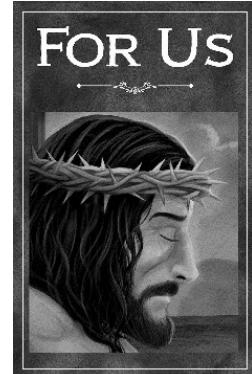


## ASH WEDNESDAY, 2026

### “O LOVE, HOW DEEP, HOW BROAD, HOW HIGH”

This Ash Wednesday, we introduce our Lent sermon series, which is based on the ancient hymn “O Love, How Deep” (LSB 544). This hymn, written in the fifteenth century, contemplates the love of God in becoming man, taking on our life, dying our death, and rising again, all *for us*. But for us to understand and appreciate this love, we must first examine ourselves and our lives to see how we have failed in thought, word, and deed. While we may try to get credit for our so-called good works, we all still die with nothing to show for them. But God’s love is not like our love. Our love is self-centered and fickle. God’s love is steady, deep, and beyond all understanding (Ephesians 3:14–19). This love of God will have no end.



#### THE OPENING HYMN #613 “To Thee, Omniscent Lord of All”

1 To Thee, om - ni - cient Lord of all, In grief and shame I  
2 O Lord, my God, to Thee I pray: O cast me not in  
3 O Je - sus, let Thy pre - cious blood Be to my soul a

hum - bly call; I see my sins a - gainst Thee, Lord,  
wrath a - way! Let Thy good Spir - it ne'er de - part,  
cleans - ing flood. Turn not, O Lord, Thy guest a - way,

The sins of thought and deed and word. They press me  
But let Him draw to Thee my heart That tru - ly  
But grant that jus - ti - fied I may Go to my

sore; I cry to Thee: O God, be mer - ci - ful to me!  
pen - i - tent I be: O God, be mer - ci - ful to me!  
house at peace with Thee: O God, be mer - ci - ful to me!

*(please stand)*

#### THE CORPORATE CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P: In the name of the Father and of the **†** Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: I will go to the altar of God,

C: to God my exceeding joy.

P: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C: who made heaven and earth.

P: Beloved in the Lord, it is our intention to receive the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ, in which He strengthens our faith by giving us His body to eat and His blood to drink.

Therefore, it is proper that we diligently examine ourselves, as St. Paul urges us to do, for this holy Sacrament has been instituted for the special comfort of those who are troubled because of their sin and who humbly confess their sins, fear God's wrath, and hunger and thirst for righteousness.

But when we examine our hearts and consciences, we find nothing in us but sin and death, from which we are incapable of delivering ourselves. Therefore, our Lord Jesus Christ has had mercy on us. For our benefit He became man so that He might fulfill for us the whole will and law of God and, to deliver us, took upon Himself our sin and the punishment we deserve.

So that we may more confidently believe this and be strengthened in the faith and in holy living, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread, broke it, and gave it to His disciples and said:

"Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you." It is as if He said, "I became man, and all that I do and suffer is for your good. As a pledge of this, I give you My body to eat."

In the same way also He took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins." Again, it is as if He said, "I have had mercy on you by taking into Myself all your iniquities. I give Myself into death, shedding My blood to obtain grace and forgiveness of sins, and to comfort and establish the new testament, which gives

forgiveness and everlasting salvation. As a pledge of this, I give you My blood to drink."

Therefore, whoever eats this bread and drinks this cup, confidently believing this Word and promise of Christ, dwells in Christ and Christ in him and has eternal life.

We should also do this in remembrance of Him, showing His death—that He was delivered for our offenses and raised for our justification. Giving Him our most heartfelt thanks, we take up our cross and follow Him and, according to His commandment, love one another as He has loved us. For we are all one bread and one body, even as we are all partakers of this one bread and drink from the one cup. For just as the one cup is filled with wine of many grapes and one bread made from countless grains, so also we, being many, are one body in Christ. Because of Him, we love one another, not only in word, but in deed and in truth.

May the almighty and merciful God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by His Holy Spirit, accomplish this in us.

**C: Amen.**

P: Having heard the Word of God, let us confess our sins to Him, imploring Him for the sake of His Son Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

**C: O almighty God, merciful Father, I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.**

P: God be merciful to you and strengthen your faith.

**C: Amen.**

P: Do you believe that the forgiveness I speak is not my forgiveness but God's?

C: Yes.

P: Let it be done for you as you believe.

In the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it. Go in ✠ peace.

C: Amen.

### **THE PSALM** Psalm 51:1-12, 17 (ESV)

P: Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your steadfast love;

C: according to Your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

P: Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!

C: For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

P: Against You, You only, have I sinned and done what is evil in Your sight,

C: so that You may be justified in Your words and blameless in Your judgment.

P: Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

C: Behold, You delight in truth in the inward being,  
and You teach me wisdom in the secret heart.

P: Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

C: Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that You have broken rejoice.

P: Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

C: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

P: Cast me not away from Your presence, and take not Your Holy Spirit from me.

C: Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.

P: The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;

C: a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.

### **THE PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, You despise nothing You have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and contrite hearts that lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness we may receive from You full pardon and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

*(please be seated)*

### **THE OLD TESTAMENT READING** Joel 2:12-19 (ESV)

"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?'" Then the LORD became jealous for His land and had pity on His people. The LORD answered and said to His people, "Behold, I am sending to you grain, wine, and oil, and you will be satisfied; and I will no more make you a reproach among the nations."

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

### **THE EPISTLE** 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:2 (ESV)

Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making His appeal through us. We implore 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. Working together with Him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For He says, "In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you" *[Isaiah 49:8]*. Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

*(please stand)*

### **THE VERSE** (*sung*) (*page 157 in the hymnal*) (*Joel 2:13*)

**Return to the Lord, your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and abounding in steadfast love.**

### **THE HOLY GOSPEL** Matthew 6:1-6, 10-16 (ESV)

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the sixth chapter.

C: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

[Jesus said] "Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when 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 when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where

thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

*(please be seated)*

**THE HYMN #544 "O Love, How Deep, How Broad, How High"**

1 O love, how deep, how broad, how high,  
5 For us by wick ed ness be trayed,  
6 For us He rose from death a gain;

Be yond all thought and fan ta - sy,  
For us, in crown of thorns ar rayed,  
For us He went on high to reign;

That God, the Son of God, should take death;  
He bore the shame sent His cross and here;

For us He form for mor - tals' sake!  
To guide, gave His dy - ing breath.  
To strength en, and to cheer.

**THE SERMON "O Love, How Deep, How Broad, How High"**

*(please stand)*

**THE PRESENTATION OF OUR OFFERINGS** *(pages 192-193 in the hymnal)*

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.

Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation; and uphold me with Thy free spirit. Amen.

## **THE PRAYERS ~ The Litany**

P: O Lord,

**C: have mercy.**

P: O Christ,

**C: have mercy.**

P: O Lord,

**C: have mercy.**

P: O Christ,

**C: hear us.**

P: God the Father in heaven,

**C: have mercy.**

P: God the Son, Redeemer of the world,

**C: have mercy.**

P: God the Holy Spirit,

**C: have mercy.**

P: Be gracious to us.

**C: Spare us, good Lord.**

P: Be gracious to us.

**C: Help us, good Lord.**

P: From all sin, from all error, from all evil;

From the crafts and assaults of the devil; from sudden and evil death;

From pestilence and famine; from war and bloodshed; from sedition and from rebellion;

From lightning and tempest; from all calamity by fire and water; and from everlasting death:

**C: Good Lord, deliver us.**

P: By the mystery of Your holy incarnation; by Your holy nativity;

By Your baptism, fasting, and temptation; by Your agony and bloody sweat; by Your cross and passion; by Your precious death and burial;

By Your glorious resurrection and ascension; and by the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter:

**C: Help us, good Lord.**

P: In all time of our tribulation; in all time of our prosperity; in the hour of death; and in the day of judgment:

**C: Help us, good Lord.**

P: We poor sinners implore You

**C: to hear us, O Lord.**

P: To rule and govern Your holy Christian Church; to preserve all pastors and ministers of Your Church in the true knowledge and understanding of Your wholesome Word and to sustain them in holy living;

To put an end to all schisms and causes of offense; to bring into the way of truth all who have erred and are deceived;

To beat down Satan under our feet; to send faithful laborers into Your harvest; and to accompany Your Word with Your grace and Spirit:

**C: We implore You to hear us, good Lord.**

P: To raise those who fall and to strengthen those who stand; and to comfort and help the weak-hearted and the distressed:

**C: We implore You to hear us, good Lord.**

P: To give to all peoples concord and peace; to preserve our land from discord and strife; to give our country Your protection in every time of need;

To direct and defend our President and all in authority; to bless and protect our magistrates and all our people;

To watch over and help all who are in danger, necessity, and tribulation; to protect and guide all who travel;

To grant all women with child, and all mothers with infant children, increasing happiness in their blessings; to defend all orphans and widows and provide for them;

To strengthen and keep all sick persons and young children; to free those in bondage; and to have mercy on us all:

**C: We implore You to hear us, good Lord.**

P: To forgive our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers and to turn their hearts; to give and preserve for our use the kindly fruits of the earth; and graciously to hear our prayers:

**C: We implore You to hear us, good Lord.**

P: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,

**C: we implore You to hear us.**

P: Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

**C: have mercy.**

P: Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

**C: have mercy.**

P: Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world,

**C: grant us Your peace.**

P: O Christ,

**C: hear us.**

P: O Lord,

**C: have mercy.**

P: O Christ,

**C: have mercy.**

P: O Lord,

**C: have mercy. Amen.**

## THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

### THE PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST

P: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. (*1 Corinthians 11:26*)

**C: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

P: O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

## THE LORD'S PRAYER *(printed inside the back cover of the hymnal)*

### THE PEACE

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: Amen.

### THE AGNUS DEI ~ LAMB OF GOD *(page 163 in the hymnal)*

Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

*(please be seated)*

### THE DISTRIBUTION AND HYMNS

#### #611 "Chief of Sinners Though I Be"



1 Chief of sin - ners though I be, Je - sus shed His  
2 Oh, the height of Je - sus' love, High - er than the  
3 On - ly Je - sus can im - part Balm to heal the  
4 Chief of sin - ners though I be, Christ is all in  
5 O my Sav - ior, help af - ford By Your Spir - it

blood for me, Died that I might live on high,  
heav'n's a - bove, Deep - er than the depths of sea,  
wound - ed heart, Peace that flows from sin for - giv'n,  
all to me; All my wants to Him are known,  
and Your Word! When my way - ward heart would stray,

Lives that I might nev - er die. As the branch is  
Last - ing as e - ter - ni - ty! Love that found me—  
Joy that lifts the soul to heav'n, Faith and hope to  
All my sor - rows are His own. He sus - tains the  
Keep me in the nar - - row way; Grace in time of

to the vine, I am His, and He is mine.  
won - drous thought! Found me when I sought Him not.  
walk with God In the way that E - noch trod.  
hid - den life Safe with Him from earth - ly strife.  
need sup - ply While I live and when I die.

## #435 "Come to Calvary's Holy Mountain"

1. Come to Cal-vry's ho-ly moun-tain, Sin-ners, ru-ined.  
2. Come in pov-er-ty and mean-ness, Come de-filed, with-  
3. Come in sor-row and con-tri-tion, Wound-ed, im-po-  
4. They that drink shall live for-ev-er; 'Tis a soul-re-  
by the fall; Here a pure and heal-ing foun-tain  
out, with-in; From in-fec-tion and un-clean-ness,  
tent, and blind; Here the guilt-y, free re-mis-sion,  
new-ing flood. God is faith-ful; God will nev-er  
Flows for you, for me, for all, In a full, per-  
From the lep-ro-sy of sin, Wash your robes and  
Here the trou-bled, peace may find. Health this foun-tain  
Break His cov-e-nant of blood, Signed when our Re-  
pet-u-al tide, O-pened when our Sav-ior died.  
make them white; Ye shall walk with God in light.  
will re-store; They that drink shall thirst no more.  
deem-er died, Sealed when He was glo-ri-fied.

*(please stand)*

## THE DISMISSAL

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. Depart in ✕ peace.

C: Amen.

## THE POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

P: Almighty, merciful God and Father, You provide the true bread from heaven, Jesus Christ, and in His body and blood You generously forgive our sins. Grant us the power of Your Holy Spirit, that, fed and nourished at this Table, we may daily respond with faith active in fruits of love; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

## THE BENEDICTION

P: The grace of our Lord ✕ Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: Amen.

*(please be seated)*