



# Ash Wednesday

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

MACON, GEORGIA

## WELCOME!

Welcome in the Lord's name to St. Paul's Episcopal Church. No matter who you are and where you are on your journey of faith, you are welcome! You bless us with your presence. We have been gathering for almost 150 years as a community to worship God and demonstrate our faith in our daily lives. Please fill out a "Welcome" card located in the pew rack and place it in the offering plate so we might get to know you better. If you have any questions, clergy or an usher would be happy to assist you in learning more about our worship and community. We invite you to participate in our worship using the books in the pews and this bulletin. Large print bulletins are available from an usher. A nursery is available if needed, although children are welcome in our worship. During worship, at various times we stand, sit, and kneel; these instructions are for those who are physically able. An \* **indicates the people stand**. Holy water is at the back of the church for blessings as you come and go. We are delighted you are with us, and hope to see you again at future parish events.

## REGARDING COMMUNION

All who seek Christ are welcome at God's Table. After the invitation to communion, ushers will guide you to receive the Sacrament. You may receive communion by kneeling or standing at the altar rail. Place your hand out, palm up, and bread will be placed in your hand. You may eat the bread and take a sip from the cup; or you may hold the bread and dip it into the cup. If you do not wish to receive the wine, you may cross your arms over your chest. If you do not wish to receive either bread or wine, cross your arms over your chest and you will receive a blessing; then return to your seat. For those who cannot come to the altar rail, notify an usher and communion will be brought to you. Parents may decide whether small children should receive; however, even if the child does not receive the Sacrament, parents are encouraged to bring children forward for a blessing. We offer gluten-free bread at communion. If you have a wheat allergy, notify a server and they will accommodate your request.

## ABOUT LENT

Early Christians observed "a season of penitence and fasting" in preparation for the Paschal feast, or Pascha (BCP, pp. 264-265). The season is now known as Lent (from an Old English word meaning "spring," the time of lengthening days). This fast became attached to another fast of forty days, in imitation of Christ's fasting in the wilderness. The forty-day fast was especially important for converts to the faith who were preparing for baptism, and for those guilty of notorious sins who were being restored to the Christian assembly. In the Western Church the forty days of Lent extend from Ash Wednesday through Holy Saturday, omitting Sundays. The last three days of Lent are the sacred Triduum of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday. All Christians are invited "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" (BCP, p. 265).

**ASH WEDNESDAY LITURGY:**  
**IMPOSITION OF ASHES & HOLY EUCHARIST RITE I**  
*BCP is Book of Common Prayer | Hymnal 1982*

---

**Prelude**

**Welcome**

**Entrance Hymn**

*“Lord, who throughout these forty days”*

**Hymn 142**

1. Lord, who throughout these forty days  
for us didst fast and pray,  
teach us with thee to mourn our sins  
and close by thee to stay.
2. As thou with Satan didst contend  
and didst the victory win,  
O give us strength in thee to fight,  
in thee to conquer sin.
3. As thou didst hunger bear and thirst,  
so teach us, gracious Lord,  
to die to self, and chiefly live  
by thy most holy Word.
4. And through these days of penitence,  
and through thy Passiontide,  
yea, evermore, in life and death,  
Jesus! with us abide.
5. Abide with us, that so, this life  
of suffering overpast,  
an Easter of unending joy  
we may attain at last!

**The Salutation**

Celebrant: Bless the Lord who forgiveth all our sins.

**People: His mercy endureth for ever.**

**The Collect**

**BCP, p. 264**

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

**People: And with thy spirit.**

Celebrant: Let us pray:

Almighty and everlasting God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made and dost forgive the sins of all those 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 thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

**People: Amen**

## THE WORD OF GOD

### First Reading

**Isaiah 58:1-12**

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

Shout out, do not hold back! Lift up your voice like a trumpet! Announce to my people their rebellion, to the house of Jacob their sins. Yet day after day they seek me and delight to know my ways, as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness and did not forsake the ordinance of their God; they ask of me righteous judgments, they delight to draw near to God. "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. Look, 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. Is such the fast that I choose, a day to humble oneself? Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush, and to lie in sackcloth and ashes? 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 thongs 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? Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am. 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. Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.

**Reader:** The Word of the Lord.

**People:** **Thanks be to God.**

### Gradual Psalm 103:8-14

*Benedic, anima mea*

- 8 The 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.
- 10 He 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.

12 As 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.

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

## **Second Lesson**

**2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10**

A reading from Paul's second letter to the Corinthians.

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.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

## **The Gospel**

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

Reader: A reading from the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

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."

**Reader:** The Word of the Lord.

**People:** Thanks be to God.

### **The Invitation to Observe a Holy Lent**

**BCP, p. 264**

*The People kneel*

**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. This 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 then kept for a time, all kneeling.*

### **The Imposition of Ashes**

**BCP, p. 265**

**Celebrant:** Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth: Grant that these ashes may be to us a sign of our mortality and penitence, that we may remember that it is only by your gracious gift that we are given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

**People:** Amen.

*If ashes are present, the people may impose ashes on themselves or on others in their household. Impose ashes making the sign off the cross, and speaking these words, "Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return."*

### **Psalm 51**

**BCP, p. 266**

- 1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindness; \*  
in your great compassion blot out my offenses.
- 2 Wash me through and through from my wickedness \*  
and cleanse me from my sin.
- 3 For I know my transgressions, \*  
and my sin is ever before me.
- 4 Against you only have I sinned \*  
and done what is evil in your sight.
- 5 And so you are justified when you speak \*

- and upright in your judgment
- 6 Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth, \*  
a sinner from my mother's womb.
- 7 For behold, you look for truth deep within me, \*  
and will make me understand wisdom secretly.
- 8 Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure; \*  
wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.
- 9 Make me hear of joy and gladness, \*  
that the body you have broken may rejoice.
- 10 Hide your face from my sins \*  
and blot out all my iniquities.
- 11 Create in me a clean heart, O God, \*  
and renew a right spirit within me.
- 12 Cast me not away from your presence \*  
and take not your holy Spirit from me.
- 13 Give me the joy of your saving help again \*  
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.
- 14 I shall teach your ways to the wicked, \*  
and sinners shall return to you.
- 15 Deliver me from death, O God, \*  
and my tongue shall sing of your  
righteousness, O God of my salvation.
- 16 Open my lips, O Lord, \*  
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.
- 17 Had you desired it, I would have offered  
sacrifice; \*  
but you take no delight in burnt-offerings.
- 18 The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; \*  
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

### **Litany of Penitence**

**BCP, pp. 267-269**

*The Celebrant and People together, all kneeling*

**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*

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.

**People: 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.

**People: Have mercy on us, Lord.**

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

**People: We confess to you, Lord.**

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

**People: We confess to you, Lord.**

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

**People: We confess to you, Lord.**

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

**People: We confess to you, Lord.**

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

**People: 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,

**People: 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,

**People: Accept our repentance, Lord.**

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

**People: Accept our repentance, Lord.**

Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us;

**People: Favorably hear us, for your mercy is great.**

Accomplish in us the work of your salvation,

**People: That we may show forth your glory in the world.**

By the cross and passion of your Son our Lord,

**People: Bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.**

**The Assurance of Absolution**

**BCP, p. 269**

*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.

**People: Amen.**

**Closing Hymn**

*“The glory of these forty days”*

**Hymn 143**

1. The glory of these forty days  
we celebrate with songs of praise;  
for Christ, by whom all things were made,  
himself has fasted and has prayed.
2. Alone and fasting Moses saw  
the loving God who gave the law;  
and to Elijah, fasting, came  
the steeds and chariots of flame.
3. So Daniel trained his mystic sight,  
delivered from the lions' might;  
and John, the Bridegroom's friend, became  
the herald of Messiah's name.
4. Then grant us, Lord, like them to be  
full oft in fast and prayer with thee;  
our spirits strengthen with thy grace,  
and give us joy to see thy face.
5. O Father, Son, and Spirit blest,  
to thee be every prayer addressed,  
who art in three-fold Name adored,  
from age to age, the only Lord.

**Blessing**

**Dismissal**

*The Deacon, or Celebrant, sends us forth into the world; the people respond*

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**BCP, p. 339**

**Postlude**



## ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

*"We challenge ourselves and the world to love like Jesus"*



### CLERGY

The Rt. Rev. Robert C. Wright, *Bishop*

The Rt. Rev. Don A. Wimberly, *Assisting Bishop*

The Rev. Bryan Hinson, *Priest-in-Charge*

The Rev. Dr. Gary Abbott, *Retired Priest-in-Residence*

### STAFF

Nadine Cheek, *Organist/Choirmaster*

Dena Hobbs, *Campus Ministry*

Leah Lowndes, *Parish Administrator*

Akram Saymeh, *Bookkeeper*

Mary Patmon, *Custodian*

### VESTRY MEMBERS

Teri Kramer, *Treasurer* | Russell Lewis, *Interim Chancellor* | Tamika Sanders, *Clerk*

#### Class of 2021

Teri Kramer  
Nancy Ogilvie  
Word Train

#### Class of 2022

Billie Abbott  
Andrea Freeman  
Sean McCrackin

#### Class of 2023

Preston Aldridge  
Danny Greene  
Kathy Sprenger

## St. Paul's Episcopal Church Prayer Lists

**We pray for those on our parish prayer list:** Betty, Bubber, Casey, Dakota, Dawson, Hallie, Jamie, Jim, Kay, the Lowndes family, Paul, Richard, Terri, the Vane family, Wesley, the Wilcox family

**We pray for those on our long term parish prayer list:** Beatrice, Betty, Blair, the Broome family, Carol, Cathy, the Coley family, Donna, Frank, George, the Gregory family, Jim, Judy, Kimberly, Mike, Rebecca, Richard, Vernon

**We pray for our ministries with:** Appleton Episcopal Ministries, Campus Ministry, Daybreak, Haitian Hope, Loaves and Fishes, Path to Shine, St. Paul's Apartments and Village, and Weekend Lunch.