



Ash Wednesday
7:00 P.M.
February 14, 2024

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Bath, PA

Prelude: "Adagio"

arr. Malvik

P: *Psalm 51, read in its entirety.*

C: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Exhortation

P: Brothers and sisters: God created us to experience joy in communion with him, to love all humanity, and to live in harmony with all of his creation. But sin separates us from God, our neighbors, and creation, and so we do not enjoy the life our Creator intended for us. Also, by our sin we grieve our Father, who does not desire us to come under his judgment, but to turn to him and live.

P: As disciples of the Lord Jesus we are called to struggle against everything that leads us away from love of God and neighbor. Repentance, fasting, prayer, and works of love—the discipline of Lent—help us to wage our spiritual warfare. I invite you, therefore, to commit yourselves to this struggle and confess your sins, asking our Father for strength to persevere in your Lenten discipline.

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

*Confession

*P: Most holy and merciful Father:

***C: 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.**

*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 your 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, Lord.**

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

***C: we confess to you, Lord.**

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

***C: we confess to you, Lord.**

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

***C: we confess to you, Lord.**

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

***C: we confess to you, Lord.**

*P: 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,

***C: accept our repentance, Lord.**

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

***C: accept our repentance, Lord.**

*P: For our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us,

***C: accept our repentance, Lord.**

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

***C: Hear us, Lord, for Your mercy is great. Amen**

***The Imposition of Ashes**

Those who desire to receive ashes come forward and kneel before the altar.

The Ministers apply ashes to the forehead of each person with the words:

*P: Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

After all who desire ashes have received them, the minister leads the congregation in the conclusion of the confession.

*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 Passion of your Son, our Lord,

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

*P: Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, does not desire the death of sinners, but rather that they may turn from their wickedness and live. Therefore we implore him to grant us true repentance and his Holy Spirit, that those things may please him which we do on this day, that the rest of our life may be pure and holy, and that at the last we may come to his eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*C: **Amen**

**Hymn LBW #296 "Just as I Am, without One Plea"*

***Prayer of the Day**

*P: The Lord be with you.

*C: **And also with you.**

*P: Almighty and ever-living God,

*C: **You hate nothing you have made, and you forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and honest hearts, so that, truly repenting of our sins, we may receive from you, the God of all mercy, full pardon and forgiveness through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

First Reading: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

¹Blow 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—²a 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. ¹²Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with →

weeping, and with mourning; ¹³rend 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. ¹⁴Who 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? ¹⁵Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; ¹⁶gather 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. ¹⁷Between 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?'"

Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:20b--6:10

^{20b}We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. ^{6:1}As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. ²For 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! ³We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, ⁴but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, ⁵beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; ⁶by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, ⁷truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; ⁸in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; ⁹as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; ¹⁰as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

“Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.”

***P:** The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the sixth chapter.

C:** ***Glory to you, O Lord.

***Gospel: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21**

[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 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. ¹⁶“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. ¹⁹“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.”

***P:** This is the Gospel of the Lord

C:** ***Praise to you, O Christ

Sermon

***Hymn WOV #776 “Be Thou My Vision”**

***Nicene Creed**

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

***Prayers of Intercession**

***P:** Trusting in God’s promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need.

A brief silence.

***V:** You call us to return to you, steadfast God. Renew a right spirit within the church and cleanse the hearts of your people. Strengthen those who proclaim your gospel in word and deed. Lord, in your mercy,

***C: Hear our prayer.**

*V: You sustain your creation, generous God. Supply all that is needful for life to flourish. Protect endangered species and fragile habitats. Teach us to live lightly upon the earth and to honor it as our home. Lord, in your mercy,

***C: Hear our prayer.**

*V: You seek justice and peace, righteous God. Rebuild cities and homelands devastated by war. Provide welcome, help, and safety to refugees. Prosper negotiations that lead to lasting peace among the nations. Lord, in your mercy,

***C: Hear our prayer.**

*V: You care for all people, loving God. Heal any who are scarred by violence, addiction, or trauma of any kind. Comfort those who grieve and bring relief to any in pain. Lord, in your mercy,

***C: Hear our prayer.**

*V: You gather this assembly, abiding God. Unite us in serving our neighbors and working for justice. We pray for caregivers and people who are hospitalized, in treatment, or recovering from illness. Lord, in your mercy,

***C: Hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

*V: You redeem us from death, faithful God. We give thanks for those who served you in the church especially Cyril and Methodius, missionaries, whom we commemorate today. Bring us with all the saints into everlasting joy. Lord, in your mercy,

***C: Hear our prayer.**

*P: Accompany us on our journey, God of grace, and receive the prayers of our hearts, through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

***C: Amen.**

***The Peace**

*P: The Peace of the Lord be with you always!

***C: And also, with you.**

The Peace will be shared between the Pastor and Congregation (only).

***Offering**

The Offering may be dropped off at the beginning or end of the worship service. We will thank God for our blessings, including the ability to give an offering for the work of God's kingdom.

Music at the Offering:

"Restoration"

arr. Heather Sorenson

***Offertory Prayer**

*P: Jesus,

*C: you are the bread of life and the host of this meal. Bless these gifts that we have gathered that all people may know your goodness. Feed us not only with this holy food but with hunger for justice and peace. We pray this in your name. Amen.

***The Thanksgiving**

*P: It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, through Christ our Lord. You bid your people cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast. Renew our zeal in faith and life, and bring us to the fullness of grace that belongs to the children of God. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

***Sanctus**

p. 89

***Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, Lord God of power and might:
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.***

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

***The Words of Institution**

*P: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

***P:** Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

***Lord's Prayer**

***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.

***Agnus Dei**

p. 92

*Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.*

*Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.*

*Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
grant us peace, grant us peace.*

***Invitation to Communion**

***P:** Bread for the journey. A feast for hungry hearts. Come!

The bread and wine/grape juice will be distributed in the front of the church. If you would like to partake in your pew, please ask pastor to get you a pre-packaged communion set or ask an usher.

***Post-Communion Blessing**

***P:** The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you onto everlasting life. Amen.

***Post Communion Canticle**

p. 93

Lord, now let your servant go in peace; your word has been fulfilled. My own eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared in the sight of every people: A light to reveal you to the nations and the glory of your people Israel. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen

***Prayer after Communion**

***P:** Almighty God, you gave your Son both as a sacrifice for sin and a model of the godly life. Enable us to receive him always with thanksgiving, and to conform our lives to his; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.

***C: Amen.**

***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.**

***Hymn WOV #657 “The Glory of these Forty Days”**

***Dismissal**

***P:** Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

***C: Thanks be to God.**

Postlude – *“Ach Gott, von Himmel sieh darien”*

arr. Pachelbel

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Assisting in Worship Today - 7:00 PM

Altar Guild - Gloria M., Judy F.

Ushers - Volunteers - Lector: Volunteer - Acolyte: Volunteer

Contacts:

Church Office Phone: 610-837-1061 - Email: stjohnbath@gmail.com

Pastor Walsh: 484-282-0699 - Email: pastorterrywalsh@outlook.com

Follow us on Facebook:

St. John's church page: <https://www.facebook.com/St-Johns-Lutheran-Church-120814211266763/>

Pastor Walsh's page, for information on faith in the wider world:

<https://www.facebook.com/terrence.walsh.96>

Follow us on our website: www.stjohnsbathpa.org

WELCOME TO ST. JOHN'S!

We are glad that you have entered into the Ash Wednesday and Lent with the people of St. John's Lutheran Church in Bath.

Ash Wednesday is a time to be reminded that our earthly lives are only temporary, but that Jesus Christ calls us to eternal life. Ash Wednesday is the beginning of Lent, a time when we reflect on the promises made at our baptisms. We invite you to give up for Lent something that harms your relationship with God, or to take up a new activity that will strength your relationship with God.

You may be new to St. John's, new to the Bath area, new to Lutheran worship, or may have never before set foot in a church. Regardless how often you have sat in church we are glad to have you join us in worshipping God. We invite you to participate in worship and say prayers for yourself and all who are need. Have questions? Please call or email Pastor Terry.

You are welcome. All are welcome. All are welcome in this place.

Today's Announcements - Ash Wednesday, February 14, 2024

This Week at St. John's

2/14/2024 - Wed.	Ash Wednesday Worship	7:00 PM
2/15/2024 - Thurs.	Quiet Communion - Fell. Hall	1:00 PM
	Adult Choir Rehearsal	7:00 PM
2/18/2024 - Sun.	Worship/Communion	8:00 AM
	Sunday School/Confirmation	9:00 AM
	45 Min Bible Study	9:15 AM
	Worship/Communion	10:15 AM
	Masked Worship/Comm. (Library)	11:45 AM

Upcoming Commemorations

Cyril, monk, died 869; Methodius, bishop, died 885; missionaries to the Slavs Wednesday, February 14, 2024. These two brothers from Thessalonika, Greece, were monks and were sent to bring Christianity to the Slavic people. In the course of their work they created a written language, inventing the Cyrillic alphabet for it, and translated the Bible and the liturgy. **Martin Luther, renewer of the church, died 1546, Sunday, February 18, 2024.** Though he began his adult church life as a simple Augustinian monk, Luther challenged the abuses he saw in the church, and his work eventually led to the Protestant Reformation. Luther's accomplishments included liturgical reform, translation of the Bible, and creation of the Small and Large Catechisms. **Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, martyr, died 156, Friday, February 23, 2024.** Because he is said to have been known by John, the author of Revelation, as well as the important early church fathers Irenaeus and Ignatius, Polycarp serves as a vital link in church history. He was burned at the stake at age 86 for refusing to renounce his faith.

Easter Flowers: We have Tulip, Daffodils, Lily, and Azalea plants for Easter Sunday, March 31, 2024. If you want to purchase a plant in memory of or in honor of a loved one, tulips and daffodils are \$7 each, and lilies are \$10 each, and azaleas are \$13 each. Fill out an order form, turn in to the office or call (610-837-1061). Plants may be picked up after either service on Easter. Orders must be placed by February 25.



2024 Fish Dinners: Lenten fish dinners are back, dates are Friday, March 1, 2024 and Friday, March 15, 2024. Pick-up times for both **take-out** dinners will be from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Order sheets are available for both dinners. Dinners will include baked or fried fish, baked potato, pickled cabbage, stewed tomatoes, roll & butter and a one dessert. Dinners are \$15 per meal. Pre-orders only, no walk ins, take-out only. Call the office to reserve your meals at 610-837-1061.

Prayers Requested For: Matthew A., Jim A., Eileen A., Phyllis & Joe A., Amy B., Allen B., Marsha B., Josie B., Shane B., Barb B., Cory B., Jamie B., Dawn & Bill B., Jason C., Patty & Larry D., Laverne F., Kathy F., Lilly F., Arya G., Cami Grace G., Janis G., Mike H., Shawn H., Lil H., Troy H., Robert H., Chuck H., Scott & Heather H., Seana I., Dennis K., Gerry K., Mary K., Steve K., Diane L., Lee L., Ruth M., The M. Family, April Rose M., Joe N., Danielle N., Samantha O., Arlene O., Brent R., Earl & Steve S., Ethel S., Louise S., Barb S., Beth S., Rosalia S., Gloria S., Dolly T., James T., Stacey T., Ann U., Viola W., Lisa W., Brenda W., LaNor W., Cecile W., Galen W., Susan W., Richard Y., Yvonne Y., Pauline Y., Francis Z., and those unnamed.

If you would like to add or remove a person from the prayer list, contact the Church Office (610-837-1061).

Online Giving Option: We share with you the new e-giving platform, Vanco. This platform provides a secure and user-friendly way to give to our church online, and we are confident that it will make giving more convenient for many members of our congregation. You can give now at this website link: **<https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZAB8>**



Scan this code to get the Vanco App on your mobile device

Stay up to date with worship schedule changes, meeting notices, and weather cancellations by texting **STJOHNSBATH to 84576** or connect with us online at **stjohnsbath.flocknote.com**

This is our new contact tool to keep in touch via email and text with everyone in our flock!

Nursery School Enrollment 2024-2025: Do you know someone looking for a great place to enroll their child in nursery school? Look no further and share the word, we have an amazing program and teachers here at St. John's Bath. Enrollment forms are available through Dawn Mayer at 610-837-9868 or by e-mailing stjohnbath@gmail.com. Classes for 2, 3, and 4-year old's.

Wednesdays in Lent, February 21 & 28, March 6 & 12 & 20

Lenten Wednesday's study "What would Jesus do or say?" We will collect topics that are of interest to those who attend. 4:00 PM in the fellowship hall, so that everyone can drive home in the daylight. If you wish to bring a packed dinner with you, you are welcome to eat dinner during the study, or to eat after the study and continue the discussion.

2024 Ash Wednesday Mediation

In the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 6:1-4, Jesus tells the disciples and us not to practice our piety before others, in order to be seen by them. Why then do we receive ashes on Ash Wednesday? How do ashes help us to enter into Lent?

Ashes are not a sign for others. In our increasingly secular culture other people may not even remember that today is Ash Wednesday, or understand the symbolism. I can't count how many times on Ash Wednesday I have been told that I have dirt on my forehead.

Ashes are not a sign for others. Ashes are a sign for ourselves, to remind us that we will not live on this earth forever. We will eternally, because Jesus Christ raises us from the dead, and lifts us out of the ashes of our existence.

Lent is about remembering the promises of our baptism. We may give up something, to honor God. Or we may take up something, to honor God.

During Lent, two psalms are often used, as reflect on the price our Lord paid to free us from bondage to sin. These are Psalm 22 and Psalm 51. You may want to reflect on these during the 40 days of Lent.

Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return. Remember that Jesus Christ raises you from death, and lifts you from the dust.

Ash Wednesday



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

E C C L E S I A S T E S 3 : 2 0