



ASH WEDNESDAY
A SERVICE OF PENITENCE AND FORGIVENESS

March 2, 2022

First Presbyterian Church, Tonawanda

Rev. Leslie Latham, Pastor

Kurt Ebsary, Musician

Welcome to our Ash Wednesday service. As we gather silently, we invite you to pray:

Almighty God, you despise nothing you have made and you forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and contrite hearts, that truly repenting of our sins, and acknowledging our brokenness, we may obtain from you, the God of all mercy, full pardon and forgiveness; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Gathering Music

Call to Worship

God sent Christ into the world not to condemn the world,
but that the world might be saved through him.

God's love endures forever.

God is our refuge and strength, a present help in trouble.

Therefore, we will not fear though the earth should change,
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;

though the waters roar and foam,

though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

God's love endures forever.

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture Readings

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

Psalm 51

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Meditation

Sung Response 103 Come Now, O Prince of Peace

Invitation to the Observance of the Lenten Discipline

Call to Confession

Trusting in divine mercy, and with humble hearts,
let us confess our sins before God and one another.

Prayer of Confession

Merciful God, whose ways are good and true, we confess that we have not lived as Christ has called us to live. We have shut our eyes to evils our world allows. We have sealed our ears from the cries of the suffering whose pain we abide. We have clung to the hostility we harbor against one another and hardened our hearts to the creative power of love.

Therefore we pray:

Open our eyes to see injustice in our world. Give us courage to resist the powers that oppress the poor. Open our ears to hear the cry of the needy. Teach us generosity for sharing the abundance of your creation. Open our minds to imagine an end to human strife. Grant us wisdom to pursue the ways of peace. Open our hearts to love our neighbors and our enemies near and far. Give us desire to embody the compassion of Christ. For the sake of the world, in the name of Christ we pray. Amen.

Declaration of Forgiveness

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

In Jesus Christ, we all have peace.

The Imposition of Ashes

Creator God, who fashioned us from the dust of the earth, bless these ashes that they may be a sign of our mortality, and a reminder of your forgiving grace through the death and resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Those who desire may come forward for the imposition of ashes.

The pastor dips her thumb into the ashes and makes a sign of the cross on the forehead or wrist of each person.

Sung Response

445

God, How Can We Forgive

Intercessions, Thanksgiving and Communion

Invitation to the Lord's Table

The Great Thanksgiving

intercessions: 471 O Lord, Hear My Prayer

Sung response to

The Lord's Prayer (ecumenical)

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Breaking of the Bread and Communion of the People

Prayer after Communion

God of the wilderness journey, thank you for giving us what we need for all the roads we travel. For the bread that nourishes our spirits and the cup that gladdens our hearts, we thank you. As we meet others on the way, may our lives and words, by the power of your Spirit, provide testimony to your gracious and faithful provision. Amen.

Hymn #215 What Wondrous Love Is This

Sending Forth

May God, who has forgiven and fed us, now make us strong for these days ahead.

May Jesus lead us, and we be found faithful to follow.

May the Spirit drive us into the wilderness, burning away the chaff of our lives,
and purifying our hearts for all to see and be blessed.

And may the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

Mercy, Master, and Fire, be with us and remain with us always! Amen!

Go in peace, to love and serve God and your neighbor.

Thanks be to God!

Please depart in silence.

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