



We believe in sharing love and grace
by seeking relationship with God and one another.

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE
ASCENSION

We believe in sharing love and grace by seeking relationship with God and one another.

ASH WEDNESDAY

Wednesday, March 5, 2025

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Glenda Curry, Bishop of the Diocese of Alabama

The Rt. Rev. Brian Prior, Assisting Bishop

The Reverend Candice B. Frazer, Rector

The Reverend Andrew S. Brislin, Associate Rector

MINISTERS SERVING THIS ASH WEDNESDAY

Rebecca Taylor, **Organist and Choirmaster**

The Holy Eucharist for Ash Wednesday

Voluntary

O Man, bewail thy grievous sin

J. S. Bach

All Stand as the Ministers Enter the Chancel

THE WORD OF GOD

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made and 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 Lessons and Responses

THE FIRST READING ISAIAH 58:1-12

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

When Shout out, do not hold back!
Lift up your voice like a trumpet!
Announce to my people their rebellion,
to the house of Jacob their sins.

Yet day after day they seek me
and delight to know my ways,
as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness
and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;

they ask of me righteous judgments,
they delight to draw near to God.

"Why do we fast, but you do not see?
Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?"
Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day,
and oppress all your workers.

Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight
and to strike with a wicked fist.
Such fasting as you do today
will not make your voice heard on high.

Is such the fast that I choose,
a day to humble oneself?
Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush,
and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?

Will you call this a fast,
a day acceptable to the Lord?
Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,

to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
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 them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?
Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly;

your vindicator shall go before you,
the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.
Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;
you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,
if you offer your food to the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,

then your light shall rise in the darkness
and your gloom be like the noonday.
The Lord will guide you continually,
and satisfy your needs in parched places,
and make your bones strong;

and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters never fail.
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 live in.

Reader The Word of the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

PSALM 103:8-14 *Benedic, anima mea*

Thomas Dupuis
(1733–1796)



8 The Lord is full of com- / passion • and / mercy, *
slow to / anger and • of / **great** / kindness.

9 He will not / always • ac- / cuse us, *
nor will he / keep his / anger • for / ever.

10 He has not dealt with us ac- / cording to • our / sins, *
nor rewarded us ac- / cord - ing / to our / wickedness.

11 For as the heavens are high a- / bove the / earth, *
so is his mercy great upon / those who / **fear** / him.

12 As far as the east is / from the / west, *
so far has he re- / moved our / sins from / us.

13 As a father / cares for • his / children, *
so does the Lord / care for / those who / fear / him.

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

Second Reading 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

A reading from Paul's second letter to the Corinthians.

We entreat 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.

As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says,

"At an acceptable time I have listened to you,
and on a day of salvation I have helped you."

See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see-- we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

Sequence Hymn 488 *Be thou by vision (Slane)*

1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;
2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;
3 High King of hea - ven, when vic - tory is won,

all else be nought to me, save that thou art—
I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord;
may I reach hea - ven's joys, bright hea - ven's Sun!

thou my best thought,— by day or by night,
thou my great Fa - ther; thine own may I be;
Heart of my heart,— what - ev - er be - fall,

wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.
thou in me dwell - ing, and I one with thee.
still be my vis - ion, O Ru - ler of all.

Words: Irish, ca. 700; versified Mary Elizabeth Byrne (1880-1931); tr. Eleanor H. Hull (1860-1935), alt. Music: *Slane*, Irish ballad melody; adapt. *The Church Hymnary*, 1927; harm. David Evans (1874-1948). By permission of Oxford University Press.

HOLY GOSPEL MATTHEW 6:1-6, 16-21

Celebrant The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke
People *Glory be to thee, O Lord*

Jesus said, "Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

"So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever 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 whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Celebrant The Gospel of the Lord.
People *Praise be to thee, O Christ.*

THE SERMON

The Rev. Andrew S. Brislin

AN INVITATION TO A HOLY LENT

Dear People of God: The first Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church to prepare for them by a season of penitence and fasting. This season of Lent provided a time in which converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism. It was also a time when those who, because of notorious sins, had been separated from the body of the faithful were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to the fellowship of the Church. Thereby, the whole congregation was put in mind of the message of pardon and absolution set forth in the Gospel of our Savior, and of the need which all Christians continually have to renew their repentance and faith.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word. And, to make a right beginning of repentance, and as a mark of our mortal nature, let us now kneel before the Lord, our maker and redeemer.

Silence is then kept for a time, all kneeling.

If ashes are to be imposed, the Celebrant says the following prayer

Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth: Grant that these ashes may be to us a sign of our mortality and penitence, that we may remember that it is only by your gracious gift that we are given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

The ashes are imposed with the following words

Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

PSALM 51 *Miserere mei, Deus*

- | | | | |
|----|---|----|--|
| 1 | Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindness; *
in your great compassion blot out my offenses. | | and blot out all my iniquities. |
| 2 | Wash me through and through from my wickedness *and cleanse me from my sin. | 11 | Create in me a clean heart, O God, *
and renew a right spirit within me. |
| 3 | For I know my transgressions, *
and my sin is ever before me. | 12 | Cast me not away from your presence *
and take not your holy Spirit from me. |
| 4 | Against you only have I sinned *
and done what is evil in your sight. | 13 | Give me the joy of your saving help again *
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit. |
| 5 | And so you are justified when you speak *
and upright in your judgment | 14 | I shall teach your ways to the wicked, *
and sinners shall return to you. |
| 6 | Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth, *
a sinner from my mother's womb. | 15 | Deliver me from death, O God, *
and my tongue shall sing of your
righteousness, O God of my salvation. |
| 7 | For behold, you look for truth deep within me,
*and will make me understand wisdom
secretly. | 16 | Open my lips, O Lord, *
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise. |
| 8 | Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure; *
wash me, and I shall be clean indeed. | 17 | Had you desired it, I would have offered
sacrifice; *but you take no delight in
burnt-offerings. |
| 9 | Make me hear of joy and gladness, *
that the body you have broken may rejoice. | 18 | The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; *
a broken and contrite heart, O God,
you will not despise. |
| 10 | Hide your face from my sins * | | |

LITANY OF PENITENCE

The Celebrant and People together, all kneeling

Most holy and merciful Father:

We confess to you and to one another,
and to the whole communion of saints
in heaven and on earth,
that we have sinned by our own fault
in thought, word, and deed;
by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.

The Celebrant continues

We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others, as we have been forgiven.

Have mercy on us, Lord.

We have been deaf to your call to serve, as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

Have mercy on us, Lord.

We confess to you, Lord, all our past unfaithfulness: the pride, hypocrisy, and impatience of our lives,

We confess to you, Lord.

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people,

We confess to you, Lord.

Our anger at our own frustration, and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,

We confess to you, Lord.

Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonesty in daily life and work,

We confess to you, Lord.

Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,

We confess to you, Lord.

Accept our repentance, Lord, for the wrongs we have done: for our blindness to human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,

Accept our repentance, Lord

For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us,

Accept our repentance, Lord.

For our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us,

Accept our repentance, Lord.

Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us;
Favorably hear us, for your mercy is great.

Accomplish in us the work of your salvation,
That we may show forth your glory in the world.

By the cross and passion of your Son our Lord,

Bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.

The Priest, stands and, facing the people, says

Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desires not the death of sinners, but rather that they may turn

from their wickedness and live, has given power and commandment to his ministers to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins. He pardons and absolves all those who truly repent, and with sincere hearts believe his holy Gospel.

Therefore we beseech him to grant us true repentance and his Holy Spirit, that those things may please him which we do on this day, and that the rest of our life hereafter may be pure and holy, so that at the last we may come to his eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

THE PEACE

Announcements

Giving is available on-line by going to www.coascension.org and click on the "Give" link

Or, text the word "GIVE" to (833)901-2138 and follow as prompted.

Or, VENMO @churchoftheascension Montgomery, Alabama (look for our logo)

OFFERTORY ANTHEM *Open my heart (J. S. Bach)*

Open my heart, O Jesus my Savior,

Unveil my eyes that I may see,

Unstop my ears, now deaf and unheeding;

Fill me with truth, and love of thee.

Thou art the light my eyes should follow,

Thy words of wisdom let me hear.

Thou art the light my eyes should follow,

Thy words of wisdom let me hear.

Midst all the tumult life hurls round me,

Let me remember thou art near. Amen.

Presentation *The Doxology Old 100th*

*Celebrant: **All things come of thee, O Lord,***

*People: **And of thine own have we given thee. Amen.***

The Great Thanksgiving

Eucharistic Prayer I

The people remain standing. The Celebrant, whether bishop or priest, faces them and sings or says

	The Lord be with you.
<i>People</i>	And with thy spirit.
<i>Celebrant</i>	Lift up your hearts.
<i>People</i>	We lift them up unto the Lord.
<i>Celebrant</i>	Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.
<i>People</i>	It is meet and right so to do.

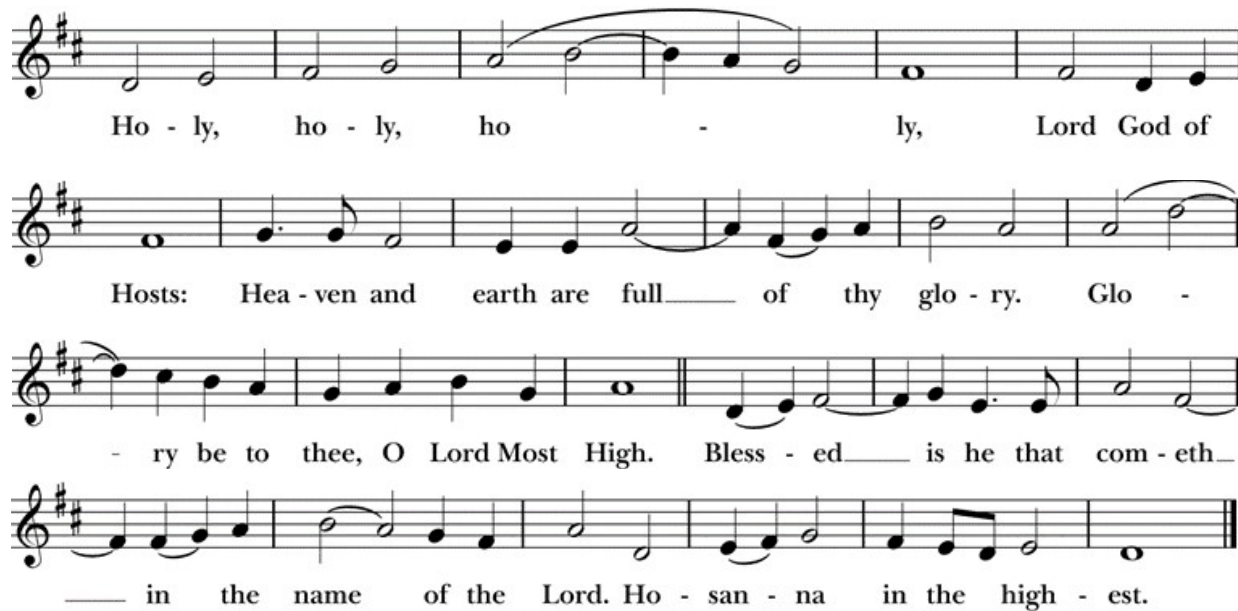
Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord; who was in every way tempted as we are, yet did not sin; by whose grace we are able to triumph over every evil, and to live no longer unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us and rose again.

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and saying,

SANCTUS (Hymnal S114)



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, Lord God of
Hosts: Hea - ven and earth are full of thy glo - ry. Glo -
ry be to thee, O Lord Most High. Bless - ed is he that com - eth
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Music: From *Missa de Sancta Maria Magdalena*, Healey Willan (1880-1968). By permission of Oxford University Press.

The people kneel or stand.

Then the Celebrant continues

All glory be to thee, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for that thou, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it, or lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing wine to be consecrated

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink ye all of this; for this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me."

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, according to the institution of thy dearly beloved Son our Savior Jesus Christ, we, thy humble servants, do celebrate and make here before thy divine Majesty, with these thy holy gifts, which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; rendering unto thee most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same.

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us; and, of thy almighty goodness, vouchsafe to bless and sanctify, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine; that we, receiving them according to thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood. And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching thee to grant that, by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we, and all thy whole Church, may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion.

And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee that we, and all others who shall be partakers of this Holy Communion, may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him.

And although we are unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offenses, through Jesus Christ our Lord;

By whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. *AMEN.*

And now, as our Savior Christ hath taught us, we are bold to say,

People and Celebrant

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.

A period of silence is kept.

Then may be sung or said

Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
Therefore let us keep the feast.

The following or some other suitable anthem may be sung or said here

Agnus Dei (S158)

O Lamb of God, that ta - kest a -
way the sins of the world, have mer - cy up -
on us. O Lamb of God, that
ta - kest a - way the sins of the world, have
mer - cy up - on us. O Lamb of

God, that ta - kest a - way the sins of the
world, grant us thy peace.

Music: From *Missa de Sancta Maria Magdalena*, Healey Willan (1880-1968). By permission of Oxford University Press.

We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. *Amen*.

Facing the people, the Celebrant may say the following Invitation

The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

The Bread and the Cup are given to the communicants with these words

The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith, with thanksgiving.

The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Drink this in remembrance that Christ's Blood was shed for thee, and be thankful.

Communion Anthem: *I want Jesus to walk with me* (Spiritual, arr. C. Haywood)

After Communion, the Celebrant says

Let us pray.

The People may join in saying this prayer

Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank thee for that thou dost feed us, in these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of thy everlasting kingdom. And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. *Amen*.

The Priest, gives the blessing

Grant, most merciful Lord, to your faithful people pardon and peace, that they may be cleansed from all their sins, and serve you with a quiet mind; through Christ our Lord. May the peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the love of God and of Jesus Christ, his son. And, the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be upon you this day and remain with you always. *Amen*.

Hymn 143 *The glory of these forty days (Erhalt uns Herr)*



1 The glo - ry of these for - ty days we
 2 A - lone and fast - ing Mo - ses saw the
 3 So Dan - iel trained his mys - tic sight, de -
 4 Then grant us, Lord, like them to be full
 *5 O Fa - ther, Son, and Spi - rit blest, to



1 ce - le - brate with songs of praise; for Christ, through whom all
 2 lov - ing God who gave the law; and to E - li - jah,
 3 liv - ered from the li - ons' might; and John, the Bride - groom's
 4 oft in fast and prayer with thee; our spi - rits strength - en
 5 thee be ev - ery prayer ad - dressed, who art in three - fold



1 things were made, him - self has fast - ed and has prayed.
 2 fast - ing, came the steeds and char - i - ots of flame.
 3 friend, be - came the her - ald of Mes - si - ah's name.
 4 with thy grace, and give us joy to see thy face.
 5 Name a - dored, from age to age, the on - ly Lord.

Words: Latin, 6th cent.; tr. Maurice F. Bell (1862-1947), alt. By permission of Oxford University Press. Music: *Erhalt uns, Herr*, melody from *Geistliche Leiden*, 1543; harm. Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750).

Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GIVING

*I gave today in gratitude for what God has given me.
 'All things come of thee, O Lord...'*

WAYS TO GIVE AT ASCENSION



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