

# ASH WEDNESDAY

February 17, 2021

Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church

The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod

**The Imposition of Ashes** will begin at about 6:45 p.m. When you enter the sanctuary, spend some time in self-examination (see below). If you desire, you may come to the rail to receive the ashes. After the pastor marks your forehead saying "Remember, you are dust, to dust you shall return", respond: "Amen." After receiving the ashes, you may return to the pew.

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

For nearly a thousand years, these words have been spoken to young and old alike as the sign of the cross is traced on their foreheads with ashes.

The Bible contains a number of references to ashes and dust. In fact, the Lord's curse on Adam, "*dust you are, and to dust you shall return*" (Genesis 3:19) is echoed in the Imposition of Ashes. Ashes not only remind us of our mortality, but are also a sign of public repentance (St. Matthew 11:21).

The reception of the ashes today is a confession that God's judgment against our sin is right and just. But the ashes are also made in the sign of the cross – the very instrument on which our Lord took our place, bearing the punishment for our sin. Thus, the cross of ashes serves to remind us that we are sinners, and that Christ died for us sinners.

## Self-Examination during Imposition of Ashes

*What is the First Commandment?*

You shall have no other gods.

*What does this mean?*

We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.

- + In what or whom do I trust above all else?
- + In what or whom do I trust most for financial security, physical safety, or emotional support?
- + Do I fear God's wrath, avoiding every sin?
- + Is my love for and trust in God evident in my daily living?
- + Do I expect only good from God in every situation, or do I worry, doubt, complain, or feel unfairly treated when things go wrong?
- + Do I withhold from God what is rightfully His?

*What is the Second Commandment?*

You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God so that we do not curse, swear, use satanic arts, lie, or deceive by His name, but call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks.

- + Is the Lord's Word evident in my daily speech and conduct, or do I curse, speak carelessly, or misuse God's name?

- + Do I keep all the vows I have made in the Lord's name, such as confirmation, marriage, or legal vows, etc.?
- + Am I diligent and sincere in my prayers, or have I been lazy, bored, or distracted? Do I trust that the Lord God will answer them according to His good and gracious will?

*What is the Third Commandment?*

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.

- + Do I despise the Word by neglect or by paying little or no attention when it is read or preached?
- + Do I attend the Church's worship faithfully, or do I attend sporadically because I prefer to be elsewhere?
- + Do I pray for my pastor and other church workers and support their efforts in service to the Word?

*What is the Fourth Commandment?*

Honor your father and your mother.

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God so that we do not despise or anger our parents and other authorities, but honor them, serve and obey them, love and cherish them.

- + Do I honor my father and mother, and other authorities, such as teachers, employers, supervisors, governmental leaders, and pastors, receiving them as gifts that God has put in authority over me?
- + Have I been angry, stubborn, or disrespectful toward those in authority over me?
- + Do I obey all the laws of the city, state, and country?
- + Do I faithfully represent God the Father in disciplining, caring for, and catechizing my children?

*What is the Fifth Commandment?*

You shall not murder.

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and support him in every physical need.

- + Have I unjustly taken the life of anyone, born or unborn?
- + Do I treat my own body as a temple of the Holy Spirit, or do I hurt or harm it by gluttony, chemical addiction, or other abuse?
- + Do I hate anyone, or am I angry with anyone?
- + Do I lose my temper or injure my neighbor by thoughts, words, or deeds?
- + Do I hold grudges or harbor resentment?
- + Do I ignore the plight of the helpless, or am I callous toward genuine need?

*What is the Sixth Commandment?*

You shall not commit adultery.

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God so that we lead a sexually pure and decent life in what we say and do, and husband and wife love and honor each other.

- + Am I in a sexual relationship with someone other than my spouse?
- + Do I look at others lustfully and thereby commit adultery with them in my heart?
- + Do I give myself freely and selflessly to my spouse?
- + Do I dishonor marriage by ridicule or divorce?
- + Do I engage in any form of sexual immorality (i.e. pornography)?

*What is the Seventh Commandment?*

You shall not steal.

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God so that we do not take our neighbor's money or possessions, or get them in any dishonest way, but help him to improve and protect his possessions and income.

- + Do I cheat or otherwise seek to get what I have not earned?
- + Do I take care of what I have, pay what I owe, return what I borrow, and respect other people's property?
- + Do I give generously, or am I selfish, stingy, and greedy with my time and money?
- + Am I unfaithful to the responsibilities of my vocation?

*What is the Eighth Commandment?*

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God so that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way.

- + Do I gossip, listen to rumors, or take pleasure in talking about the faults or mistakes of anyone?
- + Do I defend others against false accusations?
- + Do I judge others without the authority to do so?
- + Do I speak the truth in love, trying at all times to explain everything in the best possible way?

*What is the Ninth Commandment?*

You shall not covet your neighbor's house.

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God so that we do not scheme to get our neighbor's inheritance or house, or get it in a way which only appears right, but help and be of service to him in keeping it.

- + Am I discontent with what belongs to me?
- + Do I crave something better, different, or more than what God has given me?
- + Do I seek to satisfy the desires and appetites of my flesh at the expense of the well-being of others?
- + Do I resent or envy those who have what I do not?

*What is the Tenth Commandment?*

You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.



P: Be gracious to us. **C: Spare us, good Lord.**

P: Be gracious to us. **C: Help us, good Lord.**

P: By the mystery of Your holy incarnation; by Your holy nativity; by Your baptism, fasting, and temptation; by Your agony and bloody sweat; by Your cross and Passion; by Your precious death and burial; by Your glorious resurrection and ascension; and by the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter: **C: Help us, good Lord.**

P: In all time of our tribulation; in all time of our prosperity; in the hour of death; and in the day of judgment: **C: Help us, good Lord.**

P: We poor sinners implore You **C: to hear us, O Lord.**

P: To prosper the preaching of Your Word; to bless our prayer and meditation; to strengthen and preserve us in the true faith; to give heart to our sorrow and strength to our repentance:

**C: We implore You to hear us, good Lord.**

P: To draw all to Yourself; to bless those who are instructed in the faith; to watch over and console the poor, the sick, the distressed, the lonely, the forsaken, the abandoned, and all who stand in need of our prayers; to give abundant blessings to all works of mercy; and to have mercy on us all:

**C: We implore You to hear us, good Lord.**

P: To turn our hearts to You; to turn the hearts of our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers; and graciously to hear our prayers:

**C: We implore You to hear us, good Lord.**

P: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,

**C: we implore You to hear us.**

P: Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

**C: have mercy.**

P: Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

**C: have mercy.**

P: Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

**C: grant us Your peace.**

P: O Christ, **C: hear us.**

P: O Lord, **C: have mercy.**

P: O Christ, **C: have mercy.**

P: O Lord, **C: have mercy. Amen.**

P: O God, You desire not the death of sinners, but rather that they turn from their wickedness and live. We implore You to have compassion on the frailty of our mortal nature, for we acknowledge that we are dust and to dust we shall return. Mercifully pardon our sins that we may obtain the promises You have laid up for those who are repentant; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

Service of the Word

OLD TESTAMENT Joel 2:12-19

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## GRADUAL



O come, let us fix our eyes on | Jesus,\*  
the founder and perfecter | of our faith,  
**who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross,  
despise- | ing the shame,\*  
and is seated at the right hand of the | throne of God.**

EPISTLE 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

VERSE

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

HOLY GOSPEL St. Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

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

**C: Glory be to Thee, O Lord.**

*P: This is the Gospel of the Lord*

**C: Praise be to Thee, O Christ.**

NICENE CREED LSB 191

HYMN OF THE DAY: "From Depths of Woe I Cry to Thee" LSB 607

SERMON

Service of the Sacrament

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**TO OUR VISITORS AND GUESTS:** In love toward you and in faithfulness to our Lord, we ask that you speak with our pastor before coming to receive the Lord's Body and Blood in this Holy Sacrament.

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SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT LSB 194

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

"Jesus, Grant That Balm and Healing" LSB 421

"Jesus Christ, Our Blessed Savior" LSB 627

"Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness" LSB 563

COLLECT & BENEDICTION (spoken)

P: Let us pray ... one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.

The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and ✠ give you peace.

**C: Amen.**

## Lenten Cross

In past years the Immanuel Lutheran Missionary Society (ILMS) provided each family with a wooden cross to use at home during the Lenten Season to assist you with your meditation and devotion. If you do not have one, your family will receive one (along with a black cloth to drape over the cross) after the service tonight in the parish hall. After each midweek Lenten Service (and after the Maundy Thursday and Good Friday Services) you will receive another item to display with your Lenten cross.

## Services in the Season of Lent & Holy Week

Divine Services on Sundays at 9:00 a.m.

Midweek Services on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.  
February 24 and March 3, 10, 17, 24

Palm/Passion Sunday Service  
March 28<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.

Maundy Thursday Service  
April 1<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

Good Friday Service  
April 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

Easter Vigil Service  
Part One ~ April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 8:00 p.m.  
Part Two ~ April 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 a.m.