

Ash Wednesday
February 17, 2021 | 7:00 pm

Prelude

Welcome

Call to Worship (*Joel 2:12-13*)

“Even now,” declares the LORD, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning. Rend your hearts, and not your garments.”

**Let us return to the LORD our God,
for God is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, and filled with compassion and love.**

Opening Hymn “Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days”

269

Annabel Morris Buchanan | Charles H. Webb | Claudia Frances Ibotson Hernaman

Verse 1

Lord who throughout these forty days for us didst fast and pray
Teach us with Thee to mourn our sins and close by Thee to stay

Verse 2

As Thou with Satan didst contend, and didst the victory win
O give us strength in Thee to fight, in Thee to conquer sin

Verse 3

As Thou didst hunger bear, and thirst, so teach us gracious Lord
To die to self, and chiefly live by Thy most holy word

Verse 4

And through these days of penitence, and through Thy passiontide
Yea, evermore in life and death, Jesus, with us abide

Verse 5

Abide with us, that so, this life of suffering over past
An Easter of unending joy we may attain at last

Opening Prayer (*in unison*)

**God of steadfast love and mercy,
we recognize that we are not the people you desire us to be,
so we gather at the start of this season to return to you,
trusting in the transformative power of your Holy Spirit.**

**Throughout the forty days of Lent,
help us to follow you and to find you:
in the disciplines of prayer and meditation,
in whatever we deny ourselves,
and in whatever we set out to learn or do.**

**May the ashes that we wear,
the repentance that we offer,
and the journey that we undertake
lead us to new and everlasting life. Amen.**

Proclamation & Response

Old Testament Reading Psalm 51:1-17

- ¹ Have mercy on me, O God,
 according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
 blot out my transgressions.
- ² Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
 and cleanse me from my sin.
- ³ For I know my transgressions,
 and my sin is ever before me.
- ⁴ 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.
- ⁵ Indeed, I was born guilty,
 a sinner when my mother conceived me.
- ⁶ You desire truth in the inward being;
 therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.
- ⁷ Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;

- wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
- ⁸ Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.
- ⁹ Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.
- ¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and put a new and right spirit within me.
- ¹¹ Do not cast me away from your presence,
and do not take your holy spirit from me.
- ¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and sustain in me a willing spirit.
- ¹³ Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will return to you.
- ¹⁴ Deliver me from bloodshed, O God,
O God of my salvation,
and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.
- ¹⁵ O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare your praise.
- ¹⁶ For you have no delight in sacrifice;
if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.
- ¹⁷ The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Meditation

Pastor Jen Eschliman

Invitation to the Observance of Lenten Discipline

Imposition of Ashes

“Change My Heart, Oh God”

Eddie Espinosa

Chorus

Change my heart, oh God, make it ever true
Change my heart, oh God, may I be like You

Verse

You are the potter, I am the clay
Mold me and make me, this is what I pray

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Litany of Confession

Loving and merciful God,
we confess to you and to one another
that we have forgotten our first love.
We have allowed other objects and pursuits
to take your place in our lives.
Where we have failed to love you
with our whole heart, mind, soul and strength,
and where we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves:
Have mercy on us, O God.

Where we have neglected prayer and been apathetic in worship;
where we have trusted in our own abilities
instead of in your faithfulness and steadfast love:
Have mercy on us, O God.

Where we have been blind to human suffering
and found reasons to avoid generosity;
where we have been silent in the face of injustice and cruelty:
Have mercy on us, O God.

Where we have made false judgments
and harbored uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors;
where we have held prejudices toward those who differ from us:
Have mercy on us, O God.

Where anxiety has eroded the gift of your peace,
and where we have cared too much about what others think:
Have mercy on us, O God.

Where we have been prideful, impatient, and hypocritical;
where we have been wasteful and have taken your gifts for granted:
Have mercy on us, O God.

All continue to pray in a period of silent confession. At the end of the silence, all continue together:

**Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;
according to your great compassion, blot out my transgressions.
Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.
Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.**

Assurance of Pardon

Offering Ourselves and Our Gifts to God

Today's offering is for Reisterstown UMC's Local Missions Fund, which provides support for individuals and families facing need right here in our community.

The Lord's Prayer

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,
forever. Amen.

Closing Hymn

"Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross"

301

Fanny J. Crosby | William H. Doane

Verse 1

Jesus, keep me near the cross; there a precious fountain,
Free to all, a healing stream, flows from Calvary's mountain.

Refrain

In the cross, in the cross, be my glory ever,
Till my raptured soul shall find rest beyond the river.

Verse 2

Near the cross, a trembling soul, love and mercy found me;
There the bright and morning star sheds its beams around me. **(Refrain)**

Verse 3

Near the cross! O Lamb of God, bring its scenes before me;
Help me walk from day to day with its shadow o'er me. **(Refrain)**

Verse 4

Near the cross I'll watch and wait, hoping, trusting ever,
Till I reach the golden strand just beyond the river. **(Refrain)**

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Sending Forth

Benediction

Postlude