

# ST. MATTHEW'S



DARLINGTON, SOUTH CAROLINA  
EST. 1886

Ash Wednesday  
February 14, 2024 • 5:30 PM  
The Holy Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes



## Welcome to Saint Matthew's Church

In 1905 a group of God's faithful children laid the cornerstone of the present Church. A lovely structure to begin with, it has been enhanced and further beautified through the years by the work and the gifts of those who have followed in the footsteps of generations of believers in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Our order of service originated in 1549 in England and features patterns of worship and prayers rooted in the Ancient Apostolic faith and the Reformation. The entire congregation participates in the worship service using the Book of Common Prayer and the Hymnal. Together, we are the body of Christ and individually members of it (1 Cor. 12:27). If you would like to learn more, please let me know by filling out a Welcome Newcomers Card found in your pew and place it in the collection plate. I will be sure to contact you promptly.

The Reverend E. Ragland (Rags) Coxe

Our schedule of weekly worship and Christian Education is as follows:

### Sunday

**8am** Holy Communion in the Church. This is a shorter service due to the absence of music.

**9:45** Christian Education for all ages; Nursery provided.

**10:30** Family Service in the Chapel. This is a 15 minute service for families with young children.

**11am** Holy Communion in the Church with music, and livestream virtual (Zoom)

### **Last Sunday of the Month (Normally)**

**11am** Morning Prayer. This is usually a lay-led service praise and worship service with a brief homily.

**Home Communion** is available by request. Please contact the church office or the Rector.

**Virtual Participants** are encouraged to follow the services using the virtual bulletin which is e-mailed each week and your own Book of Common Prayer. Please contact the church office if you have any questions.

All baptized and believing Christians are welcome to receive communion at the Lord's table. If you are not baptized, or if you would prefer to receive a blessing, please indicate this by crossing your arms over your chest. Gluten-free wafers available, please ask the clergy.



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The Holy Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes



*Silence precedes the liturgy, which begins with the  
Acclamation and Collect of the Day*

### **The Acclamation**

*Celebrant:* Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.

*People:* ***His mercy endures for ever.***

**BCP**

Invitation to the observance of a Holy Lent

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### **The Collect of the Day (kneeling)**

**Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made, and you forgive the sins of all who are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

**The First Lesson: Isaiah 58:1-12**

**ESV**

**p.617**

“Cry aloud; do not hold back; lift up your voice like a trumpet; declare to my people their transgression, to the house of Jacob their sins.<sup>2</sup> Yet they seek me daily and delight to know my ways, as if they were a nation that did righteousness and did not forsake the judgment of their God; they ask of me righteous judgments; they delight to draw near to God.<sup>3</sup> ‘Why have we fasted, and you see it not? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you take no knowledge of it?’ Behold, in the day of your fast you seek your own pleasure, and oppress all your workers.<sup>4</sup> Be-

hold, you fast only to quarrel and to fight and to hit with a wicked fist. Fasting like yours this day will not make your voice to be heard on high.<sup>5</sup> Is such the fast that I choose, a day for a person to humble himself? Is it to bow down his head like a reed, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Will you call this a fast, and a day acceptable to the Lord? <sup>6</sup> “Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?<sup>7</sup> Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?<sup>8</sup> Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.<sup>9</sup> Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, ‘Here I am.’ If you take away the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness,<sup>10</sup> if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday.<sup>11</sup> And the Lord will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.<sup>12</sup> And your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to dwell in.

**Psalm 103:8-14 (*standing, sung*)**

**8 The Lord is full of compassion and mercy, \*long-suffering and of great goodness.**

**9 He will not always chide us, \*neither will he keep his anger for ever.**

**10 He has not dealt with us according to our sins, \*nor rewarded us according to our wickedness.**

**11 For as the heavens are high above the earth, \*so great is his mercy also toward those who fear him.**

**12 As far as the east is from the west, \*so far has he set our sins from us.**

**13 As a father pities his own children, \*so is the Lord merciful to those who fear him.**

**14 For he knows whereof we are made; \*he remembers that we are but dust.**

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; \* as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.**

**The Second Lesson: 2 Corinthians 5:20-6:10                      ESV              p. 966**

20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.<sup>6</sup> Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. 2 For he says, “In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you.” Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. 3 We put no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, 4 but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, 5 beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; 6 by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; 7 by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; 8 through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; 9 as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; 10 as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.

## **The Sequence Hymn #142 “Lord, who throughout these forty days”**

*All standing, the Deacon reads the Gospel, first saying:*

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

*People* **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

**The Gospel: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21**

**ESV**

**p. 811**

“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.<sup>2</sup> “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. <sup>3</sup> But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, <sup>4</sup> so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. <sup>5</sup> “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. <sup>6</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> “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. <sup>17</sup> But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup> 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. <sup>19</sup> “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, <sup>20</sup> but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

*After the Gospel, the Deacon says:*

The Gospel of the Lord.

*People* **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Sermon

The Rev. E. Ragland Coxé

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Confession and Litany of Penitence	547-549
The Absolution.	550
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Offertory Anthem                      “Create in Me, A Clean Heart, O God”                      Carl F. Mueller

*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.  
Then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners will be converted unto thee.  
Create in me a clean heart, O God.*

## Announcements

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## The Ministration of Communion

*(Communion will be received and consumed at the Communion Rail.)  
Please dip the wafer you receive in the chalice, but not your finger!*

**The Communion Hymn #328 “Draw nigh and take the Body of the Lord”**

The Post Communion Prayer	137
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**Hymn #149 “Eternal Lord of love, behold your Church”**

**The people leave in silence**

## Concerning Ash Wednesday

*Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent: a time of penitence, fasting, and prayer, in preparation for the great feast of the resurrection. The season of Lent began in the early days of the Church as a time of preparation for those seeking to be baptized at the Easter Vigil. The forty days refer to our Lord's time of fasting in the wilderness; and since Sundays are never fast days, Ash Wednesday is the beginning of the Lenten Fast. Throughout the Old Testament, ashes are used as a sign of sorrow and repentance, and Christians have traditionally used ashes to indicate sorrow for our own sin, and as a reminder that the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). Like Adam and Eve, we have disobeyed and rebelled against God, and are under the same judgment, "you are dust, and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19). But as we are marked with ashes in the same manner that we were signed with the Cross in Baptism, we are also reminded of the life we share in Jesus Christ, the second Adam (Romans 5:17, 6:4). It is in this sure hope that we begin the journey of these forty days, that by hearing and answering our Savior's call to repent, we may enter fully into the joyful celebration of his resurrection.*

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