

THE SEVEN LAST WORDS:
"FATHER, FORGIVE..."

Welcome to the foot of the Cross on this Ash Wednesday. God will bless our Lenten journey together week after week to the Cross and the Empty Tomb. In this season of reflection and repentance, we find peace, joy, and hope in our suffering and risen Lord.

"The Seven Last Words from the Cross" is the theme of our Midweek Lenten Series. Each Wednesday evening throughout Lent we will consider the individual statements Jesus spoke from the Cross and how deeply they affect our life and our faith.

Ash Wednesday begins the observance of Lent. To show their knowledge of the enormity of their sins and their attitude of repentance, ancient believers dressed in coarsely woven robes (sackcloth) and anointed their heads with ashes on this day. Ashes represent the dust from which man was first taken and to which we shall return because of sin (cf. Gen. 3:19). A later tradition, still practiced by many Christians, is that of saving the palm fronds used in the preceding year's Palm Sunday worship, burning them, and using the ashes to mark the foreheads of the members as a symbol of repentance. Not including the following Sundays, it is 40 days from Ash Wednesday to Easter.

The Veiled Cross. The ancient Church hung a veil or curtain between the *nave* (congregational area) and the *sanctuary* (altar area) as a symbol of the greatness of humankind's sin which separates us from God. The veil draped over the cross reminds us that our sins were also placed upon Jesus which led to His crucifixion and punishment by God in our place.

Our Practice of Close Communion. In Holy Communion, our Lord gives not only bread and wine but His very Body and Blood to eat and drink for the forgiveness of sins (1 Cor. 10:14ff). He invites to His table those who repent of their sins and trust His words, that they may show forth His death until He comes. Because those who commune unworthily or apart from faith in His words concerning the real presence of His Body and Blood do so to their spiritual harm (1 Cor. 11:29), and because Holy Communion is a public confession of faith (1 Cor. 10:15-18), those who are not instructed in this faith or who hold a confession differing from this congregation and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, yet desire to receive the Sacrament are asked to speak with the pastor before communing for the first time at Mt. Calvary. Those who have previously spoken with the pastor and have been welcomed to commune with us may commune this evening.

The Imposition of Ashes*(Prior to the beginning of the Service)*

The imposition of Ashes is an ancient practice on Ash Wednesday. Ashes are used as a sign of repentance and as a visible reminder of our sorrow over our sinful hearts and lives. As the ashes are placed on the forehead, worshippers are reminded: **“Dust to dust and ashes to ashes. You are dust, and to dust you shall return.”** The ashes, however, are placed in the sign of the cross, the symbol of our hope through Christ.

Ash Wednesday – February 14, 2024
Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church, Huron, SD

Opening Hymn # 440 – “Jesus, I Will Ponder Now”

- 1 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.

- 2 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.

3 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.

4 Grant that I Your passion view
 With repentant grieving.
Let me not bring shame to You
 By unholy living.
How could I refuse to shun
 Ev'ry sinful pleasure
Since for me God's only Son
 Suffered without measure?

5 If my sins give me alarm
And my conscience grieve me,
Let Your cross my fear disarm;
Peace of conscience give me.
Help me see forgiveness won
By Your holy passion.
If for me He slays His Son,
God must have compassion!

6 Graciously my faith renew;
Help me bear my crosses,
Learning humbleness from You,
Peace mid pain and losses.
May I give You love for love!
Hear me, O my Savior,
That I may in heav'n above
Sing Your praise forever.

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Invocation

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

C: Amen.

Confession and Absolution

P: “Dust to dust, ashes to ashes.” God’s Law speaks this verdict upon us all.

C: These words of ending recall our beginning. Out of the dust of the ground God formed humanity. God breathed into our nostrils the breath of life, and we became living beings.

P: “Dust to dust, ashes to ashes.” God made Adam, man of dust, in His image.

C: Who are we, Lord, that You are mindful of us and care for us? You have made us little less than Yourself, crowning us with glory and honor.

P: “Dust to dust, ashes to ashes.” We deserve God’s curse for we have sinned.

C: You turn us back to dust, Lord. Before the day we die, we come to You with ashes upon our lives, the mark of the curse. We confess and turn from our sin to face You, Lord. Forgive us and restore us, for Jesus’ sake, and speak to us another word besides “dust to dust, ashes to ashes.”

P: Assembled to hear God’s Word and receive His blessed Son through His Body and Blood, we admit that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful nature. Therefore, we take refuge in God’s infinite mercy, seeking and imploring His grace for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. God, be merciful to us.

C: May Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to life everlasting. Amen.

P: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy on you and has given His only Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of the Word, 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.

C: Amen.

Passion History (*Compiled from verses from each of the four Gospels*)

The Lord's Supper

- “You know that after two days is the Feast of the Passover, and the Son of Man will be given over to be crucified.”
- Now the Feast of Unleavened Bread, also called the Passover, drew near, and the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him. They assembled with the elders of the people in the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and consulted how they might take Jesus craftily and put him to death. But they said, “Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people.”
- Then Satan entered into Judas, surnamed Iscariot, one of the Twelve. He went his way to the chief priests and captains and spoke together with them how he might betray Jesus to them. They were glad to hear him. He said to them, “What will you give me to betray him to you?”

They promised to give him money and agreed with him for thirty pieces of silver. He accepted, and from that time he sought opportunity to betray him in the absence of the multitude.

- Then came the first day of Unleavened Bread when they sacrificed the Passover Lamb. Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, “Go and prepare the Passover, that we may eat it.”

They said to him, “Where do you want us to prepare it?”

- He said to them, “Go into the city and, when you have entered the city, watch for a man bearing a pitcher of water. When he meets you, follow him into the house where he enters. You shall say to the man who lives there, ‘The Master says to you, “My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at your house. Where is the guest chamber where I shall eat the Passover with my disciples?’”’ And he will show you a large upper room, furnished and prepared; there make ready for us.”

The disciples did as Jesus had directed them. They came into the city and found it as he had told them; and they made ready the Passover.

- When the hour was come, Jesus sat down and the apostles with him. As they were eating, he said, “I have longed to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I say to you I shall not eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”

As they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take eat; this is my body which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me.”

- In the same way also he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you; this is my blood of the new testament which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”
“Truly I say to you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in the kingdom of my Father.”

Nicene Creed

**I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.**

He suffered and was buried.

**And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven**

and sits at the right hand of the Father.

**And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.**

And I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the Lord and giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son,

who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,

who spoke by the prophets.

And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,

I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,

and I look for the resurrection of the dead

and the life ✝ of the world to come. Amen.

Children's Sermon

Hymn# 447 (First Word) – “Jesus, In Your Dying Woes” – *First Word: Luke 23:34*

1 Jesus, in Your dying woes,
Even while Your lifeblood flows,
Craving pardon for Your foes:
Hear us, holy Jesus.

2 Savior, for our pardon sue
When our sins Your pangs renew,
For we know not what we do:
Hear us, holy Jesus.

3 Oh, may we, who mercy need,
Be like You in heart and deed,
When with wrong our spirits bleed:
Hear us, holy Jesus.

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Sermon“Father, Forgive...” (Based on Luke 23:33-34)

Exchange of Peace and Offering

Prayer of the Church and the Lord’s Prayer

P: Heavenly Father, we thank You for Your love that promised and sent Your Son Jesus Christ to be our Savior. Yet so often we have denied Him. For looking away from Your Word and for all the times we have failed You and one another in sin, not knowing what we are doing:

C: We plead for Your forgiveness. Have mercy on us, O Lord.

P: Grant us faith, that in the forgiveness won for us by Jesus' sacrifice and by Your Holy Spirit's guidance, we may walk in Your ways, showing love, care, and forgiveness for one another.

C: Lead us to live each day in the shadow of Jesus' cross.

P: We join with God's forgiven people of all ages and pray:

C: 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

Exchange of Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Distribution of Holy Communion

Distribution Hymn # 421 – “Jesus, Grant That Balm and Healing”

- 1 Jesus, grant that balm and healing
 In Your holy wounds I find,
Ev’ry hour that I am feeling
 Pains of body and of mind.
Should some evil thought within
Tempt my treach’rous heart to sin,
 Show the peril, and from sinning
 Keep me from its first beginning.

- 2 Should some lust or sharp temptation
 Fascinate my sinful mind,
Draw me to Your cross and passion,
 And new courage I shall find.
Or should Satan press me hard,
Let me then be on my guard,
 Saying, “Christ for me was wounded,”
 That the tempter flee confounded.

- 3 If the world my heart entices
 With the broad and easy road,
With seductive, sinful vices,
 Let me weigh the awful load
You were willing to endure.
Help me flee all thoughts impure
 And to master each temptation,
 Calm in prayer and meditation.
- 4 Ev'ry wound that pains or grieves me
 By Your wounds, Lord, is made whole;
When I'm faint, Your cross revives me,
 Granting new life to my soul.
Yes, Your comfort renders sweet
Ev'ry bitter cup I meet;
 For Your all-atoning passion
 Has procured my soul's salvation.

5 O my God, my rock and tower,
Grant that in Your death I trust,
Knowing death has lost its power
Since You crushed it in the dust.
Savior, let Your agony
Ever help and comfort me;
When I die be my protection,
Light and life and resurrection.

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Distribution Hymn # 619 – “Thy Body, Given for Me, O Savior”

1 Thy body, giv’n for me, O Savior,
Thy blood which Thou for me didst shed,
These are my life and strength forever,
By them my hungry soul is fed. *Refrain*

ref Lord, may Thy body and Thy blood
Be for my soul the highest good!

2 With Thee, Lord, I am now united;
I live in Thee and Thou in me.
No sorrow fills my soul, delighted
It finds its only joy in Thee. *Refrain*

3 Who can condemn me now? For surely
The Lord is nigh, who justifies.
No hell I fear, and thus securely
With Jesus I to heaven rise. *Refrain*

4 Though death may threaten with disaster,
It cannot rob me of my cheer;
For He who is of death the master
With aid and comfort e'er is near. *Refrain*

5 My heart has now become Thy dwelling,
O blessèd, holy Trinity.
With angels I, Thy praises telling,
Shall live in joy eternally. *Refrain*

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Benediction

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.

C: Amen

Closing Hymn: # 535 – “How Wide the Love of Christ”

1 How wide the love of Christ!

It knows not class or race
But holds our one humanity
Within its broad embrace.

2 How long the love of Christ!

Its patience will not cease
Until this broken world is bound
In everlasting peace.

3 How high the love of Christ!

Beyond all thought it soars,
And yet upon our passing lives
Unmeasured mercy pours.

4 How deep the love of Christ,

Descending to a cross!
He bears within His wounded hands
All human pain and loss.

5 All praise to You, O Christ,
For love whose depth and height,
Whose length and breadth fill time and space
With endless life and light!

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