

Ash Wednesday

Necessity of Falling, Wisdom of Dust



February 18, 2026
Trinity Lutheran

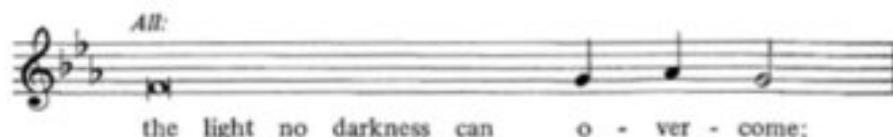
GATHERING

Leader:



Jesus Christ, you are the light of the world;

All:



the light no darkness can o - ver - come;

Leader:



Stay with us now, for it is evening,

All:



and the day is al - most over.

Leader:



Let your light scat - ter the darkness,

All:



and shine within your peo-ple here.

All: a tempo



1. Joy-ous light of heav -'nly glo - ry, lov - ing

2. In the stars that grace the dark - ness, in the

3. You who made the heav -en's splen - dor, ev - 'ry



glow of God's own face, you who sing cre - a - tion's
blaz - ing sun of dawn, in the light of peace and
danc - ing star of night, make us shine with gen - tle



sto - ry, shine on ev 'ry land and race. Now as
wis - dom, we can hear your qui - et song. Love that
jus - tice, let us each re - flect your light. Might - y



eve - ning falls a - round us, we shall raise our songs to
fills the night with won - der, love that warms the wea - ry
God of all cre - a - tion, gen - tle Christ who lights our



you, God of day - break, God of shad - ows, come and
soul, Love that bursts all chains a - sun - der, set us
way, Lov - ing Spir - it of sal - va - tion, lead us



light our hearts a - new. _____
free and make us whole. _____
on to end - less day. _____

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray together.

God of the dust and the dawn,

You meet us in the ashes and lead us into new life.

**Teach us to trust the fall as part of your rising grace,
that in losing ourselves we may be found in you,
through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and Lord.**

Amen.

CONFESSTION OF SIN

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most holy and merciful God,
we confess to you and to one another,
and before the whole company of heaven,
that we have sinned by our fault,
by our own fault,
by our own most 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, O God.

We have shut our ears to your call to serve as Christ served us.
We have not been true to the mind of Christ.

We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

Have mercy on us, O God.

Our past unfaithfulness, the pride, envy, hypocrisy,
and apathy that have infected our lives, we confess to you.

Have mercy on us, O God.

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways,
and our exploitation of other people, we confess to you.

Have mercy on us, O God.

Our negligence in prayer and worship,
and our failure to share the faith that is in us, we confess to you.

Have mercy on us, O God.

Our neglect of human need and suffering,
and our indifference to injustice and cruelty, we confess to you.

Have mercy on us, O God.

Our false judgments, our uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors,
and our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us,
we confess to you.

Have mercy on us, O God.

Our waste and pollution of your creation,
and our lack of concern for those who come after us, we confess to you.

Have mercy on us, O God.

Restore us, O God,
and let your anger depart from us.

Hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth.
May these ashes be a sign of our mortality and penitence, reminding us
that only by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ are we given eternal life;
through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

*People may come forward to receive the ashes. Ministers mark the
forehead of each person with a cross of ashes, saying:*

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

After those who desire ashes have received them, the minister continues.
Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,
that we may show forth your glory in the world.

By the cross and passion of your Son, our Savior,
bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.

Here is a flood of grace:
Out of love for the whole world, God draws near to us,
breaks every snare of sin, washes away our wrongs,
and restores the promise of life through **☩** Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

PSALM 51 (J. Talbot)

Please join in the bolded refrains at the cantor's signal.

Have mercy, Lord, in Your kindness,
in Your compassion blot out my offenses.

**Have mercy, Lord, in Your kindness,
in Your compassion blot out my offenses.**

Truly I know them all my offenses,
my sin is ever before me, O lord.
Against You alone have I sinned.
Glorify me, then I shall be clean.
Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.

Glorify me, then I shall be clean.

Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.

A pure heart create for me, O Lord.
Put a steadfast spirit deep within me,
Nor cast me away from Your presence.
O rescue me, God my Helper,
And my tongue shall declare all of Your goodness.
O rescue me, God my Helper,
And my tongue shall declare all of Your goodness.

For in sacrifice you take no delight;
Burnt offerings from me You would refuse.
My sacrifice is a contrite spirit,
my humble heart You will not spurn.
My sacrifice is a contrite spirit,
my humble heart You will not spurn.
My humble heart You will not spurn.

FIRST READING: Joel 2: 1-2, 12-17

Blow the trumpet in Zion;
sound the alarm on my holy mountain!
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,
for the day of the Lord is coming, it is near—
a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of clouds and thick darkness!
Like blackness spread upon the mountains,
a great and powerful army comes;
their like has never been from of old.

Yet even now, says the Lord,
return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
rend your hearts and not your clothing.
Return to the Lord your God,
for he is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love,
and relenting from punishment.
Blow the trumpet in Zion; consecrate a fast;
call a solemn assembly; gather the people.
Consecrate the congregation; assemble the aged;
gather the children, even infants at the breast.
Let the bridegroom leave his room
and the bride her canopy.

Between the vestibule and the altar,
let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep.
Let them say, “Spare your people, O Lord,
and do not make your heritage a mockery,
a byword among the nations.
Why should it be said among the peoples,
‘Where is their God?’”

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: Isaiah 58:1b, 2b-4, 5b-7, 9b-

Announce to my people their rebellion,
to the house of Jacob their sins.
They ask of me righteous judgments;
they want god on their side.

“Why do we fast, but you do not see?
Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?”

Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day
and oppress all your workers.
You fast only to quarrel and to fight
and to strike with a wicked fist.
Such fasting as you do today
will not make your voice heard on high.
Will you call this a fast,
a day acceptable to the Lord?

Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the straps of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,
if you offer your food to the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness
and your gloom be like the noonday.
The Lord will guide you continually
and satisfy your needs in parched places and make your bones strong,
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water whose waters never fail.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

LENTE ACCLAMATION



Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and mer - ci - ful,
slow to an - ger, and a-bound - ing in steady - fast love.

GOSPEL: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

The holy gospel according to St. Matthew the sixth chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹“Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

²“So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ³But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

⁵“And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ⁶But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

“And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ¹⁷But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY:

The Glory of These Forty Days (ELW 320)



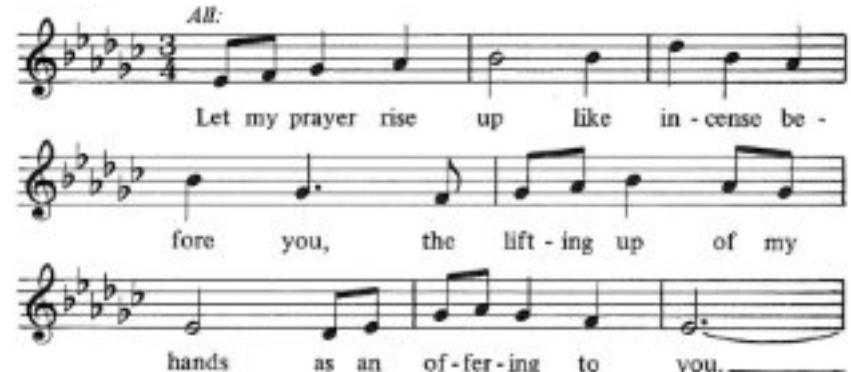
1 The glo - ry of these for - ty days we cel - e -
2 A - lone and fast - ing Mo - ses saw the cel - lov - ing
3 So Dan - iel trained his mys - tic sight, de - liv - ered
4 Then grant, O God, that we may, too, re - turn in

brate with songs of praise; for Christ, through whom all
God who gave the law; and to E - li - jah.
from the li - ons' might; and John, the Bride - groom's
fast and prayer to you. Our spir - its strength-en

things were made, him - self has fast - ed and has prayed.
fast - ing, came the steeds and char - i - ots of flame.
friend, be - came the her - ald of Mes - si - ah's name.
with your grace, and give us joy to see your face.

SERMON

PSALM 141 (M. Haugen)



All:

Let my prayer rise up like in - cense be -
fore you, the lift - ing up of my
hands as an of - fer - ing to you.

Leader or Group One:



O God, I call to you, come to me

O God, I now; O hear my voice when I call to you, come to me now; O cry to you. Let my prayer rise hear my voice when I cry to you. up like incense before you, the Let my prayer rise up like incense be - lift-ing up of my hands as an of-fer-ing to fore you, the lift-ing up of my hands as an

All or Group Two:



you. Keep watch with - in me, God; of-fer-ing to you. Keep deep in my heart may the light of your love be watch with - in me, God; deep in my heart may the burn - ing bright. Let my prayer rise light of your love be burn - ing bright.

up like incense be - fore you, the Let my prayer rise up like incense be -

lift-ing up of my hands as an of-fer-ing to fore you, the lift-ing up of my hands as an you. All praise to the God of all- Cre of-fer-ing to you. All

a - tor of life; all praise be to Christ and the
praise to the God of all- Cre - a - tor of life; all

Spir - it of love. — Let my prayer rise
praise be to Christ and the Spir - it of love.

up like in - cense be - fore you, the
Let my prayer rise up like in - cense be -

lift-ing up of my hands as an of-fer-ing to
fore you, the lift-ing up of my hands as an
lift-ing up of my hands as an of-fer-ing to
you. — of-fer-ing to you.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray together.

O God,

receive these gifts we offer
as a sign of the dedication of our lives.
We bring nothing of our own,
for all that we have is yours.

We give, not for the sake of earthly reward,
but for the secret reward only you may grant:
the joy of your righteousness;
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

EUCARISTIC PRAYER

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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.

COMMUNION

All are welcome to join in the gift of Holy Communion.

*White grape juice is available and all altar bread is gluten-free.
When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say*

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

and each person may respond

Amen.

POST COMMUNION BLESSING

Now may the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace.
Amen.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Let us pray together.

Merciful God, accompany our journey through these forty days. Renew us in the gift of baptism, that we may provide for those who are poor, pray for those in need, fast from self-indulgence, and above all that we may find our treasure in the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

BLESSING



Leader: — All: —

Let us bless our God: praise and thanks to you.

Prestider:

May God, Cre-a-tor bless us and keep us, may Christ be ev-er light for our lives, may the Spir-it of Love be our guide and path, for all of our days.

All: — A-men.

When finished, please be seated for a time of quiet contemplation, and when ready, depart in silence.

Falling Upward: The Journey of Lent

Lent is often described as a season of repentance: self-examination, and returning to God. But what if

Lent is also a season of growing—of being reshaped by God in ways we never expected?

This Lent, we invite you to join us for a sermon series inspired by Richard Rohr's *Falling Upward*. Rohr writes about two halves of life: the first half, where we focus on building, striving, and proving ourselves; and the second half, where life—often through loss, failure, or change—teaches us how to let go, trust more deeply, and live with greater freedom and grace.

Through scripture, prayer, and reflection, we will explore how God meets us not only in our successes, but especially in our struggles; not only in what we build, but in what we release.

Lent reminds us that the cross comes before resurrection—and that what feels like falling may actually be the way God is drawing us upward into deeper faith.

Whether you feel grounded or uncertain, fulfilled or weary, certain or questioning, this series is for you. Come as you are. Bring your questions, your hopes, and your whole self as we journey together toward Easter, trusting that God is at work—even when the path leads downward before it rises.

We hope you will join us for this Lenten journey of honesty, grace, and transformation.

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