



# ASH

WEDNESDAY

March 5, 2025

# Savior, Servant, Friend

## Service for Ash Wednesday

### Jesus: Forgiver

*I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. John 15:15*

#### Invocation and Call to Worship

**P** We gather together as friends in the presence of the Triune God who has called us friends. We gather together in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** **Amen.**

**P** A friend loves at all times,

**C** **And a brother is born for adversity.** (*Proverbs 17:17*)

**P** The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear him,

**C** **And he makes known to them his covenant.** (*Psalms 25:14*)

**P** A man of many companions may come to ruin,

**C** **But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.** (*Proverbs 18:24*)

**P** What a friend we have in Jesus,

**C** **All our sins and griefs to bear!**

**P** Precious Savior, still our refuge—

**C** **Take it to the Lord in prayer.**

## Gathering Hymn LSB 609 Jesus Sinners doth Receive verses 1-4



1 Je - sus sin - ners doth re - ceive; Oh, may all this  
 2 We de - serve but grief and shame, Yet His words, rich  
 3 Sheep that from the fold did stray No true shep - herd  
 4 I, a sin - ner, come to Thee With a pen - i -



say - ing pon - der Who in sin's de - lu - sions live  
 grace re - veal - ing, Par - don, peace, and life pro - claim;  
 e'er for - sak - eth; Wea - ry souls that lost their way  
 tent con - fes - sion. Sav - ior, mer - cy show to me;



And from God and heav - en wan - der! Here is hope for  
 Here our ills have per - fect heal - ing. Firm - ly in these  
 Christ, the Shep - herd, gent - ly tak - eth In His arms that  
 Grant for all my sins re - mis - sion. Let these words my



all who grieve: Je - sus sin - ners doth re - ceive.  
 words be - lieve: Je - sus sin - ners doth re - ceive.  
 they may live: Je - sus sin - ners doth re - ceive.  
 soul re - lieve: Je - sus sin - ners doth re - ceive.

Text: tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt.; Erdmann Neumeister, 1671–1756  
 Tune: Neu-verfertigtes Darmstädtisches Gesang-Buch, 1699, Darmstadt  
 Text and tune: Public domain

## Imposition of Ashes

Those who desire may come forward and receive ashes with the reminder, “Dust you are dust you shall return” (Genesis 3:19)

## Confession and Forgiveness

- P** Jesus, friend of sinners, hear me as I confess my sins.
- C** **My thoughts have befriended sin and shame, not truth and righteousness.**
- P** O Lord, you have searched me and known me! (Psalm 139:1)
- C** **My words have befriended lies and slander, not love and mercy.**
- P** Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know it altogether. (Psalm 139:4)

**C** My deeds have befriended hate and hurt, not peace and kindness.

**P** You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways.  
(Psalm 139:3)

**C** Lord, have mercy! Christ, have mercy! Lord, have mercy!

*(Please silently reflect on the ways that you have befriended sin—  
and yet Jesus still calls you a friend.)*

**P** Friends in Jesus: You have a Savior who has lived for you, died for you, and left the tomb empty for you. Your Servant Jesus has humbled himself to care for you. Your Friend, Christ Jesus, has cleansed you from all unrighteousness and washed away your sin. Jesus forgives you and loves you. Jesus is your friend now and for all eternity.

**C** What a friend we have in Jesus.

### Prayer of the Day

**P** Lord Jesus, you have invited us to take everything to you in prayer. You know our weaknesses and how we are heavy-laden. You know the burdens that we carry in our hearts and minds. Precious Savior, be our refuge. Pour out your Holy Spirit on us this Lent that we may know your friendship and love. We pray through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

### Old Testament Reading, Joel 2:12-17

“Yet even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments.” Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster. 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? Blow the trumpet in Zion; consecrate a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather the people. Consecrate the congregation; assemble the elders; gather the children, even nursing infants. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her chamber. Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep and say, “Spare your people, O Lord, and make not your heritage a reproach, a byword among the nations. Why should they say among the peoples, ‘Where is their God?’”

### **Epistle Reading, Colossians 1:9-14**

And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

### **Gospel Reading, Luke 7:36-49**

One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at table. And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner." And Jesus answering said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he answered, "Say it, Teacher."

"A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?" Simon answered, "The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt." And he said to him, "You have judged rightly." Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little." And he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this, who even forgives sins?"

The Sermon Hymn 570 Just as I am, verses 1, 2, 3, 5



1 Just as I am, with - out one plea But that Thy  
 2 Just as I am and wait - ing not To rid my  
 3 Just as I am, though tossed a - bout With man - y a  
 5 Just as I am, Thou wilt re - ceive, Wilt wel - come,



blood was shed for me And that Thou bidd'st me come to  
 soul of one dark blot, To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each  
 con - flict, man - y a doubt, Fight - ings and fears with - in, with -  
 par - don, cleanse, re - lieve; Be - cause Thy prom - ise I be -



Thee, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.  
 spot, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.  
 out, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.  
 lieve, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Text: Charlotte Elliott, 1789-1871  
 Tune: William B. Bradbury, 1816-68  
 Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon

Offering, LSB 956 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 Thy pres - ence; and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it



from me. Re-store un-to me the joy of Thy sal-va-tion;  
and up-hold me with Thy free spir-it. A-men.

Text: Psalm 51:10-12  
Tune: Johann Georg Winer, 1583-1651, adapt.  
Text and tune: Public domain

## Prayers

**P** Amid our trials, temptations and troubles, we have a friend who sticks with us. Where else can we find a friend so faithful? And, so, we take it to the Lord in prayer. Jesus, you know our every weakness and have promised to be our friend, so we lift our prayers and raise our petitions.

**C** **Lord, hear our prayer.**

**P** Deliver us from the mess of our sin, and let us never be defined by the messes that we make.

**C** **Lord, hear our prayer.**

**P** Deliver this world from the mess of evil and injustice, and befriend the vulnerable, the sojourner, the unborn and all who need a friend.

**C** **Lord, hear our prayer.**

**P** Deliver the self-righteous from their delusions and teach us to never underestimate the debts that you have forgiven on our behalf.

**C** **Lord, hear our prayer.**

**P** Deliver us from death, and remind us that friendship with you means that we are more than mere dust.

**C** **Lord, hear our prayer.**

**P** Deliver us from sorrow, discouragement and pain by the power of your abiding friendship.

**C** **Lord, hear our prayer.**

**P** Deliver us from apathy and malaise so that we can befriend our neighbors with your love.

**C** **Lord, hear our prayer.**

**P** Jesus, deliver us from isolation, and give us a seat at your table where we receive your body and blood.

**C** **Jesus, what a privilege it is to be your friend. Amen.**

## Lord's Prayer

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.

## Benediction

**P** Jesus has called you friends and made known to you all that he has heard from the Father. Go now as friends of Jesus befriending others in the name of Jesus. Amen.

**C** **What a friend we have in Jesus!**

## Sending Hymn, LSB 770 What a Friend we have in Jesus



1 What a friend we have in Je - sus, All our sins and griefs to bear!  
2 Have we tri - als and temp-ta-tions? Is there trou-ble an - y-where?  
3 Are we weak and heav - y lad - en, Cum - bered with a load of care?



What a priv - i - lege to car - ry Ev - 'ry-thing to God in prayer!  
We should nev - er be dis-cour-aged— Take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Pre - cious Sav - ior, still our ref - uge— Take it to the Lord in prayer.



Oh, what peace we of - ten for - feit; Oh, what need-less pain we bear—  
Can we find a friend so faith - ful Who will all our sor - rows share?  
Do thy friends de-spise, for-sake thee? Take it to the Lord in prayer.



All be - cause we do not car - ry Ev - 'ry-thing to God in prayer!  
Je - sus knows our ev - 'ry weak-ness— Take it to the Lord in prayer.  
In His arms He'll take and shield thee; Thou wilt find a sol - ace there.

Text: Joseph M. Scriven, 1819–86  
Tune: Charles C. Converse, 1832–1918  
Text and tune: Public domain