

# ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH



## ASH WEDNESDAY

February 17, 2021

7:00 p.m.

*If you are visiting, we offer you a special welcome and would like to get acquainted. Please send the co-host a chat note if the chat option is open, or after worship email [office@stjamesvt.org](mailto:office@stjamesvt.org) with your name, where you're from, and an email address if you would like receive more information about our parish. Thank you for worshipping with us! We are glad you are here.*

*Please keep your microphone muted for most of the service. A “designated responder” will lead the responses of the people. If you are reading a lesson or adding a thanksgiving or prayer request aloud during the time of prayers, please unmute yourself. After your prayer is completed, mute yourself again.*

*On this day, the Presider begins the liturgy with the Salutation and the Collect of the Day*

**Presider** The Lord be with you.

**People** *And also with you.*

**Presider** Let us pray.

*Presider and People*

Almighty and merciful God, you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who turn to you in true repentance: Create in us new and humble hearts, that we, who come to you for healing and for help, may find forgiveness, reconciliation, and transformation of life; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

—*St. Helena Breviary*

## The Liturgy of the Word

### First Reading: Isaiah 58:1-12

**Reader:** 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** Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Churches.

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

*A period of silence is kept.*

### **Psalm 103:8-14**

*Benedic, anima mea*

8 You are full of compassion and mercy, \*  
slow to anger and of great kindness.

9 You will not always accuse us, \*  
nor will you keep your anger for ever.

10 You have 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 your mercy great upon those who fear you.

12 As far as the east is from the west, \*  
so far have you removed our sins from us.

13 As a parent cares for a child, \*  
so do you care for those who fear you.

14 For you yourself know whereof we are made; \*  
you remember that we are but dust.

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

**Reader:** A reading from The Second Letter of Paul 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** Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Churches.

**People** Thanks be to God.

**Sequence Hymn: You shall be like a garden**

**Isaiah 58:11**

The musical score is written in 3/4 time with a tempo marking of quarter note = 80. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has a treble clef and a bass clef. The treble clef part has lyrics: "You shall be like a gar - den, like a". The bass clef part has a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Chords indicated above the treble clef are Dmin, A7, Dmin, and A7. The second system also has a treble clef and a bass clef. The treble clef part has lyrics: "deep spring where wa - ters ne - ver fail." The bass clef part continues the accompaniment. Chords indicated above the treble clef are Dmin, Gmin, and A7. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

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

**Deacon** The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

**People** Glory to you, Lord Christ.

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."

**Deacon** The Gospel of the Lord.

**People** Praise to you, Lord Christ.

*A period of silence is kept.*

### **Time of Reflection**

*The Presider invites the people to the observance of a holy Lent, saying*

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 as able. The Presider then says the following prayer over the ashes.*

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. *Amen.*

*There is no Imposition of Ashes during this service. Led by the Presider, we all say together:*

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

*A period of silence follows*

*The following Psalm is then said in unison.*

**Psalm 51: 1-18**

*Miserere mei, Deus*

- 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**

*The Presider and People say together*

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 Presider 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.

*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.

*Have mercy on us, Lord.*

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

*We confess to you, Lord.*

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people,  
*We confess to you, Lord.*

Our anger at our own frustration, and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,  
*We confess to you, Lord.*

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

Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,  
*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,  
*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,  
*Accept our repentance, Lord.*

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

Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us;  
*Favorably hear us, for your mercy is great.*

Accomplish in us the work of your salvation,  
*That we may show forth your glory in the world.*

By the cross and passion of your Son our Lord,  
*Bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.*

*The Priest 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. God pardons and absolves all those who truly repent, and with sincere hearts believe the holy Gospel. Therefore we beseech God to grant us true repentance and the Holy Spirit, that those things may please God 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 eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*The Peace is then exchanged.*

## The Peace

**Presider** The peace of Christ be always with you.

**People** *And also with you.*

*Please either open your microphone to share the peace aloud or visually give a sign of peace or share your peace in the chat box.*

## Offertory Hymn: Bless the Lord, my soul

WLP 825

The image shows a musical score for the offertory hymn. It consists of two systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "Bless the Lord my soul and bless God's ho - ly name." and "Bless the Lord my soul, Who leads me in - to life." The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line and chords that support the vocal melody.

Words: Psalm 103

Music: Jacques Berthier (1923-1994)

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## **The Lord's Prayer**

**Presider** Let us pray.

*All say together*

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your Name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial,  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever. Amen.

## **Concluding Solemn Prayer**

*The Deacon says*

Bow down before the Lord.

*The Presider says*

Grant, most merciful Lord, to your faithful people pardon and peace, that they may be cleansed from all their sins, and serve you with a quiet mind; through Christ our Lord.

## **Dismissal**

**Deacon** Let us bless the Lord.

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

**Officiant and Preacher:** The Rev. Kim Hardy  
**Lectors:** Jenny Ogelby, Kathy Rouleau  
**Deacon:** The Rev. Dn. Dave Ganter  
**Psalm Leader & Intercessor:** Barbara Cook  
**Designated Responder on Behalf of the People:** Jenny Ogelby  
**Musicians:** Carol Reichard, Kim Hardy  
**Usher:** Peggy Bonesteel  
**Zoom Facilitator (co-host):** Neal Robinson

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## Ash Wednesday

Welcome to St. James Episcopal Church on this first day of Lent. Today the Liturgy presents a challenge to Christian people. It confronts us with the radical change in living which is the Way of Christ. We are faced with sin and salvation as alternative directions for our lives: sin as separation from God, from others, from ourselves and from the natural world; salvation as reconciliation with God, others, ourselves, and the natural world.

The Church's liturgy on Ash Wednesday invites us 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." This first day of Lent sets the pattern for our Lenten observance: one which leads directly to our recognition that we are mortal; we will die and, indeed, are in the process of dying all the time. Our sin is not the primary focus of our attention. Instead, our recognition that we are sinful moves us to an awareness of our need to change and be changed. Our repentance becomes not an end in itself but a renewed relationship of children to God, opening us to accept God's love, mercy, and peace.

As a result, prayer, fasting, and self-denial are saved from being mere good works for our own benefit, and instead free us, our time, and our resources to a new and deeper scope of ministry to others.

Finally, in the scriptures we recover once again the story of God's mighty acts of salvation for the entire human race: we discover once again that we are part of a vast company of believers in every age on pilgrimage into God's Kingdom.

*Isaiah 58:1-12* "Be reconciled to God..." Paul tells us. Make you prayer, fasting, and ministry the marks of an inner and fundamental way of living day in and day out, says the Lord. In his teaching about fasting, Jesus echoes the message Isaiah had given to Israel centuries earlier.

"Remember, you are dust and to dust you shall return," is turned around into, "you shall have life, and you shall have it abundantly."

## ST. JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH

**Bishop of Vermont:** The Right Rev. Shannon MacVean-Brown

**Rector:** The Rev. Kim Hardy

**Deacon:** The Rev. Deacon David Ganter

**Vestry:**

**Senior Warden,** Neal Robinson

**Junior Warden,** Ron Belair

Peggy Bonesteel

Linda Chiasson

Ron Cook

Carol Gross

Patricia Hanson

Paula Morgan

**Minister of Music:** Carol Reichard

**Parish Administrator:** Diane Muckstadt

**4 St. James Place, Essex Junction, Vermont 05452**

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