

Saint Matthew's

EPISCOPAL CHURCH



Holy Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes
Ash Wednesday
February 17, 2021
7:00 pm

*The People are invited to read the words in **bold**. While we're online, these words will be led by someone on screen so that you can read and pray with them. No matter where you are, joining in this worship service is a form of prayer that connects you to God and to each other. Find a comfortable place to sit. Kneel or stand for the prayers if you'd like. Whenever two or three are gathered, even virtually, Jesus is present among us.*

+ THE WORD OF GOD +

Celebrant Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

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,
 nor will be again after them
in ages to come.

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, and abounding in steadfast love,
and relents from punishing.
Who knows whether he will not turn and relent,
and leave a blessing behind him,
a grain offering and a drink offering
for the LORD, your God?

Blow the trumpet in Zion;
sanctify a fast;
call a solemn assembly;
gather the people.
Sanctify 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?'"

Lector The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 103:8-14

*The People read the verses in **bold**.*

⁸The LORD is full of compassion and mercy, *
slow to anger and of great kindness.

⁹**He will not always accuse us, ***
nor will he keep his anger for ever.

¹⁰He has not dealt with us according to our sins, *
nor rewarded us according to our wickedness.

¹¹**For as the heavens are high above the earth, ***
so is his mercy great upon those who fear him.

¹²As far as the east is from the west, *
so far has he removed our sins from us.

¹³**As a father cares for his children, ***
so does the LORD care for those who fear him.

¹⁴For he himself knows whereof we are made; *
he remembers that we are but dust.

Second Reading

2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says, "At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you." See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge,

patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see-- we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

Lector The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

The Holy Gospel

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Gospeller The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Jesus said, "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.

"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. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"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. But 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. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so 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; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Gospeller The Gospel of the Lord.
People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

The Sermon

The Rev. Marissa Rohrbach

An Invitation to a Holy Lent

Celebrant

Dear People of God: the first Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church to prepare for them by a season of penitence and fasting. The season of Lent provided a time in which converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism. It was also a time when those who, because of notorious sins, had been separated from the body of the faithful were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to the fellowship of the Church. Thereby, the whole congregation was

put in mind of the message of pardon and absolution set forth in the Gospel of our Savior, and of the need which all Christians continually have to renew their repentance and faith.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word. And, to make a right beginning of repentance, and as a mark of our mortal nature, let us now kneel before the Lord, our maker and redeemer.

Silence is kept for a time.

Then the Celebrant says a prayer

You have created us out of the dust of the earth, and yet you call us beloved. May these ashes be to us not only a sign of our mortality and penitence, but a reminder that when this body fails, it is only by your gracious gift that we are given everlasting life. **Amen.**

Imposition of Ashes

Ashes are placed in a cross sign on yourself or others foreheads as the Priest says

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

Then everyone says together

God of compassion, through your Son Jesus Christ you reconciled your people to yourself. Following his example of prayer and fasting, may we obey you with willing hearts and serve one another in holy love. If today we hear his voice, may we harden not our hearts, but follow after Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Psalm 51

(read together)

¹ Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.

² Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin.

³ For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.

⁴ Against you, you alone, have I sinned,
and done what is evil in your sight,
so that you are justified in your sentence
and blameless when you pass judgment.

⁵ Indeed, I was born guilty,
a sinner when my mother conceived me.

⁶ You desire truth in the inward being;
therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

⁷ Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

⁸ Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.

⁹ Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.

¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and put a new and right spirit within me.

¹¹ Do not cast me away from your presence,
and do not take your holy spirit from me.

¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and sustain in me a willing spirit.

¹³ Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will return to you.

¹⁴ Deliver me from bloodshed, O God,
O God of my salvation,
and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.

¹⁵ O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare your praise.

¹⁶ For you have no delight in sacrifice;
if I were to give a burnt-offering, you would not be pleased.

¹⁷ The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Litany of Penitence

The Celebrant and People together,

Most holy and merciful Father:

**We confess to you and to one another,
and to the whole communion of saints
in heaven and on earth,**

**that we have sinned by our own fault
in thought, word, and deed;**

by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.

The Celebrant continues, the People respond with the words in bold.

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, Lord.

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 your Holy Spirit.

Have mercy on us, Lord.

We confess to you, Lord, all our past unfaithfulness: the pride, hypocrisy, and impatience of our lives.

We confess to you, Lord.

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people,

We confess to you, Lord.

Our anger at our own frustration, and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,

We confess to you, Lord.

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

We confess to you, Lord.

Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,

We confess to you, Lord.

Accept our repentance, Lord, for the wrongs we have done: for our blindness to human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,

Accept our repentance, Lord.

For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us,
Accept our repentance, Lord.

For our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us,
Accept our repentance, Lord.

Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us,
Favorably hear us, for your mercy is great.

Accomplish in us the work of your salvation,
That we may show forth your glory in the world.

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

The Priest stands and, facing the people, says

Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desires not the death of sinners, but rather that they may turn from their wickedness and live, has given power and commandment to his ministers to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins. He pardons and absolves all those who truly repent, and with sincere hearts believe his holy Gospel.

Therefore, we beseech him to grant us true repentance and his Holy Spirit, that those things may please him which we do on this day, and that the rest of our life hereafter may be pure and holy, so that at the last we may come to his eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Peace

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

An Ash Wednesday Reflection

Samantha Trolice

Blessing

The Celebrant blesses the people saying

Christ give you grace to grow in holiness, to deny yourselves, take up your cross, and follow him; and the blessing of God almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be with you this day and always. **Amen.**

Dismissal

Celebrant Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Worship Leaders

Celebrant & Preacher

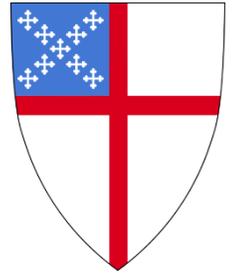
The Rev. Marissa Rohrbach

Lectors

Paul Reis, Andrea Sato, Vytas Kisielius, Janet Nobles, Sharon Pearson, Pam Ely

Next Week: Worship online again with St. Matthew's

There are many ways to connect with St. Matt's in the coming weeks. Please keep an eye on our website and social media as well as our e-news. There you'll find information and opportunities to connect for friends and members of all ages.



Staff

Rector	The Rev. Marissa S. Rohrbach, marissa@stmatthewswilton.org
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Jr. Warden	Pam Ely	Clerk	Anne Newton
Treasurer	Keith DeAngelis		

The Vestry

Vytas Kisielius	Pam Carlson	Joe Magnano
Dodo Roberts	Tim Jarvis	Paul Reis
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