Year A – Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, February 18, 2026

Collect for Ash Wednesday

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all 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 you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Old Testament

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

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1 Blow the trumpet in Zion, And sound an alarm in My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the
land tremble; For the day of the LORD is coming, For it is at hand: 2 A day of darkness and
gloominess, A day of clouds and thick darkness, Like the morning clouds spread over the mountains.
A people come, great and strong, The like of whom has never been; Nor will there ever be any such
after them, Even for many successive generations.
12 Now, therefore,' says the LORD, 'Turn to Me with all your heart, With fasting, with weeping, and
with mourning.' 13 So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the LORD your God, For He
is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm. 14
Who knows if He will turn and relent, And leave a blessing behind Him -- A grain offering and a
drink offering For the LORD your God? 15 Blow the trumpet in Zion, Consecrate a fast, Call a sacred
assembly; 16 Gather the people, Sanctify the congregation, Assemble the elders, Gather the children
and nursing babes; Let the bridegroom go out from his chamber, And the bride from her dressing
room. 17 Let the priests, who minister to the LORD, Weep between the porch and the altar; Let them
say, 'Spare Your people, O LORD, And do not give Your heritage to reproach, That the nations
should rule over them. Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?' '

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

The People: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 51

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1 Have mercy upon me, O God, According to Your lovingkindness; According to the multitude of
Your tender mercies, Blot out my transgressions. 2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And
cleanse me from my sin. 3 For I acknowledge my transgressions, And my sin is always before me.
The LORD our God is gracious and merciful.
4 Against You, You only, have I sinned, And done this evil in Your sight -- That You may be found

just when You speak, And blameless when You judge. 5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me. 6 Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, And in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom.

The LORD our God is gracious and merciful.

7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. 8 Make me hear joy and gladness, That the bones You have broken may rejoice. 9 Hide Your face from my sins, And blot out all my iniquities.

**At the end of the Psalms this is sung or said*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: **
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

New Testament

2 Corinthians 5:20-21, 1-2

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20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. 21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

1 We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. 2 For He says: 'In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you.' Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

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

The People: Thanks be to God.

Gospel

Matthew 6:1-8, 16-18

Deacon: *The Lord be with you.*

People: *And also with you. Or And with your spirit.*

Deacon: *May the Lord be on our minds, on our lips, and on our hearts as we hear His Holy Gospel. The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Saint Matthew.*

People: *Glory to You, Lord Christ.*

Deacon: *We are reading from Matthew's Gospel chapter 6, beginning at verse 1.*

1 Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. 2 Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 3 But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 that your charitable deed may be in

secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly. 5 And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 6 But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. 7 And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. 8 Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.

16 Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 17 But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, 18 so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

After the Gospel reading, the deacon can elevate the book and says:

Deacon: ***The Gospel of the Lord.***

People: *Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.*