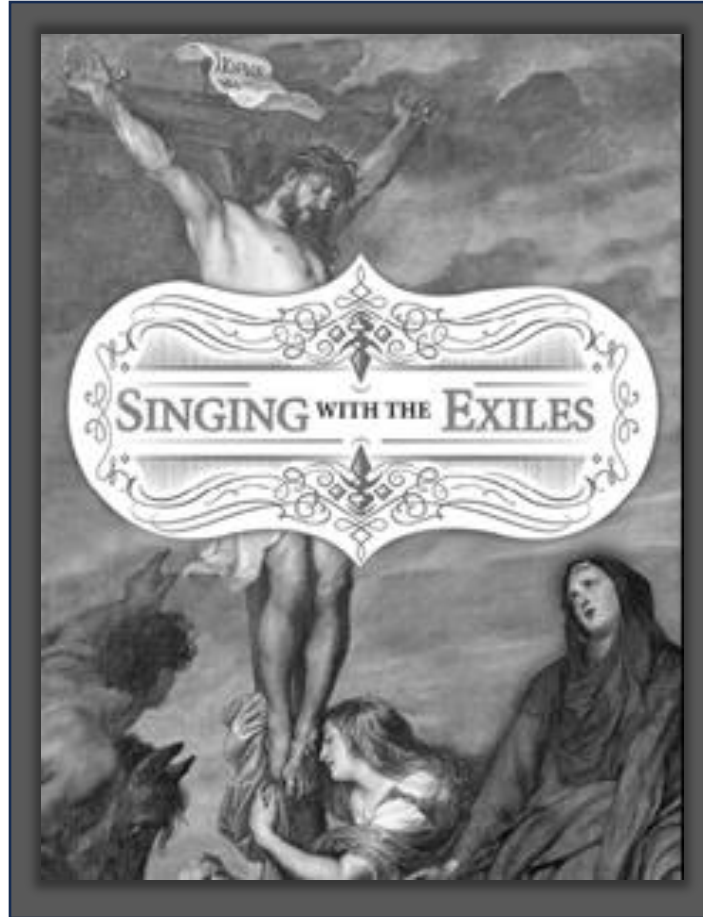


The Order of Worship for
ASH WEDNESDAY

March 5, 2025



Ash Wednesday is a time to acknowledge who we are in God's sight and then receive His gracious absolution. Our Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, declares us loved and forgiven. And He goes one step further. In Jesus Christ, our God transforms worms into mountain movers (Isaiah 41:15). There is a word for that—grace!

LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE CROSS - LCMS

*Welcoming all to walk together
toward abundant life in Christ.*

SINGING WITH THE EXILES

Gathered by the waters of Babylon, Judean exiles wistfully wondered: Is God for real? If so, does He really care about us? What does our future hold? Will this ever change? God's people had watched their world shatter into a million pieces. They were demoralized and disillusioned. Their disaster looked terminal.

Do you feel this way? Does it look as though your current problems are more than you can bear? Do you find yourself asking: Why did this happen? Why did God allow it? Is there any order in the world? Will God really deliver on what He said?

Isaiah answers these questions in chapters 40–55 of his book. He announces that just when Israel's history seemed closed and controlled by hopeless Babylonian imperial policy, to the shock and surprise of everyone the Lord will stir up a king named Cyrus and a new exodus will explode in the desert! A Servant will be wounded for our transgressions and crushed for our iniquities. And barren Zion will be given so many children that, like the old woman in the shoe, she won't know what to do! Standing behind these marvelous promises is God's almighty Word. "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever" (Isaiah 40:8). The exiles are going home!

That's why we are "Singing with the Exiles" as they are restored to their home.

This Lent, Isaiah 40–55 will shape us through...

<i>Ash Wednesday</i>	"God Has a Word for That"	(Isaiah 41:14–16)
<i>Lent Two</i>	"He Only Has Eyes for You"	(Isaiah 43:1–7)
<i>Lent Three</i>	"Marked"	(Isaiah 44:1–5)
<i>Lent Four</i>	"Breaking Down the Gates"	(Isaiah 45:1–8)
<i>Lent Five</i>	"Get Out!"	(Isaiah 48:17–22)
<i>Lent Six</i>	"One Little Word Can Fell Him"	(Isaiah 49:1–6)
<i>Maundy Thursday</i>	"He Prepares a Table"	(Isaiah 49:7–13)
<i>Good Friday</i>	"All"	(Isaiah 52:13–53:12)
<i>Easter</i>	"We Are Going Home"	(Isaiah 55:6–13)

We begin Lent with Ash Wednesday, a name that reminds us of our human frailty, our mortality, our sorrow at our sinful nature, our repentance, and our need for grace. The austerity of the liturgy on this most solemn day reflects these themes.

This Lent, our Call to Worship/Confession and Absolution is drawn from the Seven Penitential Psalms, so named by Cassiodorus (c. AD 485–c. AD 585) in the sixth century AD. For centuries, Psalms 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, and 143 have served as a source of prayer and reflection during Lent. Their honest confessions invite us to turn to our Lord with the same candor and humility.

BEFORE THE SERVICE: IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Why? The ashes that are put on our foreheads in the shape of a cross remind us of our dirty sins that were piled on Jesus when He died on the cross for us. The ash cross on our forehead also reminds us of the first time the sign of the cross was made on our bodies at Holy Baptism. There, in the water of our baptism, we were washed clean with the blood of Jesus, and the dirt of our sins was washed away forever.

This act of humility reminds us that as disciples of the Lord Jesus we are called to struggle against everything that leads us away from love of God and neighbor. Repentance, self-denial, prayer, and works of love--the disciplines of Lent--help us to wage our spiritual warfare.

What will happen? All who desire (it is optional) will come forward. The officiant will touch his thumb into the ashes and make the sign of a cross on your forehead, leaving an ashen cross on your forehead. You will hear the words of our Lord from Genesis 3:19b “...**for dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.**”

After being marked, you may return to your seat. You may want to meditate on Psalm 90, found on the back cover of your worship folder.

(During the preservice music, after everyone has had a chance to receive ashes, the pastors will take the ashes out of the sanctuary and return to begin the service.)

(Please stand)

INVOCATION

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (2 Corinthians 13:14)

C **Amen.**

OPENING HYMN

Just as I Am, without One Plea

LSB 570 sts. 1-3

1. Just as I am, without one plea
But that Thy blood was shed for me
And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.
2. Just as I am and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.



3. Just as I am, though tossed about
 With many_a conflict, many_a doubt,
 Fightings and fears within, without,
 O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Text: Charlotte Elliott, 1789–1871

Text: Public domain

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Psalm 6

- P O LORD, do not rebuke me in Your anger or discipline me in Your wrath.
 C **Be merciful to me, LORD, for I am faint; O LORD, heal me, for my bones are in agony.**
 P My soul is in anguish. How long, O LORD, how long?
 C **Turn, O LORD, and deliver me; save me because of Your unfailing love.**
 P No one remembers You when he is dead. Who praises You from the grave?
 C **I am worn out from groaning; all night long I flood my bed with weeping and drench my couch with tears.**

Silence for private confession of sins

- P My eyes grow weak with sorrow; they fail because of all my foes.
 C **Holy God, holy and most merciful Father, have mercy upon us. We have lived as though You do not matter and as if we mattered most. We have not loved You with our whole heart and we have failed to love our neighbor as ourselves.**
 P The LORD has heard your cry for mercy; the LORD accepts your prayer. As a called and ordained servant of the Word, I announce the grace of God to all of you. Therefore in the stead and by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.
 C **Amen.**

RESPONSE

Just as I Am, without One Plea

LSB 570 sts. 4–5

4. Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind;
 Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
 Yea, all I need, in Thee to find,
 O Lamb of God, I come, I come.
5. Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,
 Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
 Because Thy promise I believe,
 O Lamb of God, I come, I come.



Text: Charlotte Elliott, 1789–1871

Text: Public domain

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you,

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray. O God of steadfast love and mercy, we give You thanks for the season of Lent—its call to repentance, its focus on Jesus’ suffering and death, and its offer of new life. Grant us faith to embrace the grace that You pour out so abundantly because of the blood and resurrection of Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen**

THE SCRIPTURE LESSONS HAVE AS THEIR THEME “GOD’S TRANSFORMATIVE POWER”

OLD TESTAMENT

Isaiah 41:14–16

¹⁴Fear not, you worm Jacob,
you men of Israel!

I am the one who helps you, declares the LORD;
your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel.

¹⁵Behold, I make of you a threshing sledge,
new, sharp, and having teeth;

you shall thresh the mountains and crush them,
and you shall make the hills like chaff;

¹⁶you shall winnow them, and the wind shall carry them away,
and the tempest shall scatter them.

And you shall rejoice in the LORD;
in the Holy One of Israel you shall glory.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**



EPISTLE

Hebrews 2:1–9

¹Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. ²For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, ³how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard, ⁴while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.

⁵Now it was not to angels that God subjected the world to come, of which we are speaking. ⁶It has been testified somewhere,

“What is man, that you are mindful of him,
or the son of man, that you care for him?
⁷You made him for a little while lower than the angels;
you have crowned him with glory and honor,
⁸putting everything in subjection under his feet.”

Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. ⁹But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

THE GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 5:1–12

¹Seeing the crowds, [Jesus] went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

²And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

³“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

⁵“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

⁶“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

⁷“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

⁸“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

⁹“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

¹⁰“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹“Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

NICENE CREED

C I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

SERMON HYMN

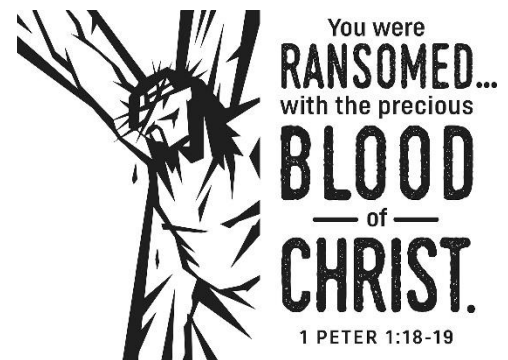
Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed

LSB 437 sts 1–3

1. Alas! And did my Savior bleed,
And did my sov'reign die?
Would He devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?
2. Was it for crimes that I had done
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity, grace unknown,
And love beyond degree!
3. Well might the sun in darkness hide
And shut his glories in
When God, the mighty maker, died
For His own creatures' sin.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, alt.

Text: Public domain



SERMON

“God Has a Word for That”

Pastor Menk

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

[1 Timothy 2:1-4]

P Heavenly Father, the mountains of sin and shame stand in our way, but we believe that,

C **“We will thresh the mountains and crush them, and reduce the hills to chaff” (Isaiah 41:15).**

P O God, the mountains and hills of addictions and obsessions threaten to overwhelm us, but we trust that,

C **“We will thresh the mountains and crush them, and reduce the hills to chaff” (Isaiah 41:15).**

P Loving Lord, obstacles standing in our way fill our hearts with fear and anxiety, but we know that,

C **“We will thresh the mountains and crush them, and reduce the hills to chaff” (Isaiah 41:15).**

P Heavenly Father, You have a word for all of this,

C **Grace, grace, amazing and life-changing grace!**

P Father, we pray confidently and boldly, because You are

C **“The One who helps us; our Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel” (Isaiah 41:14).**

P In Christ’s holy name we pray. Amen.

OFFERING

T SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION T

(Please stand)

PREPARATION

P The Lord be with you.

[2 Timothy 4:22]

C **And also with you.**

P Lift up your hearts.

[Colossians 3:1]

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

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

[Psalm 136]

C **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

PROPER PREFACE

P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who became sin for us at the cross, taking away the ashes of our death so that we may be redeemed by His blood and marked by His Spirit. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

SANCTUS

(Sung to the tune of Dearest Jesus, We Are Here - LSB 592)

Holy, holy, holy Lord, Heav'n and earth proclaim the story
Of Your majesty adored Of Your kingdom, pow'r and glory
With hosannas now we meet You With our palms and praises greet You

Hail! Hosanna! Blest is He Who in God's own name draws near us!
Hail! Hosanna! Blest are we Since we have God's love to cheer us:
Blood outpoured and body broken, Of eternal love the token.

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

*Mathew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24
Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25*

(Only by the almighty creative Word of God are we able to believe that the blessed sacrament delivers what God promises, the forgiveness for our sins. Mt. 26:28)

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to His disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as oft as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9-13

PAX DOMINI

LSB 163

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C **Amen.**

AGNUS DEI

(Sung to the tune of O Sacred Head, Now Wounded - LSB 449)

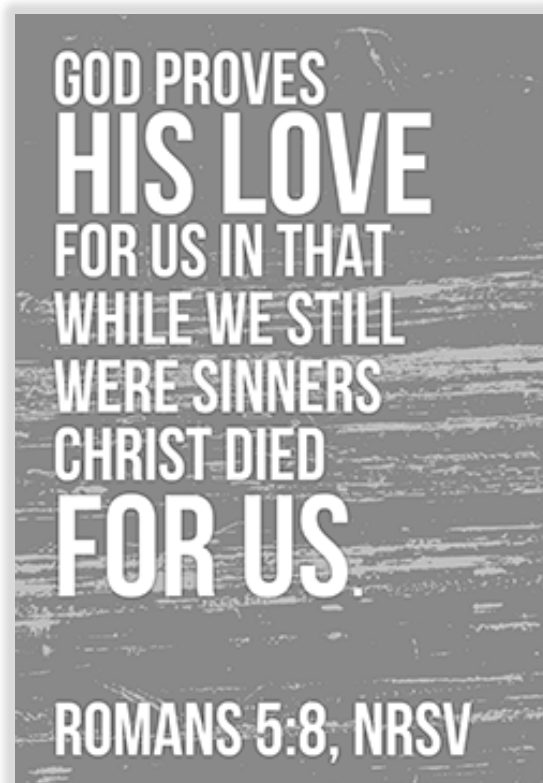
O Lamb of God, once lifted upon the cursed tree,
O Lamb of God, once offered in sacrifice for me,
O Lamb of God, my Savior in my place crucified,
Your peace and mercy grant me. My Savior will provide.

DISTRIBUTION

The pastor and those who assist distribute the body and blood of Christ in, with, and under the bread and wine to those who come to receive, saying:

Take, eat; this is the true body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, given into death for your sins. **Amen.**

Take, drink; this is the true blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, shed for the forgiveness of your sins. **Amen.**



1. Chief of sinners though I be,
Jesus shed His blood for me,
Died that I might live on high,
Lives that I might never die.
As the branch is to the vine,
I am His, and He is mine.
2. Oh, the height of Jesus' love,
Higher than the heav'ns above,
Deeper than the depths of sea,
Lasting as eternity!
Love that found me—wondrous thought!
Found me when I sought Him not.
3. Only Jesus can impart
Balm to heal the wounded heart,
Peace that flows from sin forgiv'n,
Joy that lifts the soul to heav'n,
Faith and hope to walk with God
In the way that Enoch trod.
4. Chief of sinners though I be,
Christ is all in all to me;
All my wants to Him are known,
All my sorrows are His own.
He sustains the hidden life
Safe with Him from earthly strife.
5. O my Savior, help afford
By Your Spirit and Your Word!
When my wayward heart would stray,
Keep me in the narrow way;
Grace in time of need supply
While I live and when I die.

Text: William McComb, 1793–1873, alt.

Text: Public domain

DISTRIBUTION HYMN Drawn to the Cross, Which Thou Hast Blessed *LSB 560*

1. Drawn to the cross, which Thou hast blessed
With healing gifts for souls distressed,
To find in Thee my life, my rest,
Christ crucified, I come.
2. Thou knowest all my griefs and fears,
Thy grace abused, my misspent years;
Yet now to Thee with contrite tears,
Christ crucified, I come.
3. Wash me and take away each stain;
Let nothing of my sin remain.
For cleansing, though it be through pain,
Christ crucified, I come.
4. And then for work to do for Thee,
Which shall so sweet a service be
That angels well might envy me,
Christ crucified, I come.

Text: Genevieve M. Irons, 1855–1928

Text: Public domain



1. What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this
That caused the Lord of bliss
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul,
To bear the dreadful curse for my soul!
2. When I was sinking down, sinking down, sinking down,
When I was sinking down, sinking down,
When I was sinking down
Beneath God's righteous frown,
Christ laid aside His crown for my soul, for my soul,
Christ laid aside His crown for my soul.
3. To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing;
To God and to the Lamb I will sing;
To God and to the Lamb,
Who is the great I AM,
While millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing,
While millions join the theme, I will sing.
4. And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on;
And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on.
And when from death I'm free,
I'll sing His love for me,
And through eternity I'll sing on, I'll sing on,
And through eternity I'll sing on.

Text: A General Selection of . . . Hymns and Spiritual Songs, 1811, Lynchburg, alt.

Text: Public domain

(Please stand)

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

P We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

BENEDICTION

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and T give you peace.

C Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

Holy, Holy, Holy

LSB 507sts. 3–4

3. Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide Thee,
Though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see,
Only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee,
Perfect in pow'r, in love, and purity.

4. Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All Thy works shall praise Thy name in earth and sky and sea.
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessèd Trinity!

Text: Reginald Heber, 1783–1826

Text: Public domain

SILENT PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we are so thankful that worms become mountain movers and that the lowly and despised are loved and lifted up. Look out, mountains, here we come! In Jesus' name. Amen.

POSTLUDE



Acknowledgments

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For next week, read Isaiah 43:1–7 and answer these questions:

1. In Isaiah 40:26, the prophet writes that God calls each star by name. What does it mean for you that this same God also calls you by name (Isaiah 43:1)?
2. Israelites passed through the waters when God led them through the Red Sea (Isaiah 43:1; cf. Exodus 14). What comfort does this give to you?
3. Look again at Isaiah 43:3–7. What value does God place on His people? What does this say about your worth?

SERMON NOTES

“God Has a Word for That”

“Do not be afraid, O worm Jacob, O dead ones of Israel . . .” (Isaiah 41:14).

Worm = _____ (e.g., Isaiah 66:24; Jonah 4:7)

“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? . . . I am a worm and not a man” (Psalm 22:1, 6).

“I Myself will help you, declares the LORD; your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel” (Isaiah 41:14).

“Redeemer” = _____ (Job 19:25; 42:10)

“Holy One” = _____

“See, I am making you into a threshing sledge, new and sharp, with many teeth. You will thresh the mountains and crush them, and reduce the hills to chaff” (Isaiah 41:15).

My mountains = _____

“You shall winnow them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the tempest shall scatter them. And you shall rejoice in the LORD; in the Holy One of Israel you shall glory” (Isaiah 41:16).

THE START OF
Lent
ASH WEDNESDAY



Psalm 90: A prayer of Moses the man of God

Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations. Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. You turn men back to dust, saying, "Return to dust, O sons of men." For a thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night. You sweep men away in the sleep of death; they are like the new grass of the morning - though in the morning it springs up new, by evening it is dry and withered. We are consumed by your anger and terrified by your indignation. You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your presence. All our days pass away under your wrath; we finish our years with a moan. The length of our days is seventy years - or eighty, if we have the strength; yet their span is but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away. Who knows the power of your anger? For your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you. Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom. Relent, O LORD! How long will it be? Have compassion on your servants. Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days. Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us, for as many years as we have seen trouble. May your deeds be shown to your servants, your splendor to their children. May the favor of the Lord our God rest upon us; establish the work of our hands for us - yes, establish the work of our hands.

