

St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church & Elementary School
Our Mission: Learn God's Truth, Share Spirit's Healing, Follow Jesus' Ways.
ASH WEDNESDAY

March 5, 2025

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(P) Pastor; (A) Worship Assistant; (\*) Please stand as you're able;  
Congregation responses in **BOLD**

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The CHURCH'S GATHERING



PRELUDE: "God's Word Is Our Great Heritage" –J.G. Walther

CALL to WORSHIP and PRAYER of the DAY

Lord, ☩ have mercy. **Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy on us.**
Holy God, **hear our prayer.** *A brief silence.* Almighty and ever-living God,
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 Leader and Savior, who lives
and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen**

***GATHERING HYMN: # 509 "God's Word Is Our Great Heritage"**

GOD'S WORD

READING: Genesis 4:2b-15 *Contemporary English Version*

A: This is a reading from the book of Genesis, the 4th chapter.

Later Eve had another son and named him Abel. Abel became a sheep farmer, but Cain farmed the land. One day, Cain gave part of his harvest to the LORD, and Abel also gave an offering to the LORD. He killed the first-born lamb from one of his sheep and gave the LORD the best parts of it. The LORD was pleased with Abel and his offering, but not with Cain and his offering. This made Cain so angry that he could not hide his feelings.

The LORD said to Cain: What's wrong with you? Why do you have such an angry look on your face? If you had done the right thing, you would be smiling. But you did the wrong thing, and now sin is waiting to attack you like a lion. Sin wants to destroy you, but don't let it!

Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go for a walk." And when they were out in a field, Cain killed him.

Afterwards the LORD asked Cain, "Where is Abel?"

"How should I know?" he answered. "Am I supposed to look after my brother?"

Then the LORD said:

Why have you done this terrible thing? You killed your own brother, and his blood flowed onto the ground. Now his blood is calling out for me to punish you. And so, I'll put you under a curse. Because you killed Abel and made his blood run out on the ground, you will never be able to farm the land

again. If you try to farm the land, it won't produce anything for you. From now on, you'll be without a home, and you'll spend the rest of your life wandering from place to place.

"This punishment is too hard!" Cain said. "You're making me leave my home and live far from you. I will have to wander about without a home, and just anyone could kill me."

"No!" the LORD answered. "Anyone who kills you will be punished seven times worse than I am punishing you." So the LORD put a mark on Cain to warn everyone not to kill him.

This is the Word of God, word of life.

We give our thanks to God.

READING: Romans 7:5-13 *Common English Bible*

A: This is a reading from Paul's letter to the Romans, the 7th chapter. When we were self-centered, the sinful passions aroused through the Law were at work in all the parts of our body, so that we bore fruit for death. But now we have been released from the Law. We have died with respect to the thing that controlled us, so that we can be slaves in the new life under the Spirit, not in the old life under the written Law.

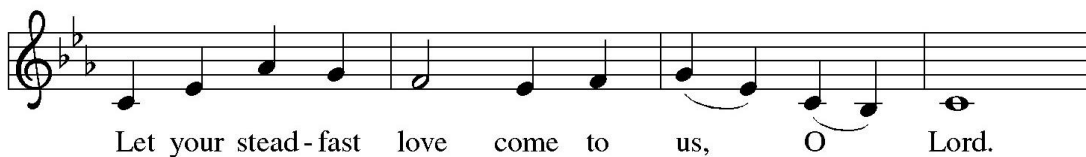
So what are we going to say? That the Law is sin? Absolutely not! But I wouldn't have known sin except through the Law. I wouldn't have known the desire for what others have if the Law had not said, *Don't desire to take what others have*. But sin seized the opportunity and used this commandment to produce all kinds of desires in me. Sin is dead without the Law. I used to be alive without the Law, but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life, and I died. So the commandment that was intended to give life brought death. Sin seized the opportunity through the commandment, deceived me, and killed me. So the Law itself is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous, and good.

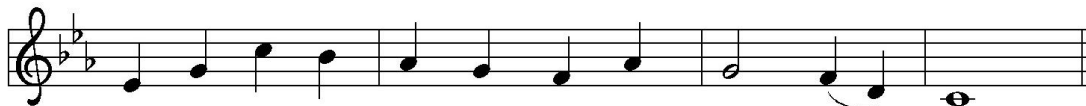
So did something good bring death to me? Absolutely not! But sin caused my death through something good so that sin would be exposed as sin. That way sin would become even more thoroughly sinful through the commandment.

This is the Word of God, word of life.

We give our thanks to God.

***WELCOMING the GOSPEL:**





Save us as you prom-ised; we will trust your word.

Verse: *Return to the | Lord, your God,* who is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, and abounding in | steadfast love.*

***HOLY GOSPEL: Luke 6:39-49** *Common English Bible*

P: This is the Holy Gospel as the Word was given to Luke, the 6th chapter.

We give glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus also used some sayings as he spoke to the people. He said: Can one blind person lead another blind person? Won't they both fall into a ditch? Are students better than their teacher? But when they are fully trained, they will be like their teacher.

You can see the speck in your friend's eye. But you don't notice the log in your own eye. How can you say, "My friend, let me take the speck out of your eye," when you don't see the log in your own eye? You show-offs! First, get the log out of your own eye. Then you can see how to take the speck out of your friend's eye.

A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot produce good fruit. You can tell what a tree is like by the fruit it produces. You cannot pick figs or grapes from thorn bushes. Good people do good things because of the good in their hearts. Bad people do bad things because of the evil in their hearts. Your words show what is in your heart.

Why do you keep on saying that I am your Lord, when you refuse to do what I say? Anyone who comes and listens to me and obeys me is like someone who dug down deep and built a house on solid rock. When the flood came and the river rushed against the house, it was built so well that it didn't even shake. But anyone who hears what I say and doesn't obey me is like someone whose house wasn't built on solid rock. As soon as the river rushed against that house, it was smashed to pieces!

This is the Good News of Christ's Victory.

We give praise to you, O Christ.

***HYMN of the DAY: # 606 "Our Father, We Have Wandered"**

MESSAGE: Integrity *silence for reflection follows*

CHORAL RESPONSE: "Out of the Depths, I Cry to You" –K. Lee Scott

ASH WEDNESDAY SOLEMN CONFESSION

INVITATION to the LENTEN DISCIPLINE

P: People of God, today with the whole church we enter the time of recalling Jesus' passover from death to life, and our life in Christ is renewed.

We begin this holy season by acknowledging our need for repentance and for God's mercy. We are created to experience joy in communion with God,

to love one another, and to live in harmony with creation. But our sinful rebellion separates us from God, our neighbors, and creation, so that we do not enjoy the life our creator intended.

As disciples of Jesus, we are called to a discipline that contends against evil and resists whatever leads us away from love of God and neighbor. I invite you, therefore, to the discipline of Lent—self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love—strengthened by the gifts of word and sacrament. Let us continue our journey through these forty days to the great Three Days of Jesus' death and resurrection.

OUR CONFESSION

P: We confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. *Silence.* Most holy and merciful God, **we confess to you and to one another, and before the whole company of heaven, that we have sinned by our fault, by our own fault, by our own most grievous fault, in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone.**

A: 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, O God.**

We have shut our ears 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, O God.**

Our past unfaithfulness, the pride, envy, hypocrisy, and apathy that have infected our lives, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to share the faith that is in us, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our neglect of human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our false judgments, our uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

P: Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us.
Hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.

IMPOSITION of ASHES

Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth.
May these ashes be a sign of our mortality and penitence, reminding us

that only by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ are we given eternal life;
through the same Jesus Christ, our Leader and Savior. **Amen**

FORGIVENESS

A: Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,
that we may show forth your glory in the world.

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

P: Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Savior
Jesus † Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy
Spirit keep us in eternal life. **Amen**

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE

A: Led by the Spirit, we turn to God in prayer for the church, the world, and
all those in need. *A brief silence.*

1 God of our journeys, we pray for the church as the season of Lent begins.
Guide your people in spiritual practices and preparation for baptism.
Strengthen communities of faith in discipleship and witness for the sake of
the gospel. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

2 God of creation, we pray for the earth. As you once brought forth life from
the dust, breathe healing and renewal into all places where ecosystems are
stretched and strained. Nurture organic cycles of life, death, and rebirth.
God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

3 God of the nations, we pray for an end to wars and occupations that
reduce communities to ash. Turn leaders away from fearful decision-making,
and lead all people into the justice and compassion of your reign. God, in
your mercy,
receive our prayer.

4 God of community, we pray for those who accompany the dying: for first
responders, health care and hospice workers, chaplains, and those who
facilitate burials of the dead. Sustain them as they serve their neighbors in
life and death with dignity and care. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

5 God of the suffering, we pray for all who live with any pain. Comfort people living with chronic or terminal illnesses, addictions, or anxiety. Grant that all who dwell in the dust of grief may know your presence there.

P: We pray for.... God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

God of the cross, we give thanks for those who have completed their lives on earth and have returned to you. Strengthen us with the promise that within the ashes of death are the seeds of resurrection life. God, in your mercy,
receive our prayer.

Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life. **Amen**

JESUS' SUPPER

PEACE

We come to the Table, forgiven and reconciled with all God's people.
The peace of Christ is with you always. **And also with you.**

RECEIVING the OFFERING

OFFERING HYMN: "Create in Me"

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re-new a right
spir-it with-in me. Cast me not a-way from your pres-ence, and take
not your Ho-ly Spir-it from me. Re-store to me the joy of
your sal-va-tion, and up-hold me with your free Spir-it.

OFFERING PRAYER

A: Let us pray. *A brief silence.* Gracious Provider, you set your immense treasures among us, opening your heart to the world. As we prepare to feast

on your bountiful love, deepen our commitment to sharing those treasures with others, through our Savior, Jesus Christ. **Amen**

***THANKSGIVING at the TABLE**

We bless and praise you, O God of the universe.

**Your grace and mercy are everlasting,
and your faithfulness endures from age to age.**

We praise you for creating the heavens and the earth.

**We praise you for saving the earth
from the waters of the flood.**

We praise you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea.

**We praise you for leading your people
through the wilderness to the land of milk and honey.**

We praise you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one.

We praise you for the death and resurrection of Christ.

We praise you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

On the night when Jesus was handed over, he took some bread in his hands, gave thanks to his Father and broke the loaf. Giving it to his followers, he said,

“Take this and eat. It is my body, which is given for you.
Do this to remember me.”

After supper he took a cup filled with wine, blessed and shared it with them, saying,

“This cup that is poured out for you, and for all people for the forgiveness of sin, is the new covenant in my blood.
Do this, as often as you drink it, to remember me.”

With this bread and cup we remember our Lord’s passover from death to life as we witness to the mystery of faith:

**We remember Christ’s death.
We proclaim Christ’s resurrection.
We await Christ’s return.**

O God of resurrection and new life:
Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and
on these gifts of bread and wine.

**Bless this feast. Grace our table
with your presence. Come, Holy Spirit.**

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread.
Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world.
Breathe his new life into us.

**Send us out, burning with justice,
peace, and love. Come, holy Jesus.**

We ask this gift of grace in Jesus' holy and loving name. **Amen**

***LORD'S PRAYER**

We pray for Christ's forgiveness, as he has taught us.

**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**

***BREAKING the BREAD**

Bread is broken. **Love is shared.**

Sharing Communion *Please take time for meditation & prayer.*

SONG during SUPPER: # 601 "Savior, When in Dust to You"

SPIRIT'S SENDING

***PRAYER for MISSION**

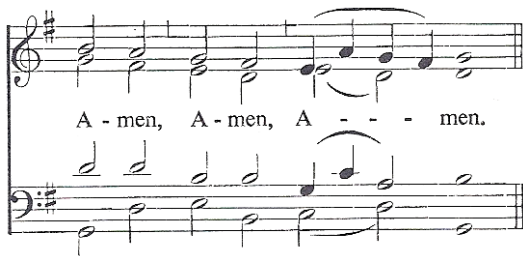
P: Holy God, hear our prayer. *A brief silence.* Merciful God, **accompany our
journey thru these forty days. Renew us in the gift of baptism, that
we may provide for those who are poor, pray for those in need, fast
from self-indulgence, and above all that we may find our treasure in
the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Leader and Savior. Amen**

***BLESSING**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and † give you peace.



***SENDING HYMN: # 618 "Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer"**

***SENDING**

A: Go in peace. Care for others as God cares for you.

God leads us as we love and serve all! Amen

POSTLUDE: "Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer" –J.B. Carlson