



A Service of Worship and Reflection

February 14, 2024

7:00 p.m.

GOD'S PEOPLE GATHER

PRELUDE

"I Want Jesus to Walk with Me"

Susan Herman, flute

African-American Spiritual

arr. Lloyd Larson

WORDS OF PREPARATION AND REFLECTION

“Improv On 1 Corinthians 13 For Ash Wednesday on Valentine’s Day”

If I speak in tongues of justice or spirituality,
but do not have ashes,
I am a self-congratulating vigil,
a Sunday service inspired by itself.

If I have social media outreach,
a labyrinth in the church garden,
Bible study in the brew-pub,
and if I have a capital campaign,
to remove pews, put in church chairs
and even add a coffee shop,
but do not have ashes, I am nothing.

If I give to church-wide offerings,
and go on mission trips so that I may boast,
but do not have ashes, I gain nothing.

Ashes are awkward; ashes are dirty;
ashes, like love,
are not envious, boastful, arrogant or rude.
Ashes do not insist on a perfect Lent;
they do not even need to be in church
or be a gimmick getting folks to church;
they do not inventory wrongdoing,
especially the wrongdoing of others,

but rejoice in the precious now,
the very fragility of life.

Ashes bear love, believe in love,
hope in the possibility
of forgiveness for everyone,
endure even times of lovelessness.

Forgiveness never ends.
As for spiritual practices,
they will come to an end;
as for precious old hymns
and passionate praise songs,
they will grow quiet;
as for theology and faith formation,
believe me, it will shift and change again.

For churches are always reaching
for a part of things,
while those who flee church
reach for another part,
but, when the full forgiveness comes,
it will look more like Valentine’s Day.

When I was a child, I said “I love you,”
I cut out pink and red hearts,
I sent them to everyone, even the bullies,
but when I became an adult,
I decided to make it more complicated.

Now in our churches and lives
we have become too fond of mirrors,
but some day we will see each other
face to smudged face.
Now I love only in part;
then I will love fully,
even as I have been fully loved.

Today ashes, dust,
and a child's pink paper art abide, these three;
but the greatest of these is the heart.

OPENING SONG

**“Ash Wednesday Comes,
and Lord We Hear”**

Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

1. Ash Wednes - day comes, and Lord, we hear the
2. "Re turn to me with all your heart— with
3. You call to us— the old, the young; you
4. O God most mer - ci - ful and kind, your

word for which our spir - its yearn; a - mid this world's dis -
fast - ing, weep - ing, mourn - ing, too." O God, we seek a
sum - mon na - tions strong and weak. When we have drift - ed
love is not a prize we earn; yet in our life with

ness and fear, we hear your lov - ing call: "Re - turn!"
brand new start, a new be - gin - ning here with you.
toward the wrong, you call us back, your way to seek.
you we find the joy that comes when we re - turn.

CALL TO WORSHIP (from Isaiah 58:5-6)

Pastor: We come to worship God as the Lenten season begins, aware of our frailty and our failings.

People: We come seeking God's mercy, acknowledging our mortality.

Pastor: Having received the waters of baptism,

People: we come to be marked now with ashes.

Pastor: May we humble ourselves before God not with a yoke of burden

People: but a mantle of freedom in Jesus' name.

SPECIAL MUSIC

"Pie Jesu"

from *Requiem*

Andrew Lloyd Weber

Susan Herman & Caron Treon, flutes

Pie Jesu, pie Jesu, pie Jesu, pie Jesu

Qui tollis peccata mundi

Dona eis requiem, dona eis requiem

Agnus Dei, Agnus Dei, Agnus Dei, Agnus Dei

Qui tollis peccata mundi

Dona eis requiem, dona eis requiem

Sempiternam, Sempiternam, Requiem

Translation:

Merciful Jesus,

who takes away the sins of the world,

grant them rest.

Lamb of God,

who takes away the sins of the world,

grant them rest, everlasting rest.

REFLECTION

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Isaiah 58:1-12

CALL TO CONFESSION (from Joel 2:12-13)

Pastor: The prophet Joel cried out: Return to the Lord with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. For God is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love. Let us confess our sins and repent of all unrighteousness.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (from Isaiah 58:4-7; Joel 2:17)

People: Merciful God, we confess that we have been a rebellious people. We have broken your covenant, and we have tolerated injustice in our land. We have not shared our food with the hungry, we have not sheltered the homeless, and we have not aided the destitute. We quarrel and fight among ourselves, and we use religion to cover our deceit. We have become a mockery of our heritage; the world looks at us and asks, "Where is their God?" Forgive us, O God. Subdue our rebellious hearts and restore in us the light of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS (from Isaiah 58:9b-10)

Pastor: 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. In the name of Jesus Christ, know that you are forgiven and rejoice.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SONG

“Lord, I Want to Be a Christian”

No. 729
Glory to God

1 Lord, I want to be a Chris-tian in my heart, in my heart;
2 Lord, I want to be more lov - ing in my heart, in my heart;
3 Lord, I want to be more ho - ly in my heart, in my heart;
4 Lord, I want to be like Je - sus in my heart, in my heart;

Lord, I want to be a Chris-tian in my heart.
Lord, I want to be more lov - ing in my heart.
Lord, I want to be more ho - ly in my heart.
Lord, I want to be like Je - sus in my heart.

In my heart, in my heart,
In my heart, in my heart,

Lord, I want to be a Chris-tian in my heart.
Lord, I want to be more lov - ing in my heart.
Lord, I want to be more ho - ly in my heart.
Lord, I want to be like Je - sus in my heart.

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features a vocal line and a bass line. The lyrics are arranged in four systems, each with a vocal line and a bass line. The first system includes four numbered lines of lyrics. The second system includes four lines of lyrics. The third system includes two lines of lyrics. The fourth system includes four lines of lyrics. The score concludes with a final chord in the bass line.

REFLECTION

RESPONSIVE READING OF PSALM 51:1-17

Pastor: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

People: **For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.**

Pastor: Indeed, I am guilty. But you desire truth in the inward being; therefore, teach me wisdom in my secret heart. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be brighter than new-fallen snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

People: **Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and sustain in me a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.**

Pastor: Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance. Open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

People: **For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased. The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.**

SONG

“Restore in Us, O God”

No. 434
Glory to God



1 Re - store in us, O God, the splen-dor of your love;
2 O Spir - it, wake in us the won - der of your power;
3 Bring us, O Christ, to share the full - ness of your joy;
4 Three - per - soned God, ful - fill the prom - ise of your grace,

(Am7) (Em) (Am) (Bm) (Em) (Bm7) (Em)
B^bm7 Fm B^bm Cm Fm Cm7 Fm



re - new your im - age in our hearts, and all our sins re - move.
from fruit - less fear un - furl our lives like spring - time bud and flower.
bap - tize us in the ris - en life that death can - not de - stroy.
that we, when all our search - ing ends, may see you face to face.

INVITATION TO OBSERVE THE LENTEN DISCIPLINE

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Pastor: Let us pray for the needs of the world, saying, Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.
Holy God, as the Ordinary season now turns to Lent, we pray that you will guide us in the days ahead. As we journey with Jesus Christ, give us an abiding sense of your presence, an unguarded sense of ourselves, and an awareness of the needs of this world. Lord, in your mercy,

People: hear our prayer.

Silence

Pastor: Loving God, as we are marked with the ashes of earth, we bring before you the frailty of our very human lives, the fragility of our health, the tenuousness of our accomplishments and plans, the changing nature of even our closest relationships. Grant us patience in suffering and healing from our ills. Give us, in equal measure, humility and hope in our pursuits. Bind us in covenantal love that is both constant yet able to change according to the needs and circumstances before us. Lord, in your mercy

People: hear our prayer.

Silence

Pastor: Just God, you call us to loosen the bonds of injustice, to care for those in need, to lift the burdens that bind others. We ask you to increase our courage and our will to work for the freedom and peace you envision and demand. We pray for an end to warfare and conflict, accepting our calling to be peacemakers. We pray for an end to hunger and homelessness, knowing we are called to share our bread and to open our doors. We pray for an end to false righteousness, evil speech, and shallow piety in our lives, in the church, in our national life, and among all the nations. Lord, in your mercy

People: hear our prayer.

Silence

Pastor: Forever God, we pray that your kingdom will come in fullness; that what is perishable will be raised imperishable; and that death itself will be swallowed up in victory; through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

People: Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

All: 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

SONG

“O Lord, Hear My Prayer”

No. 471
Glory to God

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of three systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are: "O Lord, hear my prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer. When I call, an - swer me. O Lord, hear my prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer. Come and lis - ten to me." The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line and chords that support the vocal melody.

REFLECTION

EPISTLE LESSON

2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

REFLECTION

GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.

Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.

LITANY OF IMPOSITION

Pastor: We bow our heads before you, O God, aware of our sinfulness and our shortcomings. Remembering our baptism, the watermark of the cross upon us,

People: We also receive this ashen cross upon our foreheads – another sign that in life and in death, we belong to you.

Pastor: In the name of Jesus Christ, crucified, risen, and coming again, we pray. Amen.

THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

If you are worshiping via live stream, place a plate with bread or crackers in your home worship space. Beside it set a cup with juice, wine, water, or other common beverage.

With these elements we celebrate the shared presence of Christ that connects and nourishes our communion of faith.

If you are worshiping in person, please come down the center aisle for the Imposition of Ashes and receive the Communion elements from the servers before returning to your seat using the side aisles.

Pastors and servers will bring ashes and communion elements to the seats of those who cannot come forward.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND INVITATION

1 Let us break bread to - geth - er on our knees; (on our knees)
 2 Let us drink wine to - geth - er on our knees; (on our knees)
 3 Let us praise God to - geth - er on our knees; (on our knees)

let us break bread to - geth - er on our knees. (on our knees)
 let us drink wine to - geth - er on our knees. (on our knees)
 let us praise God to - geth - er on our knees. (on our knees)

Refrain

When I fall on my knees, with my face to the ris - ing sun,

O Lord, have mer - cy on me. (on me)

SILENT REFLECTION

BLESSING AND BENEDICTION

ANTHEM

“When Jesus Wept”

Sanctuary Choir

William Billings

arr. Lee Kjelson

*When Jeus wept, the falling tear
In mercy flowed beyond all bound;
When Jesus groaned a trembling fear
Seized all the guilty world around.*

Please depart in silence

* Please rise in body or in spirit.

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Service Participants:

Pastor Keith L. DeVries

Pastor Ivan N. Herman

Keith Atwater, Music Director

Rick Schlosser, Organist

WELCOME TO ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP

This worship service introduces us to the season of Lent, the 40 days leading up to Easter. Lent traditionally begins on Ash Wednesday, so named because of the ancient practice of wearing ashes as a sign of humility and repentance. This practice was employed by Christians to signify total dependence on God.

The Imposition of Ashes is the actual marking on the forehead in the form of a cross with ashes that come from the burning of palms used on the previous Palm Sunday.

The Lord's Supper will be celebrated tonight after receiving the imposition of ashes. Proceed down the center aisle to receive your ashes, partake of the Communion elements, and return to your seat using the side aisles.

The Taizé Service is a unique style of worship which includes periods of silence broken by brief readings of scripture and the singing of a certain style of music. Taizé music, largely written by members of the Taizé community, involves the use of simple, brief texts sung repetitively as a meditation. Taizé worship services are best when periods of silence are spent in meditation, reflection, contemplation, and prayer.

The Liturgical Color of Purple in our sanctuary is a visual reminder that we are now in the season of Lent. Lent is a journey which leads us to Jesus' final days, his death, and finally on Easter morning, his resurrection. May the traditional Lenten colors serve as a reminder that we are to observe a holy Lent through self-examination, penitence, prayer, works of love, and reading/meditating on the Word of God.

Childcare is available in Room 102.

