If you have questions, please ask! We are blessed to have you with us!

Our Communion Practice

We practice close communion, the Biblical and ancient practice of the church, celebrating the Lord's Supper only with those who are close to us in faith and teaching. In this sacrament we are also giving public confession of our doctrinal unity and fellowship. We invite visitors from sister WELS or ELS congregations to join us in the sacrament. We ask our fellow Christians from other denominations to kindly respect our practice, and to make an appointment to speak with the pastor if you have any questions.

We Care about Your Children

We love to have children with us for worship. Children's worship bulletins and "church bags" (with paper, colors, Bible story books) are available from an usher. Baby noises can be beautiful to our Savior who said, "Let the little children come to me." If children are crying loudly, our nursery and Gathering Area (back of the church) are audio-equipped and available for you and your young children. After the children regain their composure, come back so we can all worship together.

We Care about Your Special Needs

Large Print Service Folders are available from an usher. *Hearing Assistance* for those with hearing aids is provided through our *Hearing Loop*. More information is available from an usher. A *wheelchair lift* is available for your assistance; please ask an usher.

Our Facilities

Restrooms are in our Fellowship Hall, downstairs and to the right of the kitchen.

Our Vision of Ministry

We will be a vibrant family of Christians growing in faith, love, and action. We will strive to be known for truth (God's Word) and love (Jesus' great gift) and to offer a worship and congregation life that not only connects us with Christ, but with each other and our community. As part of our ministry ... St. John offers an excellent preschool and k-8 program. St. John is a ministry partner with ... Shoreland Lutheran High School www.slhs.us and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) - www.wels.net.

Ash Wednesday

March 2, 2022

IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ... We observe Ash Wednesday. Ash Wednesday worship does not look, sound, or feel like any other service. It is a service that includes unusual, and perhaps, uncomfortable elements: the pastor's black robe, the somber and serious tunes, the look all-around of dirty ash on a rough banner, the moments of silence for reflection, and a message that echoes God's curse placed not only on Adam and Eve, but on us as well: "For dust you are and to dust you will return." With this on our hearts, we are called to heed King David's plea: "Put your hope in the Lord, for with the Lord is unfailing love and with him is full redemption." God bless your worship this evening.



"My Time is Near"

"Satan Has Asked to Sift All of You"

"They Bound Him"

The Semblance of Legality

What to Remember When You are Seized with Remorse

A Part for the Whole?

“MY TIME IS NEAR”

OPENING HYMN

“Jesus, I Will Ponder Now”

Hymn 420 (St. 1-3)

Jesus, I will ponder now on your holy passion;
with your Spirit me endow for such meditation.
Grant that I in love and faith may the image cherish
of your suff’ring, pain, and death that I may not perish.

Make me see your great distress, anguish, and affliction,
bonds and stripes and wretchedness and your crucifixion;
make me see how scourge and rod, spear and nails did wound you,
how for them you died, O God, who with thorns had crowned you.

Yet, O Lord, not thus alone make me see your passion,
but its cause to me make known and its termination.
Ah! I also and my sin wrought your deep affliction;
this indeed the cause has been of your crucifixion.

INSTRUCTION FOR THE BEGINNING OF LENT

P: 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 forty days of Lent we fix our eyes on Jesus, as the Author 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.

I invite you, therefore, to confess your sins, ask our Father for forgiveness, and commit yourselves to this struggle. Isaiah leads us to see and confess our wrong against the Lord. He shows us we can confess and repent with confidence and hope: the Lord has worked salvation. He has come and will come again as Redeemer for his people.

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 59:12-20

For our offenses are many in your sight,
and our sins testify against us.
Our offenses are ever with us,
and we acknowledge our iniquities:

rebellion and treachery against the LORD,
turning our backs on our God,
fomenting oppression and revolt,
uttering lies our hearts have conceived.

So justice is driven back,
and righteousness stands at a distance;
truth has stumbled in the streets,
honesty cannot enter.

Truth is nowhere to be found,
and whoever shuns evil becomes a prey.
The LORD looked and was displeased
that there was no justice.

He saw that there was no one,
he was appalled that there was no one to intervene;
so his own arm worked salvation for him,
and his own righteousness sustained him.

He put on righteousness as his breastplate,
and the helmet of salvation on his head;
he put on the garments of vengeance
and wrapped himself in zeal as in a cloak.

According to what they have done,
so will he repay
wrath to his enemies
and retribution to his foes;
he will repay the islands their due.

From the west, men will fear the name of the LORD,
and from the rising of the sun, they will revere his glory.
For he will come like a pent-up flood
that the breath of the LORD drives along.

“The Redeemer will come to Zion,
to those in Jacob who repent of their sins,”
declares the LORD.

LESSON

Luke 18:9-14

To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself:

‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.

“But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’ I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

P: Let us be silent. Let us be still. Let us pause now for a time of reflection and self-examination.

Silence for reflection and self-examination

CONFESSION OF SINS

P: 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.

P: 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.

C: Have mercy on us, Lord.

P: 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.

C: Have mercy on us, Lord.

P: We confess to you, Lord, all our past unfaithfulness.
The pride, hypocrisy, and impatience in our lives

C: we confess to you, O Lord.

P: Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, our manipulation of other people

C: we confess to you, O Lord.

P: Our anger when our selfish aims are denied,
and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves

C: we confess to you, O Lord.

P: Our love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonesty in daily life and
work

C: we confess to you, O Lord.

P: Our negligence in worship and prayer, and our failure to show the faith that
is in us

C: we confess to you, O Lord.

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

C: forgive us, O Lord.

P: For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward others, and for our
prejudice and contempt for those who differ from us,

C: forgive us, O Lord.

P: For what we think or say or do that is at variance with your will,

C: forgive us, O Lord.

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

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

THE CONFESSION OF THE ASH BANNER (see page 16)

*As we make our confession on the Ash Banner,
consider the cross with hymns found in
the Lent and Passion sections of our new hymnal - Christian Worship, 393-437.*

PIANO MEDITATION

ABSOLUTION

P: 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.

In love he has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

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.

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 suffering of your Son, O Lord,

C: bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.

HYMN

"Jesus, I Will Ponder Now"

Hymn 420 (St. 4-6)

Jesus, I will ponder now on your holy passion;
with your Spirit me endow for such meditation.
Grant that I in love and faith may the image cherish
of your suff'ring, pain, and death that I may not perish.

Make me see your great distress, anguish, and affliction,
bonds and stripes and wretchedness and your crucifixion;
make me see how scourge and rod, spear and nails did wound you,
how for them you died, O God, who with thorns had crowned you.

Yet, O Lord, not thus alone make me see your passion,
but its cause to me make known and its termination.
Ah! I also and my sin wrought your deep affliction;
this indeed the cause has been of your crucifixion.

SERMON

"My time is near." (Matthew 26:18)

PRAYER AND 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.

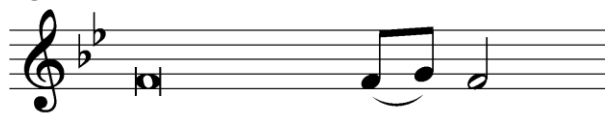
THE SACRAMENT

(Guests, please see our communion practice on page 2.)

(Individually packaged wafers are gluten-free.)

PREFACE

CW p.183



The Lord be with you.



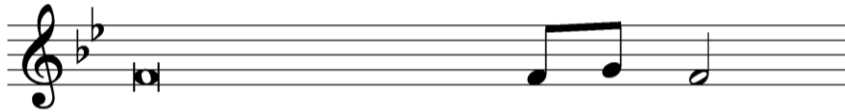
And al - so with you.



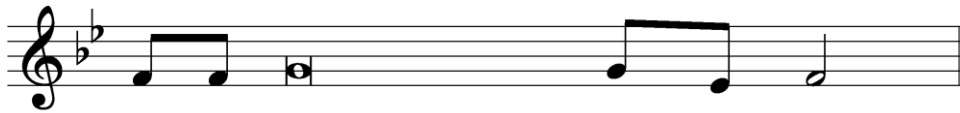
Lift up your hearts.



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 lived among us as a human being and revealed his glory as your only Son, full of grace and truth. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

CW p.184



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er,



God of might. Heav - en and earth are full of your



glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.



Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the

Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho -
 san - na in the high - est!

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 T 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 T 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.

JESUS, LAMB OF GOD

CW p.186

Je - sus, Lamb of God, you take a - way the
 sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.
 Je - sus, Lamb of God, you take a - way the

sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.

Je - sus, Lamb of God, you take a - way the

sin of the world; grant us your peace.

DISTRIBUTION

PRAYER

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his mercy endures forever.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

We give you thanks, O Lord, for the foretaste of the heavenly banquet you have given us in this Sacrament. Through this gift you have fed our faith, nourished our hope, and strengthened our love. By your Spirit, help us to live as your holy people until that day when you will receive us as your guests at the wedding supper of the Lamb, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

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 T give you peace.
Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

“Abide with Me”
Hymn 783 vs. 1-2, 5-7

Abide with me; fast falls the eventide.
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me!

Swift to its close ebbs out life’s little day;
Earth’s joys grow dim; its glories pass away.
Change and decay in all around I see;
O thou who changest not, abide with me!

I need thy presence ev’ry passing hour.
What but thy grace can foil the tempter’s pow’r?
Who like thyself my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, oh, abide with me!

I fear no foe with thee at hand to bless;
Ills have no weight and tears no bitterness.
Where is death’s sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still if thou abide with me.

Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies.
Heav’n’s morning breaks, and earth’s vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me!

OFFERING

*If you prefer online giving, you may scan this
code with your mobile device.*



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Lent Customs and Opportunities

The Color Purple - the color of royalty reminds us of Christ as our King, willing to be crowned with thorns, willing to sacrifice himself for his people, fighting our battle against Satan and evil, winning our victory for life. When we see what our king was willing to go through for us, the color purple also becomes the color of repentance - our commitment to live with Christ as King.

Lenten Self-Denial Offering -

some Christians find that giving up (sacrificing) some normal part of life (meat, candy, TV, for example) helps them consider Jesus' sacrifice for them.

Some Christians find that a special gift (perhaps the savings from what they gave up) for Christ's church is a meaningful way to thank Jesus.

Special gifts can be given for the special work of the church (any Lent offering envelope) or designated for a special project with the special offering envelope.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, the Christian's 40-day journey with the Lord to the cross and tomb, preparing for the proclamation of Easter. The 40 days are reminiscent of several biblical events: Jesus' 40-day fast at the beginning of his ministry, Moses' stay on Mount Sinai at the giving of the Law, Elijah's fast on his way to the mountain of God.

Ash Wednesday begins the Christian's Lenten journey with a reminder of our mortality and a call to repentance (Genesis 18:27; Job 46:6; Jeremiah 6:26; Matthew 11:21). The ancient practice of imposing ashes on the foreheads of the faithful gives Ash Wednesday its name. The church father Tertullian (A.D. 160-215) writes of the practice as a public expression of repentance and of our human frailty that stands in need of Christ. The ashes remind us forcefully of our need for redeeming grace as they recall words from the rite for Christian burial: "...earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust..." words, that will someday be spoken over us all. The imposition of ashes has never been an exclusively Roman Catholic practice and today is observed by Christians of many traditions.

Ashes on Ash Wednesday

For thousands of years, God's people have used ashes as a sign of sorrow over sin. For hundreds of years, Christ's Church has used ashes at the beginning of the season of Lent, now known as Ash Wednesday, to express our sorrow over sin.

We won't be placing ashes on your foreheads, but we will use ashes as a way to make the "confession we say" into a "confession we see" by marking our confession with ash. In our Ash Wednesday service we will have the opportunity to step forward, dip our finger into a bowl of ash, and place our mark in the form of a cross on a burlap banner. We will then wipe our fingers clean and return to our seats.

Why make a mark with ash? The symbolism is rich:

- we make our individual mark acknowledging our individual guilt
- we make our marks together confessing our common sinfulness
- we feel the rough texture of burlap - our sorrow and Christ's cross are rough and pained
- we mark the sign of the cross - the cost of our sin - declaring our confidence in Christ as our Savior.

Not everyone will feel comfortable joining in this symbolism, so don't feel pushed. Feel free to participate as you are comfortable. Or feel free not to participate. Either way, feel free in the forgiveness of Christ!

(See previous page for more Lent Customs and Opportunities.)