



Mary Magdalene Apostle Catholic Community

*Making Catholicism relevant
Restoring women's ordination
Living the change we envision*



*We believe God's power is love.
God's purpose is love. God's presence is love.*



**Joint Ash Wednesday Service
Mary Magdalene Apostle Catholic Community &
Gethsemane Lutheran Church
February 18, 2026**

Introduction and Welcome

Welcome to our Ash Wednesday service with the communities of Gethsemane Lutheran Church and Mary Magdalene the Apostle Catholic Community. We honor the Kumeyaay Nation, on whose unceded ancestral lands we have made our home.

In this liturgy, we confront our common humanity and place our faith in the One God of all. Today we gather as one, in person and online. Know that wherever you are and whoever you are, you are welcome here, just as you are. We are glad you are joining us.

For those of you participating online, we invite you to join in our songs and communal responses in the worship aid located at mmacc.org and at gethsemanesd.org. It is also posted on the Gethsemane Facebook page. Prayer requests may be offered in the comments at any time. If you have ashes at home, you are, of course, invited to use them. If not, receive the blessing of the ashes spiritually. You are also invited to have bread and wine or something similar with you to share in communion.

For those in person, please silence your cell phone before the service begins. All are invited and welcome to receive the gluten free bread, and the eucharistic red wine or white grape juice. Please let the providers know if you would like to receive where you are seated, and we will bring ashes and the elements of communion to you.

Donations may be placed in the basket at the chapel doors or made online at either community's website. We invite you now to take a deep breath and center yourself in the presence of the Holy before we begin with our opening song.

(Strike the Singing Bowl)

Tree of Life and awesome mystery, in your death we are reborn;
though you die in all of hist'ry,
still you rise with every morn, still you rise with every morn.

We remember truth once spoken, love passed on through word and deed;
every person lost and broken
wears Christ's body, in their need, wears Christ's body, in their need.

Christ, you lead and we shall follow, stumbling though our steps may be;
one with you in joy and sorrow,
we the river, you the sea, we the river, you the sea.

Greeting

Blessed be the one God, creator of darkness and light, word and wisdom
enfleshed, wind sweeping over the waters. ***Amen.***

The grace of our precious Jesus, the Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. ***And also with you.***

Prayer of the Day

Presider 1: Gracious God,

**All: in love you breathed into earth the breath of life,
creating us to serve you and our neighbors. Call forth
our prayers and acts of kindness. Strengthen us to face
our mortality with confidence in the grace of Jesus the
Christ, who lives in cosmic glory with You and the Holy
Spirit, one God, now and always. Amen.**

First Reading*Isaiah 58:4b, 6-7, 10-11***A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah**

You cannot fast as you do today
and expect your voice to be heard on high!

...Rather, is this not the fast I choose?:
releasing those bound unjustly,
untying the thongs of the yoke,
setting free the oppressed,
breaking off every yoke?

Is it not sharing your bread with the hungry,
bringing the afflicted and the unhoused into your home,
clothing the naked when you see them,
and not turning your back on your own flesh?

...If you lavish your food on the hungry
and satisfy the afflicted,
then your light shall rise, your radiance seen from afar,
and your gloom shall be become like midday.

Then the Beloved will guide you always
and satisfy your thirst in parched places.
You shall be like a well-watered garden
like a flowing spring whose waters never fail.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

Thanks be to God.

[gong and silence for reflection]

Psalm	<i>Ps 83, Merrill, Music Response, Hidalgo</i>
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The sung psalm response is:

Let the refining fire of your Love reach the hidden places within open hearts!

Forgive us and let the deep regret of our souls rise up as contrite offerings.

O Great Creator, do not keep silence.
Do not withhold your peace or be still, O Giver of Life!
Fear is rampant in the world.
Those who rule by oppression rise up with power.
They lay deceptive plans against the people.
They consult together against freedom and justice.
Crafty words belie intent as thousands reap dire consequence.
Nations go to war and the innocent suffer!
Yes, they conspire with one accord.
Against Love they make a covenant.
No institution is free from the insidious arm of corruption, at home and in fields afar.
R: Let the refining fire of your Love reach the hidden places within open hearts!
Forgive us and let the deep regret of our souls rise up as contrite offerings.

Who will succor those without shelter, children orphaned,
all who starve, those cast aside by decisions based on greed?
Who will speak up on their behalf?
Let all with faith-filled hearts rise up with Love!
Clothe us in the dress of your peace,
in the stronghold of your mercy, that we might bear the power of Love.
Let us walk in shoes of integrity and don the mantle of truth.
Let us shed the tatters of envy and fear,
the rags of anger and greed,
and say, "We shall seek only the truth,
the truth which will set us free!"

R: Let the refining fire of your Love reach the hidden places within open hearts!

Forgive us and let the deep regret of our souls rise up as contrite offerings.

O Beloved, let all that is unholy within us be cleansed,
erased as chalk from a slate.

As fire consumes the forest,
as the flame reaches up to the heavens,
let the refining fire of your Love
reach into the hidden places within open hearts!

Forgive us.

Let the deep regret of our souls rise up as contrite offerings.

Let the people seek your Word.

Let the nations turn from violence and destruction.

Let them know that You alone,

You who reign with Love

are the Most High over all the earth!

R: Let the refining fire of your Love reach the hidden places within open hearts!

Forgive us and let the deep regret of our souls rise up as contrite offerings.

Second Reading

<i>2 Corinthians 5:20; 6:1-7a, 8b-9ab, 10</i>

A Reading from Paul's 2nd Letter to the Corinthians

We are ambassadors for Jesus the Christ, as if God were appealing through us. We implore you on behalf of the Christ, be reconciled to God.

Working together, then, we appeal to you not to receive the God's grace in vain. For God says:

"In an acceptable time, I heard you.

On the day you needed to be healed,

to be made whole, I helped you."

Look, now is a very acceptable time. Now is the day of salvation.

We put no stumbling block in anyone's path. We would not want our ministry discredited!

Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: through great endurance in afflictions, hardships, constraints, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, vigils, fasts. As servants of God, we commend ourselves by sincerity of heart, knowledge, patience, and kindness. We commend ourselves with a holy spirit, in unfeigned love, in truthful speech, in the power of God, which is love. We are genuine yet treated as deceivers; known, yet treated as unknown. We are treated as if we are dying, and yet look, we live! We are looked on with pity, yet we are always rejoicing; we are looked on as "poor", yet enriching many; as having nothing yet possessing all things.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

Thanks be to God.

[gong and silence for reflection]

***Glory! Praise to the Word of God.
...for by your endless wisdom, Jesus,
You show us the way.***

Gospel*Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18*

God is with you. ***And also with you.***
A Reading from the Gospel attributed to Matthew.
Glory to You, O Christ.

A Reading from the Gospel attributed to Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

Jesus taught the crowds and the disciples, saying:

"Take care not to perform righteous deeds so that people may see them; otherwise, you'll have no recompense from your Cosmic God. When you give alms, don't blow a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in places of worship and in the streets to win the praise of others. Amen, I say to you, they've received their reward. When you give alms, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your almsgiving may be secret. Your God, who sees in secret, will bless you. When you pray, don't be like hypocrites who love to stand and pray in their places of worship and on street corners so that others may see them. Amen, I say to you, they've received their reward. When you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to God in secret. God, who sees in secret, will bless you....

"When you fast, don't look gloomy like the hypocrites. They neglect their appearance, so they appear to others to be fasting. Amen, I say to you, they've received their reward. When you fast, anoint your head and wash your face so you don't appear to be fasting, except to your God who is hidden. Your God, who sees what is hidden, will reward you.

The Gospel of God.
Praise to you Jesus the Christ.

Hymn: "Change Our Hearts"*Rory Cooney*

***Change our hearts this time, Your word says it can be.
Change our minds this time, Your life could make us free.
We are the people your call set apart;
God, this time change our hearts.***

Brought by your hand to the edge of our dreams
One foot in paradise, one in the waste
Drawn by your promises
Still we are lured
By the shadows and the chains we leave behind, but

***Change our hearts this time, Your word says it can be.
Change our minds this time, Your life could make us free.
We are the people your call set apart;
God, this time change our hearts.***

Show us the way that leads to your side
Over the mountains and sands of the soul
Be for us manna, water from the stone
Light which says we never walk alone

***Change our hearts this time, Your word says it can be.
Change our minds this time, Your life could make us free.
We are the people your call set apart;
God, this time change our hearts.***

Examination of Conscience

Reflection before Examination:

“This day we acknowledge our oneness with all humanity. Our personal failings merge with the failings of the human race as we ponder the state of our world. Why do we confess to wrongs we have not personally committed? A 16th century mystic, Rabbi Isaac Luria teaches that “the people of (God) may be likened to a body of which every (one) is a living part.”

This teaching is prescient. As contemporary people, science has taught us that all life, however different it may seem, comes from the same matter, a matter we might call stardust. That reality corresponds with Rabbi Luria’s teaching: “The vitality of the whole depends upon the health of every organ and limb. That is how deeply we are connected to one another. Therefore, each individual sin inflicts damage on the whole organism and all of us share responsibility for healing the body of (God’s people).”¹

Prayer before Confession:

Our God, and God of all generations, may our prayers reach Your presence. When we turn to You, do not be indifferent...we know we are arrogant and stubborn, claiming to be blameless and free of sin. In truth, we have stumbled and strayed. We have done wrong.² You know the secrets of the universe and the secrets of the human heart. You know and understand us, for You examine our inner lives. Nothing is concealed from You, nothing hidden from Your sight. Eternal One, our God and God of our ancestors, we pray that this will be the desire of Your heart: forgive all our wrongs; pardon us for every act of injustice; help us atone for all our moral failures, that we might be at-one with one another and with You.³ **Amen.**

¹ Machzor for the Days of Awe, Yom Kippur 1, New York: CCAR 2015/5776, p. 83

² Machzor for the Days of Awe, Yom Kippur 1, p. 82.

³ Machzor for the Days of Awe, Yom Kippur 1, p. 84.

As we begin our collective confession, our response will be antiphonal, with Left and Right sides alternating. The online community is invited to choose to join in the responses with either side.

Failures of Judgment

Failures of Judgment. For these failures, O God, we ask forgiveness.

**(L) The ways we have wronged you deliberately and by mistake;
(R) and the harm we have caused in Your world through the words of our mouths.**

**(L) The ways we have wronged You by hardening our hearts;
(R) and the harm we have caused in Your world through careless speech.**

**(L) The ways we have wronged you through lies and deceit;
(R) and the harm we have caused in Your world through gossip and rumor.**

**(L) The ways we have wronged You by judging others unfairly;
(R) and the harm we have caused in Your world through disrespect to parents and teachers.**

**(L) The ways we have wronged You through insincere apologies.
(R) and the harm we have caused in Your world by mistreating a friend or neighbor.**

**(L) The ways we have wronged You through violence and abuse;
(R) and the harm we have caused in Your world through dishonesty in business.**

***Taizé Chant: O God hear our prayer, O God hear our prayer, When we call, answer us.
O God hear our prayer, O God hear our prayer, Come and listen to us.***

Failures of Thought and Action

Failures of Thought and Action: For these wrongs, we seek forgiveness:

**(L) The ways we have harmed You openly and secretly;
(R) and harm we have caused in Your world by losing self-control.**

**(L) The ways we have wronged You through sexual immorality;
(R) and harm we have caused in Your world through consumption of food and drink.**

**(L) The ways we have wronged You by giving in to our hostile impulses;
(R) and harm we have caused in Your world through greed and exploitation.**

**(L) The ways we have wronged You through cynicism and scorn;
(R) and harm we have caused in Your world through arrogant behavior.⁴**

⁴ Machzor for the Days of Awe, Yom Kippur 1, p. 88.

Taizé Chant:

***O God hear our prayer, O God hear our prayer, When we call, answer us.
O God hear our prayer, O God hear our prayer, Come and listen to us.***

Failures of Integrity

Failures of Integrity: We wrong You when we wrong ourselves. For our failures of integrity, O God, we seek forgiveness:

(L) For passing judgment without knowledge of the facts, and for distorting facts to suit our purposes.

(R) For succumbing in silence to social pressure, and for acquiescing in beliefs we find offensive.

(L) For using others' bad behavior to excuse our own and for blaming others for our mistakes and poor decisions.

(R) For pretending to have emotions we do not feel, and for appearing to be other than what we are.

(L) For condemning in children the faults we tolerate in ourselves;

(R) and for tolerating in ourselves the faults we condemn in others.

Taizé Chant:

***O God hear our prayer, O God hear our prayer, When we call, answer us.
O God hear our prayer, O God hear our prayer, Come and listen to us.***

Failures of Justice

Failures of Justice: We dishonor You when we dishonor our society. For our failures of justice, O God, we seek forgiveness.

(L) For being indifferent to deprivation and hunger, while accepting a culture of self-indulgence and greed.

(R) For abuse of power in board rooms, court rooms, and classrooms.

(L) For accepting the neglect of children and elders, of the ill and weak, and the mistreatment of strangers among us.

(R) For permitting social inequities to prevail, and for lacking the vision to transcend our selfishness.

(L) For glorifying violence, turning hastily to war, and for allowing history to repeat itself.

(R) For behaviors that risk the future of our planet, and for wreaking havoc on our only true inheritance – God's creation.⁵

⁵ Machzor for the Days of Awe, Yom Kippur 1, p. 89.

Presider: For all these wrongs, collective and individual, we ask Your forgiveness, O God.

Taizé Chant:

O God hear our prayer, O God hear our prayer, When we call, answer us.

O God hear our prayer, O God hear our prayer, Come and listen to us.

For Acts of Healing and Repair

For Acts of Healing and Repair: We recognize the healing we have done individually or anonymously and the acts of repair we have done without personal gain:

(L) by seeking forgiveness and by forgiving others;

(R) through righteous giving and by opening our hearts;

(L) by comforting the mourner and visiting the sick;

(R) by pursuing justice, human rights, fairness and civility;

(L) by making peace between one person and another;

(R) by protecting nature and all its creatures;

(L) by teaching our children the ways of peace...

(R) by honoring elders and loving the stranger;

(L) by choosing life and blessing,

(R) by choosing to live and be a blessing.

All: And all these bring nearer the day when we shall be one and Your Name shall be One.⁶

Presider: Our God and God of our (ancestors), do not abandon us, leaving us in shame. Show us Your ways. (T)each us how to live. Let us be open to Your love, ready to revere Your very being. Cut away the hardness of our hearts so that we may turn to You with all our heart's devotion and truly repent. For the sake of Your great name, pardon our failures and forgive our moral weakness...forgive our wrongs, no matter how great.⁷

Blessing and Distribution of Ashes

Blessing

God of all Life and Creation, on this Ash Wednesday You invite us to remember and wonder at the gift of life and our connectedness with all creation. May these ashes remind us of the mystery of life, death and new life. May they nourish our hearts. During the Lenten Season bring forth in us the fruits of Your Spirit, a harvest of justice, peace and generosity.

⁶ *Id.*, p. 93.

⁷ *Id.*, p. 104

All: God of Life, we ask for Your blessing upon these ashes. May they become for us a symbol of our passing through death to life, a proclamation, not of our piety but of your grace. Bless us and ground us in Your everlasting love, as a faith community both forgiven and forgiving, healed and healing. Amen.

Distribution: At this time, you are invited to come forward, to one of two stations. Receive the sign of the cross on your forehead made with these ashes. Receiving ashes is a sign of our commitment to make Lent a time of Holiness and thanksgiving, a time of spiritual renewal in our relationships with ourselves, God, all people, and our planet. As ashes are placed on your forehead, you will hear a blessing spoken over you. For those online, please feel free to participate spiritually or by imposing ashes on your forehead or hand. Please respond with “Amen.”

*“Beloved, You have come from stardust and to stardust you shall return.
You are loved. Nothing can separate you from God’s love.”*

*Instrumental Music played during distribution.
At the conclusion of the distribution, we will return to the chant:*

***O God hear our prayer, O God hear our prayer, When we call, answer us.
O God hear our prayer, O God hear our prayer, Come and listen to us. (2x)***

Holy Communion

Blessed are you, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this bread to offer, which earth has given and human hands have made. It will become for us the bread of life.

Blessed be God forever.

Blessed are you, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this wine to offer, fruit of the vine and work of human hands. It will become our spiritual drink.

Blessed be God forever.

Pray that our offering is one that God desires.

We are gathered in Your name. Be with us in our midst.

Eucharistic Prayer

God dwells in you. ***And also in you.***

Let us give thanks to the life-giving Spirit of God.

We give God thanks and praise.

Presider: We thank You, Holy One, for all that has come into being; for cosmic unfolding; and for walking with us along the road of life. In gratitude we sing to You our great hymn of praise:

Sanctus [Sung]

Heritage Mass, Alstott

**Holy, Holy, Holy, O God of Hosts.
Heaven and Earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna, hosanna in the highest!
Blessed are all who come in Your Name, O God.
Hosanna, hosanna in the highest!**

Voice 1

In the fullness of Your time, You took on our humanity in Jesus the Christ, so that we might know our divinity.

Voice 2

In Jesus, you shared in every aspect of our life so that we might know you are God-with-us.

[Please extend your hand, palm up, toward the bread and wine]

Presider: Pour out your Spirit on these gifts, O God. May this bread and wine become in us the body and blood of Jesus. We remember that...

...on the night before Jesus died, while at supper with his friends, he took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread and gave it to them saying: "Take this, all of you, and eat. This is my body. Do this in memory of me."

[Pause]

In the same way, Jesus took the cup filled with wine. He gave You thanks, and gave the cup to his friends, saying: "Take this all of you and drink. This is my blood, the new covenant of God-with-you. Do this in memory of me."

Presider: We remember all that has been done for us:

Voice 3: The journey of prayer and preaching

Voice 4: The path of healing and forgiveness

Voice 5: The road to the cross

Voice 6: The tomb

Voice 7: The resurrection

Voice 8: The ascension to You, O God,

Voice 9: And so we offer to You these gifts

from the gifts you have given to us and for us all.

Presider

We remember the communion of saints, here, now, and always.

***Through Christ, With Christ, In Christ,
In the unity of Sophia Spirit,
may all glory and honor be Yours, now and always.***

The Great Amen [Sung]

Heritage Mass, Alstott

A-men. A-men. A-men!

Prayer of Jesus

The prayer often called "the Lord's Prayer" or the "Our Father" has been translated, rendered, and sung in many ways throughout the last 2,000 years. Please use the words most comforting to you. We offer this contemporary recited version.

***Loving God, in whom is heaven.
May Your Name be honored everywhere.
May Your kin-dom come. May the desire of Your heart
for the world be done, in us, by us and through us.
Give us the bread we need for each day.
Forgive us. Enable us to forgive others.
Keep us from all anxiety and fear.
For You reign in the power
that comes from love which is Your glory,
forever and ever.
Amen.***

Presider:

This is God's holy bread and wine for the transformation of God's holy people.

We are blessed to share in this sacred meal.

Whenever and wherever we gather, online or in person, on Sunday or during the week, we are the church and God is with us. May all who share in this communion be united in the Body of Christ that knows no bounds. Amen. We invite those here in-person to gather in a semi-circle around the altar. We'll put the wafer into your hand. Please dip the wafer into the cup of your choice, red wine or white grape juice. Please stay at the altar to pray until all in your group have been served.

Please come. These are the gifts of God for the people of God.

Communion Song – "We Rise Again from Ashes" Conry

We rise again from ashes,
from the good we've failed to do.
We rise again from ashes,
to create ourselves anew.
If all the world is ashes,
then must our lives be too;
an offering of ashes
an offering to you.

Then rise again from ashes,
let healing come to pain.
Though spring has turned to winter
and sunshine turned to rain,
the rain we'll use for growing
and create the world anew;
From an offering of ashes,
an offering to you

Closing Rites

Presider: Now having received this precious gift of the very life of Jesus the Christ, live it from this day onward to life everlasting. **Amen.**

Closing Blessing

May we gain wisdom in our lives overflowing like a river with understanding, each of us loved for the peace we bring to others.

May our deeds exceed our speech.

May Love conquer our fear and doubt and despair.

*Rise up like the sun, O God, over all humanity. May Your radiance...go forth over all the earth...enflame the universe with the joy of wholeness, of freedom and of peace.*⁸

Sending Forth

We stand at the threshold of Lent. Journey in peace. Remember the poor.

Thanks be to God.

Closing Song – In These Days of Lenten Journey *Manalo*

***In these days of Lenten journey, we have seen and we have heard,
the call to sow justice in the lives of those we serve.***

We open our eyes to the hungry and see the faces of Christ.

As we nourish all the people who hunger for food,

may our faith in our God be renewed. **R**

We open our ears to the weary and hear the cry of the poor.

To the voices that echo the song of despair

we will show our compassion and care. **R**

We call on the spirit of justice and pray for righteousness' sake.

We will sing for the freedom of all the oppressed;

we will loosen the bonds of distress. **R**

We are grateful that you have joined us for worship today.

Presiders: Rev Karla Seyb-Stockton, pastor, GLC

+Bishop Jane Via, pastor, MMACC

Rev Nancy Corran, pastor

Cantor: Rev Suzie Knapp, pastor, MMACC

Pianist: Malcolm Twentyman

Ministers of the Good News: Everyone

⁸ Ibid.

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