

Atonement Lutheran Church

Serving God through the ELCA in the Metropolitan New York Synod



ASH WEDNESDAY

7:00 PM Worship Service

On Ash Wednesday we begin our forty-day journey toward Easter with a day of fasting and repentance. Marking our foreheads with dust, we acknowledge that we die and return to the earth. At the same time, the dust traces the life-giving cross indelibly marked on our foreheads at baptism. While we journey through Lent to return to God, we have already been reconciled to God through Christ. We humbly pray for God to make our hearts clean while we rejoice that “now is the day of salvation.”

Returning to our baptismal call these 40 days, we more intentionally bear the fruits of mercy and justice in the world.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

The congregation gathers in silence.

Please stand if you are able.

Greeting

Pastor The Lord be with you.

All And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

The presiding minister gathers the congregation into prayer.

Pastor Let us pray...

Almighty and ever-living God, you have made nothing you have made.
Create in us new and honest hearts and renew our hope in you,
the God of all mercy, who grants us pardon and peace through
your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

All Amen.

The congregation is seated.



WORD

First Reading

Joel 2:1-2, 12-14, 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?

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?’ ”

Reader The word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

The Gospel

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Pastor The holy gospel according to St. Matthew, in the sixth chapter.
All 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.

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.”

Pastor The gospel of the Lord.
All Praise to you, O Christ.

The congregation is seated.

Sermon

Silence for reflection follows the sermon.

gospel

Invitation to Lent

The presiding minister invites the congregation into the discipline of Lent.

Pastor Today, we enter into the intentionality of the next 40 days. As Christ was revealed to us more fully during Epiphany, now we are called to reveal ourselves more fully to God during Lent. Today, as we prepare to confess our transgressions to God, let us also commit ourselves to one another, that we can turn toward God—and to our neighbor—with hearts of mercy and acts of compassion.

Confession of Sin

Please kneel or sit. Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

Pastor Most holy and merciful God:

All We confess to you and to one another, and to the whole communion of saints in heaven and on earth, that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed; by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.

Pastor 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.

All Have mercy on us, Lord.

Pastor We have been deaf to your call to serve as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind, and heart, of Christ.

All Have mercy on us, Lord.

Pastor We confess to you, Lord, our past unfaithfulness. The pride, hypocrisy, and impatience in our lives.

All We confess to you, Lord.

Pastor Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of others.

All We confess to you, Lord.

Pastor Our anger, and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,
All **We confess to you, Lord.**

Pastor Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonesty
in daily life and work.
All **We confess to you, Lord.**

Pastor Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to commend the
faith that is in us.
All **We confess to you, Lord.**

Pastor 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.
All **Accept our repentance, Lord.**

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

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

Pastor Do not remember the deeds of our past, but turn our faces toward the
future, where your forgiveness is sure, your welcome is clear, and your
love is overflowing.
All **Hear us, Lord, for your mercy endures forever. Amen.**



Imposition of Ashes

Pastor Almighty God, from the dust of the earth you have created us. May this moment be for us a recognition of our mortality and penitence, and a reminder that only by your gracious gift are we given eternal life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

All Amen.

Those who desire to receive ashes may now come forward. The pastor will mark you with the ashes, saying “remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

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

Please kneel.

Pastor Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,

All that we may show forth your glory in the world.

Pastor By the cross and passion of your Son, our Lord,

All bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.

The minister stands and addresses the congregation.

Pastor Our merciful and loving God does not want us to be separated from heaven. Just as we hope for forgiveness, so God hopes that we will move our hearts toward Christ and find new life. May this day be our turning point— and may our lives reflect the unlimited compassion and love that God has already given us, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

All Amen.

The congregation stands.



Prayers of Intercession

(A brief silence)

Pastor For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.
All Lord, have mercy.

Pastor For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of us all, let us pray to the Lord.
All Lord, have mercy.

Pastor For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.
All Lord, have mercy.

Pastor For the health of creation, for abundant harvests that all may share, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.
All Lord, have mercy.

Pastor For public servants, the government, and those who protect us; for those who work to bring peace, justice, healing, and protection in this and every place, let us pray to the Lord.
All Lord, have mercy.

Pastor For those who travel, for those who are sick and suffering, and for those who are in captivity, let us pray to the Lord.
All Lord, have mercy.

Pastor For deliverance in time of affliction, wrath, danger, and need, let us pray to the Lord.
All Lord, have mercy.

Pastor For all servants of the church, for this assembly, and for all people who await from the Lord great and abundant mercy, let us pray to the Lord.
All Lord, have mercy.

Pastor For all servants of the church, for this assembly, and for all people who await from the Lord great and abundant mercy, let us pray to the Lord.
All Lord, have mercy.

Pastor Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

A brief time of silence follows.

Pastor Giving thanks for all who have gone before us and are at rest, rejoicing in the communion of all the saints, we commend ourselves, one another, and our whole life to you, through Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

Pastor O God, from whom comes every holy desire, every good counsel, and all just works: grant to us, your servants, the peace that passes all understanding, that our hearts and minds may be set upon you, and that our lives may bring glory and honor to your Holy Name.
Through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

All Amen.

SENDING

Blessing

Pastor May God, who has called us forth from the dust of the earth, and claimed us as children of the light, strengthen you on your journey into life renewed!
May the Lord bless you and keep you.
May the Lord's face shine upon you and be gracious to you.
May the Lord look upon you with favor, and grant you ☩ peace.

All Amen.

Dismissal

A Marked with the cross of Christ, go forth to love and serve the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

The congregation departs in silence.
The action underscores the beginning of the season of Lenten repentance
— with tonight's worship ending as unresolved—
moving us toward the completion of our absolution on Easter Sunday.



We have just begin our forty-day journey toward Easter with a day of fasting and repentance. Marking our foreheads with dust, we acknowledge that we die and return to the earth.

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While we journey through Lent to return to God, we have already been reconciled to God through Christ.

We humbly pray for God to make our hearts clean while we rejoice that “now is the day of salvation.”

Returning to our baptismal call these 40 days, we more intentionally bear the fruits of mercy and justice in the world.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Atonement

Serving God through the ELCA in the Metropolitan New York Synod

100 Market Street
Saugerties, NY 12477
(845) 246-8322

Visit Our Website at: www.atonement-saugerties.org

Sunday Worship 9:00 AM
Sunday School 10:30 AM

When you or someone you know is hospitalized or in need of emergency pastoral care:

Rev. Jeffrey Koenig, Coverage Pastor
(845) 597-2901 (Cell)



Atonement Lutheran Church Est. 1859

Saugerties, NY