



LUTHERAN COMMUNITY CARE

'Sharing the love of Christ - building caring communities'

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Dear Pastor,

Lent is traditionally a time for reflection on the temptation, suffering and passion of Christ and our own need for repentance and forgiveness. As we focus on Christ and his suffering, we can't help but see the pain in our own world, and hear the call of Christ to reach out in love to those around us.

In the next edition of Together, LCC will launch our *Food Parcels+* Lenten Appeal. We are committed to engaging with the people who come to us on all levels: emotional and spiritual, as well as providing practical assistance. With the support of many in the Lutheran Church, we touch the lives of thousands of individuals and families each week.

As part of our Lenten Appeal, we have prepared a package of Lenten Resources (Year C) for your use, which we enclose now. There are a number of prayers for each Sunday in Lent which you might like to use as part of your services. Each prayer is numbered to correlate with the Copyright information listed in the Appendix. Most of these resources are either in the public domain or have permission to be used for worship; some ask that the source be acknowledged. There are also prayer points for each Sunday to use as you see fit.

I hope these resources are useful to you and your church as you journey through Lent this year. Thank you for your support of the ongoing work of LCC

Yours in Christ

Helen Lockwood
Director
Lutheran Community Care

Ash Wednesday

Prayer Points

- That we would hear God's call to embrace His values, which are different to the world and our human nature.
- For Lutheran Community Care, as we strive to act out these values of love in service.

A Corporate Prayer of Confession for Ash Wednesday (1)

(Based on Psalm 51:3)

*For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.
(Psalms 51:3, NRSV)*

O, God, when we pause to look back at our lives on this Ash Wednesday, we realize that we have been weighed in the balance and found wanting.

We have neglected to do good when it was in our power to do so.

We, like believers of old, have pulled down your altars
and erected idols crafted in our own image.

We have turned our backs on the poor,
choosing instead to criminalize poverty.

We have ignored the cries of the motherless, the fatherless,
the widow and the widower
choosing instead to turn children and the elderly into the new poor.

We have bankrupted the country with our greed and
consumed more than our share of the world's riches

We have not dealt honorably with our enemies or our friends,
and we have feigned a place in the company of the righteous.

Forgive us, O God, for turning sackcloth and ashes into a fashion statement
by pursuing form without substance.

Forgive us, O God, for the times we have neglected to provide our children
and our world an authentic example of Christianity.

As we begin the journey of these 40 days
Wash us, O God and we shall be clean
Cleanse us, O Lord, and we shall be made whole. Amen.

(Silence)

COLLECT PRAYER (2)

Righteous God,
in humility and repentance
we bring our failures in caring, helping, and loving,
we bring the pain we have caused other,
we bring the injustice in society of which we are a part,
to the transforming power of your grace.
Grant us the courage to accept the healing you offer
and to turn again toward the sunrise of your reign,
that we may walk with you in the promise of peace
you have willed for all the children of the earth,
and have made known to us in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Lent 1

Prayer Points

- Thank God for his inclusive nature. Acknowledge his call on us to embrace all people from all walks of life.
- Pray for the work of Lutheran Community Care as we work toward a society which is inclusive of people from different social, educational and cultural backgrounds. Ask for God's guidance for our various Projects which aim to help people overcome barriers in their lives which prevent them from engaging in their community.

Introduction to Prayer of the Church/General Prayer (3)

Beloved friends, in this season of repentance and healing, we accept God's invitation to be ever-mindful of the needs of others, offering our prayers on behalf of God's community in the church and the world.

Prayer of Confession (4)

Gracious and merciful God, we confess to you our reluctance to enter the wilderness places where we are confronted with our true selves.

The places where we are tempted to put worldly values before our desire for you, and when our hunger for power and wealth is greater than our hunger for seeking and doing your will:

Forgive us, O God, and increase our trust in you.

When we are tempted to use the gifts you give us to benefit ourselves at the expense of serving others:

Forgive us, O God, and increase our trust in you.

When we are tempted to use sensational means to increase people's faith, rather than being guided by the humility of Christ:

Forgive us, O God, and increase our trust in you.

When we are tempted to manipulate you, O God, to satisfy our own needs:

Forgive us, O God, and increase our trust in you.

When we are tempted to maintain and build on divisions between ourselves and those in our communities whom we think of as "others":

Forgive us, O God, and increase our trust in you.

A time of silence for personal confession

ALL: Merciful God, save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. Forgive us our sins and fill us with the joy and peace of your salvation. So strengthen us with your Spirit during this Lenten season that we put our whole trust in you as confidently as Jesus did. This we pray in his name. Amen

Lent 2

Prayer Points

- Thank God for the transformative nature of his love.
- Pray that God would bless LCC as we walk alongside people, working with them and seeing the transformations in their lives. Thank God for this privilege. Pray that he would constantly be working in our organisation so that we serve our clients in ways that most help them and show God's love.
- Pray for LCC's service and ministry through Family Accommodation and Support Services

Prayer of Confession (5)

Lord God, we come to you today with the knowledge that we have often turned you away. You want to do good things in our lives, yet we shut you out. You long to provide the comfort and the peace we need, yet we reject you. In our pride, our sin and our ignorance, we hurt ourselves, we hurt others and we hurt you. Please forgive us, Jesus. Please open our hearts to receive the hope and life which you so freely give. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Collect Prayer (6)

God of promise and hope, beyond all of our imaginings you have chosen to come to us where we are and offer us life. Open our hearts to accept your love. Give us courage to believe the promises of good that you have made. Thankyou that you have not left us alone and that you care so deeply for us. May we in turn be your love within this world. For Jesus' sake, Amen.

Lent 3

Prayer Points

- Praise and acknowledge God's wisdom, power and knowledge.
- Pray that God would be working in our hearts to make us less judgemental of others, and increase our trust in his knowledge of every person and every situation.
- Pray for LCC, that we would continue to be a place of acceptance and love for people who are otherwise judged and condemned by society.
- Pray for LCC's service and ministry to Low Income/ Disadvantaged Individuals and Families.

Prayer of Praise/Adoration (7)

Gracious and merciful God, we fill our bodies with rich food and sweet drinks yet we still hunger and thirst for more - for you. And so we praise you for taking the initiative to replenish and renew our lives. You established a new and everlasting covenant of grace in the person of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Through him we seek you and find you, O God. Through him we call on you and know that we are heard. For, through him, the distance between your thoughts and our thoughts, your ways and our ways, is spanned by your divine love. We praise and adore you, O God, as we offer this prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord and our Saviour . Amen

Prayer of Confession (8)

Merciful God, when we compare our lives to the potential we believe you have in mind for us, we realise anew that our thoughts are unfortunately not your thoughts and our ways are sadly very different from your ways. And yet your mercy is so great that you keep giving us another chance to cultivate our identity as people shaped by your thoughts and your ways.

Forgive us, O God, when we are tempted to shape our behaviour and our lifestyles by other than the way, the truth and the life of Jesus Christ.

We confess that there are times when we so lower our standards that we fail to take sin and its consequences seriously.

Forgive us, O God, when we expect others to repent while ignoring the need to repent ourselves.

We confess that there are times when we find it more comfortable to adapt to the standards of the world rather than responding to the challenges of true christian discipleship.

Forgive us, O God, when we use the stress of daily 'busy-ness' as an excuse to turn away from examining what discipleship really means for us personally and as members of this faith community.

God will not let us be tested beyond our strength, and patiently and graciously provides ways for us to turn our lives around so that we might daily bear the fruits of repentance.

Merciful and gracious God, strengthen us with your Spirit so that we willingly turn towards you, thinking your thoughts and following your way.

Help us to bring forth fruits worthy of our calling as followers of Jesus Christ. This we pray in his name. Amen

Lent 4

Prayer Points

- Thank God for the gift of reconciliation with Him.
- Pray that LCC would continue to be ambassadors of God's love, forgiveness and hope.
- Pray for LCC's service and ministry through the Centre for Learning

Collect Prayer (9)

God of patient love,
you await the return of the wayward and wandering
and eagerly embrace them in pardon.
Through baptism you have clothed us with the glory of Christ
and restored our inheritance:
give us generous hearts
to welcome all who seek a place
at the table of your unconditional love.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Or

Eternal lover of our wayward race,
we praise you for your ever-open door.
You open your arms to accept us
even before we turn to meet your welcome; you invite us to forgiveness even before
our hearts are softened to repentance.
Hold before us the image of our humanity made new, that we may live in Jesus
Christ, the model and the pioneer of your new creation. Amen.

Prayer of Confession (10)

Merciful God, you have brought our lives into harmony with yours through
the sacrificial love, life, and death of Jesus Christ. You have created us anew
in Christ and have entrusted us with the task of living out this newness of life. We
confess that we readily accept the privilege of being a new creation in Christ but all
too often we fail to live up to the responsibility which that brings.
When we are content to enjoy newness of life in Christ as a personal experience
only, and fail to accept the challenge of sharing this experience with others.

Forgive us, O God

Being a new creation in Christ means having our identity shaped by Christ
himself. When we believe that our identity is shaped by what we do
and how well we do it.

Forgive us, O God

Being a new creation in Christ means accepting others in love as we are
accepted by him. When we allow prejudice and judgmental attitudes to
undermine our call to be agents of reconciliation.

Forgive us, O God

Being a new creation in Christ means being commissioned to spread the good
news of peace and love, justice and mercy, to a world sorely in need of such

news. When we fail to live out the values of the gospel, forgetting the high cost to Jesus when he showed us just how much he values and loves us.

Forgive us, O God

We come to you, merciful God, in penitence and faith, praying that you will heal us and forgive us in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Lent 5

Prayer Points

- Thank God that we have the assurance of hope for the future.
- Ask for God's guidance as LCC moves ahead with new plans and directions in the future.
- Pray for LCC's work in Community Development.

Collect (11)

Creator God,
you prepare a new way in the wilderness
and your grace waters the desert.
Help us to recognize your hand
working miracles beyond our imagining.
Open our hearts to be transformed
by the new thing you are doing,
so that our lives may proclaim
the extravagance of your love for all,
and its presence in Jesus Christ. Amen.

Confession (12)

Lord Jesus, as saints and sinners we approach your throne. We live in constant tension between what has been and what is to come. We are not perfect, and we need the hope which you offer. When we grow weary and bitter and cannot find strength to believe in a bright future, please renew us. Forgive us for the times we trust in our own wisdom and our efforts to attain righteousness. Release us from the sin and pain of our past and teach us that we truly are new creations in you. Amen.

Prayer of Praise (13)

We praise and adore you, O God, for giving us reason to sing aloud with joy. The Psalmist wrote about a joyous future and the prophet Isaiah beseeches us not to dwell on things past, but to concentrate on the new thing that you have planned for us. A new thing greater than any could imagine, when you entered our history in the person of Jesus Christ. A costly act which transformed the future forever. As we draw nearer to the events which led up to the death of Jesus, we marvel that through even that dreadful act you turn our weeping into shouts of joy and point us toward a new future through the glory of the resurrection. Accept our prayers and praises we pray, for we utter them in joyful thanksgiving for all the great things you have done for us - especially for the great gift of Jesus, our Lord and our Saviour, in whose name we pray. Amen

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