

# *Ash Wednesday*



## **Holy Eucharist II**

March 5, 2025

7:00 p.m.

**Saint Alban's Episcopal Church Welcomes You**

*130 39<sup>th</sup> Ave. Pl. NW, Hickory, NC 28601*

*(828) 324-1351*

*Welcome to St. Alban's. We are grateful for your presence.*

*Cloth pew bags are available for our younger worshippers.*

*Please return to the basket as you depart.*

## Prelude

# The Word of God

**Silent Procession**      *(Stand as Ministers of the service enter)*

Bless the Lord, who forgives all our sins

*People*            ***His mercy endures forever.***

*Let us pray.*

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.*

**First Reading:** Joel 2:1-2, 12-17      *(The people sit.)*

A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Joel.

<sup>1</sup>Blow 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—

<sup>2</sup>a 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.

<sup>12</sup>Yet even now, says the LORD,  
    return to me with all your heart,  
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;  
    <sup>13</sup>rend 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.

<sup>14</sup>Who 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?

<sup>15</sup>Blow the trumpet in Zion;  
    sanctify a fast;  
call a solemn assembly;  
    <sup>16</sup>gather the people.

Sanctify the congregation;  
    assemble the aged;  
gather the children,  
    even infants at the breast.

Let the bridegroom leave his room,  
    and the bride her canopy.

<sup>17</sup>Between 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.  
*People*            Thanks be to God.

**Psalm:** Psalm 103:8-14   *(Spoken in unison as the People remain seated.)*

<sup>8</sup>The LORD is merciful and gracious,  
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.  
<sup>9</sup>He will not always accuse,  
nor will he keep his anger forever.  
<sup>10</sup>He does not deal with us according to our sins,  
nor repay us according to our iniquities.  
<sup>11</sup>For as the heavens are high above the earth,  
so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;  
<sup>12</sup>as far as the east is from the west,  
so far he removes our transgressions from us.  
<sup>13</sup>As a father has compassion for his children,  
so the LORD has compassion for those who fear him.  
<sup>14</sup>For he knows how we were made;  
he remembers that we are dust.

**Second Reading:** 2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10

A Reading from Paul's Second Letter to the Church in Corinth.

<sup>20b</sup>We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. <sup>21</sup>For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

<sup>6:1</sup>As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. <sup>2</sup>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! <sup>3</sup>We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, <sup>4</sup>but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, <sup>5</sup>beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; <sup>6</sup>by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, <sup>7</sup>truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; <sup>8</sup>in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; <sup>9</sup>as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; <sup>10</sup>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.

**Sequence Hymn** *(Stand)*

*Eternal Lord of love, behold your Church*

Hymnal 149

**Gospel:** Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 (Remain standing.)

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

*People* Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Jesus said, <sup>1</sup>“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.

<sup>2</sup>“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. <sup>3</sup>But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, <sup>4</sup>so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

<sup>5</sup>“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. <sup>6</sup>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.

<sup>16</sup>“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. <sup>17</sup>But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup>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.

<sup>19</sup>“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; <sup>20</sup>but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup>For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

*People* Praise to you, Lord Christ.

## **The Homily**

The Rev. Anne Bridgers

## **Invitation to Holy Lent**

BCP p. 264

*All stand as the Celebrant 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.*

*The ushers will direct the people to come forward to receive the imposition of ashes.*

## **Imposition of Ashes**

BCP p. 265

*The ashes are imposed with the following words*

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

- <sup>1</sup>Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindness; \*  
in your great compassion blot out my offenses.
- <sup>2</sup>Wash me through and through from my wickedness \*  
and cleanse me from my sin.
- <sup>3</sup>For I know my transgressions, \*  
and my sin is ever before me.
- <sup>4</sup>Against you only have I sinned \*  
and done what is evil in your sight.
- <sup>5</sup>And so you are justified when you speak \*  
and upright in your judgment.
- <sup>6</sup>Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth, \*  
a sinner from my mother's womb.
- <sup>7</sup>For behold, you look for truth deep within me, \*  
and will make me understand wisdom secretly.
- <sup>8</sup>Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure; \*  
wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.
- <sup>9</sup>Make me hear of joy and gladness, \*  
that the body you have broken may rejoice.
- <sup>10</sup>Hide your face from my sins \*  
and blot out all my iniquities.
- <sup>11</sup>Create in me a clean heart, O God, \*  
and renew a right spirit within me.
- <sup>12</sup>Cast me not away from your presence \*  
and take not your holy Spirit from me.
- <sup>13</sup>Give me the joy of your saving help again \*  
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.
- <sup>14</sup>I shall teach your ways to the wicked, \*  
and sinners shall return to you.
- <sup>15</sup>Deliver me from death, O God, \*  
and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness,  
O God of my salvation.
- <sup>16</sup>Open my lips, O Lord, \*  
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.
- <sup>17</sup>Had you desired it, I would have offered sacrifice, \*  
but you take no delight in burnt-offerings.
- <sup>18</sup>The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; \*  
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

**Litany of Penitence**

*The Celebrant and People together, all kneeling as able.*

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.

***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 Celebrant, 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. *Amen.*

**The Peace**

*(All stand.)*

BCP p. 269

*Celebrant*      The peace of the Lord be always with you.  
*People*         And also with you.

# The Holy Communion

**Offertory Anthem**

*Hands are Holding Rust*

Rusty Edwards

**The Great Thanksgiving**

Eucharistic Prayer C (*Stand or kneel*)

BCP p. 369

*The People remain standing.*

**Celebrant** The Lord be with you.

**People** And also with you.

**Celebrant** Lift up your hearts.

**People** We lift them to the Lord.

**Celebrant** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People** It is right to give him thanks and praise.

*Facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds*

God of all power, Ruler of the Universe, you are worthy of glory and praise.

*Glory to you for ever and ever.*

At your command all things came to be: the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home.

*By your will they were created and have their being.*

From the primal elements you brought forth the human race, and blessed us with memory, reason, and skill.

You made us the rulers of creation. But we turned against you, and betrayed your trust; and we turned against one another.

*Have mercy, Lord, for we are sinners in your sight.*

Again and again, you called us to return. Through prophets and sages you revealed your righteous Law. And in the fullness of time you sent your only Son, born of a woman, to fulfill your Law, to open for us the way of freedom and peace.

*By his blood, he reconciled us.*

*By his wounds, we are healed.*

And therefore we praise you, joining with the heavenly chorus, with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and with all those in every generation who have looked to you in hope, to proclaim with them your glory, in their unending hymn:

**Sanctus**

S-129

*Celebrant and People*

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

**The Lord's Prayer**

BCP p. 363

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

*People and Celebrant*

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 forever. Amen.

### **The Breaking of the Bread**

*The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.*

### **Fraction Anthem**

S-164

Jesus, Lamb of God: have mercy on us.  
Jesus, bearer of our sins: have mercy on us.  
Jesus, redeemer of the world: give us your peace.

*Facing the people, the Celebrant says the following Invitation*

The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you,  
and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

*The ministers receive the Sacrament in both kinds, and then immediately deliver it to the people.  
Gluten free waters are available upon request at the altar rail.*

*Two chalices are offered at the altar rail. The first one is offered to those who prefer to drink from the cup.  
The second chalice follow for those who prefer to intinct (dip) the wafer in the wine before consuming.*

*Please hold the wafer in your open palm to indicate your preference to the server.*

### **Communion Hymn**

*Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us*

Hymnal 559

### **The Post-Communion Prayer**

BCP p. 365

*After Communion, the Celebrant says*

Let us pray.

*Celebrant and People*

Almighty and everliving God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

### **Solemn Prayer over the People**

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 quit mind; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **Recessional Hymn**

*Lord, who throughout these forty days*

Hymnal 142

### **Dismissal**

Let us bless the Lord.

*People*

Thanks be to God.

### **Postlude**



# **Keeping a Holy Lent at St. Alban's**

## Ash Wednesday Services

Wednesday, March 5

Noon & 7 p.m.

## Opportunities after Church

March 9 - Ukranian Egg (Pysanky)

March 16 - Gesundheit Bags

March 23 - Notes for Blessing Bags

March 30 - Blessing Bags



## Wednesday Soup & Program

*Lord Teach Us: The Lord's Prayer & Christian Life*

March 12

March 19

March 26

April 2

April 9

*Meals begin at 6 p.m.  
Program begin at 6:30 p.m.  
Sign up at the Kiosk in the  
Commons Room.*



## RISE Against Hunger

Saturday, March 22, 10 a.m. - Noon

## Palm Sunday: April 13

## Holy Week

Maundy Thursday, April 17, 7 p.m.

Good Friday, April 18, Noon

Holy Saturday Liturgy, April 19, 9 a.m.