



# Ash Wednesday

Feb. 17, 2021 6:00 pm

*Live online Worship  
Park Hill Presbyterian Church*

WELCOME

Rev. Marie Mainard O'Connell

PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS

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.

## INTROIT

### CALL TO WORSHIP

Come — from all the demands of the week, from all the distractions of a multi-tasking life, from all the never-ending to-do lists — come.

Turn from what you think you know, what you think you need to do, what you think is required, and come, focus on the One who calls us to follow, even to the cross. Come to worship, and be freed by confession, and the cross.

### HYMN OF GATHERING "Ash Wednesday Comes and, Lord, We Hear"

TALLIS' CANON

Ash Wednesday comes and Lord, we hear the word for which our spirits year; amid the world's distress and fear, we hear your loving call: "Return!"

"Return to me with all your heart with fasting, weeping, mourning too."  
O God we seek a brand new start, a new beginning here with you.

You call to us—the old, the young; you summon nations strong and weak.  
When we have drifted toward the wrong, you call us back, you way to seek.

### READING & MEDITATION

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Hear these words of our Lord, as they come from the Gospel of Matthew.

"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.

<sup>2</sup> "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. <sup>3</sup> But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, <sup>4</sup> so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

<sup>5</sup> "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. <sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>16</sup> “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. <sup>17</sup> But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup> 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.

#### ANTHEM

“Take Up Your Cross”

Virtual Choir

#### INVITATION TO THE OBSERVANCE OF A HOLY LENT

Friends in Christ, every year at the time of the Christian Passover we celebrate our redemption through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Lent is a time to prepare for this celebration and to renew our life in the paschal mystery. We begin this holy season by acknowledging our need for repentance, and for the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ. We begin our journey to Easter with the sign of ashes. This ancient sign speaks of the frailty and uncertainty of human life, and marks the penitence of this community.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of Christ, to observe a holy Lent by self-examination and penitence, by prayer and fasting, by works of love, and by reading and meditating on the Word of God. Let us Confess our sin together, responsively saying, “In your goodness Lord,” **“Have mercy on us, Oh God.”**

#### CONFESSON

Holy and merciful God, 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. In your goodness Lord, **have mercy on us, Oh God.**

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. In your goodness Lord, **have mercy on us, Oh God.**

We have not listened 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. In your goodness Lord, **have mercy on us, O God.**

We confess to you, O God, all our past unfaithfulness: The pride, hypocrisy, and impatience in our lives, we confess to you, O God. Help us to turn from our sin.

#### LITANY OF TURNING FROM SIN

As we enter this season, let us begin by quite literally turning ourselves, body, mind, and spirit, away from destructive powers and toward healing and life. In our next litany, I invite you to physically turn your body away from me, or away from the screen so that you cannot see my image, or the cross as it stands on the table.

In this litany you will be asked four questions, each reminiscent of those asked at your baptism, about your commitment to turn away from sin and evil, and to turn towards Christ. With each question, please answer and turn yourself around a little, until by the time you answer the fourth question, you are facing the cross again. This is an unusual litany, but these are unusual times, and we are separated by space but not the Spirit, I ask you to join me in physically representing what we hope to spiritually accomplish. Please turn your body now, and prepare to answer. Let us begin.

Do you renounce evil and all its works, committing yourself to the path of abundant life for all creation — do you? **I do.** (Turn a bit)

Trusting in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, will you lay aside the ways of destruction, choosing the harder path of healing — will you? **I will.** (Turn a bit)

Hearing the call of Christ to you and to our community, will you examine yourself honestly and seek to repair any harm you have done — will you? **I will.** (Turn a bit)

Knowing where the journey leads and trusting in the guidance of the Spirit, do you set your face toward God’s kingdom, accepting that means giving up other ways — do you?

**I do.** (Turn fully toward the cross/center)

Then fix your eyes upon Jesus and the cross. However tempting it may be to look away, set your face toward his way and follow where he is leading. Remember that we are mortal, we are but dust and breath, yet his way is life. **Amen**

#### HYMN OF FORGIVENESS

“There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy”

#435

## IMPOSITION OF ASHES

*This year, some of us are all too aware that we are dust as we are called to remember the brevity and beauty of our lives while in the midst of a pandemic. This year you are invited to impose the ashes upon yourself, or if you do not have ashes, to perhaps use the dirt of a potted plant, or even the dust that hides upon a shelf. In this way, we can mark the passage of this time, this moment, in our brief lives blessed by God.*

**"Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."**  
**"I am dust, and I am a beloved child of God."**

## HYMN OF WORSHIP

**"Bless the Lord, My Soul"**

#544

## THE APOSTLE'S CREED

Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation, That we may show forth your glory in the world. By the cross and passion of our Savior, bring us with all your saints to the joy of Christ's resurrection. Help us to share the faith as it has been spoken through the ages in the Apostle's Creed, saying together what we believe:

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth;  
And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,  
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, dead, and buried.**

**He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead.**

**He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father almighty.  
From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen**

## COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

We prepare now to celebrate the Communion of the People with our Lord, and so I invite you to set your prepared elements before you, and to Hear the gracious words of our Savior Jesus Christ:

Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

The Lord be with you.

Lift up your hearts.

Let us give thanks to God.

**And also with you.**

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise, eternal God, creator and ruler of the universe. You are our God, and we are the creatures of your hand. You made us from the dust of the earth, breathed into us the breath of life, and set us in your world to love and serve you. When we rejected your love and ignored your wisdom, you did not reject us. You loved us still and called us to turn again to you in obedience and in love.

You are holy, O God of majesty, and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Out of your great love for the world, you sent Jesus among us to set us free from the tyranny of evil. He lived as one of us, sharing our joys and sorrows. By his dying and rising, he releases us from bondage to sin and frees us from the dominion of death.

We give you thanks that the Lord Jesus, on the night before he died, took bread, and after giving thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take, eat. This is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me. In the same way he took the cup, saying: This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood, shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.

Remembering all your mighty and merciful acts, we take this bread and this wine from the gifts you have given us, and celebrate with joy the redemption won for us in Jesus Christ. Accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving as a living and holy offering of ourselves, that our lives may proclaim the One crucified and risen.

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these your gifts of bread and wine, that the bread we break and the cup we bless may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ. By your Spirit unite us with the living Christ and with all who are baptized in his name, that we may be one in ministry in every place.

As this bread is Christ's body for us, send us out to be the body of Christ in the world. Lead us, O God, by the power of your Spirit to live as the Lord requires: to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with you, our God. Keep our eyes fixed on Jesus

Christ until this mortal life is ended, and all that is earthly returns to dust.

And now, with the confidence of the children of God, let us pray  
**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.**

Friends, these are the gifts of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

This is Christ's body, broken for you. (eat bread)

This is the cup of salvation, shed for you. (drink cup)

Let us pray: God of compassion, through your Son Jesus Christ you reconciled your people to yourself. Following his example of prayer and fasting, may we obey you with willing hearts and serve one another in holy love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

#### LENTEN DOXOLOGY

(tune of OLD HUNDRETH)

**Praise God throughout these forty days.**  
**Praise Christ, our Lord, whom God did raise.**  
**And praise the Spirit who imparts God's love in Christ into our hearts.**

#### CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

May the God of peace make you holy in every way and keep your whole being—spirit, soul, and body—free from every fault at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Amen.

#### POSTLUDE

"Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days"

#166

#### MY EMBODIED LENTEN PRACTICE 2021

The Lenten Season is a time of focus on the life of Jesus as he moves towards the cross. This time may help us focus on our faith, taking the opportunity to commit to spiritual renewal. Below are some ways of increasing your faith through study, commitment, prayer, and mission. Please choose one or more and make your commitment for the six weeks of Lent.

- Pick up a "Lent Take Out Box" with devotional, coloring mosaic and weekly activities
- Pick up just the Embodied Lent Devotional and coloring mosaic for daily reflection
- Order the "Lent in Plain Sight" daily devotional online or download for Kindle
- Attend the 8:00pm Sunday "Lent in Plain Sight" Zoom study; ID 501 753 9533
- Attend the 1:00pm Wednesday Bible Study to prepare for worship during Lent
- Attend a 9:45am Sunday School Bible Study to dive deeper into scripture during Lent
- Use the "Tread Lightly" Action Calendar for daily actions for earth stewardship
- Contemplate the Presbyterians for Earth Care devotional emailed each Saturday
- Reconcile an old relationship – reconnect, or build a bridge, offer or receive forgiveness
- Take on the practice to begin each day with a time of prayer and devotion.
- Make an effort to stop or avoid a behavior that is harmful, such as \_\_\_\_\_.
- Pray together as a family or with a friend in the evenings.
- Begin each meal wherever you are with a prayer of thanksgiving
- Other areas of strengthening my faith: \_\_\_\_\_

This I promise, to myself and to my Savior Christ, to faithfully do to the best of my ability during these 40 Days of Lent.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_