

Mifflin Avenue and South Avenue United Methodist Churches

March 2, 2022

Ash Wednesday

7:00 pm

ORDER OF WORSHIP

CELEBRATION THROUGH CENTERING

PRELUDE

'Lord Jesus Christ Be Present Now'

G. Bohm

GATHERING WORDS

Pastor: In the quiet of the night, in the comfort of darkness we come to you, O Lord. We come for peace; we come for comfort; we come for forgiveness and love.

HYMN

‘Jesus, Remember Me’
Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.
Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

No. 488 (Sing 2X)

Pastor: O Lord, hear our prayer...
(Silence)

Pastor: In the softness of evening, in the solace of silence we come to you, O Lord. We come for acceptance; we come for community; we come for forgiveness and love.

HYMN

‘Jesus, Remember Me’
Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.
Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

No. 488 (Sing 2X)

Pastor: O Lord, hear our prayer...
(Silence)

Pastor: In the serenity of day’s end, in the restfulness of worship, we come to you, O Lord. We come to you for respite; we come to you for completion; we come to you for forgiveness and love.

HYMN

‘Jesus, Remember Me’
Jesus, remember Me when you come into your kingdom.
Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

No. 488 (Sing 2X)

Pastor: O Lord, hear our prayer...
(Silence)

Pastor: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

THE LORD’S PRAYER (Sung)

CHIMES AND BRINGING FORTH THE LIGHT

CELEBRATION THROUGH ADORATION

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN

‘When You Are Praying’
NEW BRITAIN 8.6.8.6 ("Amazing Grace")

*"When you are praying," Jesus said,
"Don't put on vain displays —
But close your door and speak your heart,
And humbly offer praise."*

*Our Father in the heavenly realm,
Our Abba, ever near —
Your name is holy, set apart;
O bring your kingdom here!*

*God, give us all we daily need
And we will be content;
Forgive our sins as we forgive
The wrongs that we resent.*

*God, give us grace to follow you;
Protect us on your Way.*

*When evil tempts us from your path,
Deliver us, we pray.*

*O Lord, we turn in trust to you;
You know the things we need —
And like a parent, you so love:
The ones who ask, receive.*

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Pastor: Praised be the God of grace, mercy, and peace. Blessed by God for ever.

People: Blessed by God for ever.

Pastor: Today, Ash Wednesday, many Christians receive a cross of ashes on their foreheads. This powerful sign has been used by God's people for hundreds of years. The cross of ashes tells friends and neighbors that we know we are not perfect. We sometimes break the law of God. We hurt other people. We act selfishly.

People: Today we tell God and each other that we are sorry. With the help of Jesus, we will try during Lent to become better. The cross of ashes means all of these things.

OPENING PRAYER

On this day, merciful God, we begin a journey of repentance, a journey of renewal, a journey of healing. Sometimes this journey is hard. We often don't know where we are going. Help us remember that we follow in the footsteps of your Son, Jesus, our guide and guardian. Help us be faithful on this day and all days. In the name of Christ, we pray. Amen.

INTROIT

'Where He Leads Me'

No 338 (Refrain only)

*Where he leads me I will follow,
Where he leads me I will follow,
Where he leads me I will follow;
I'll go with him, with him all the way.*

ANTHEM

'Breath of God, Breath of Peace'

Tice/Morris

CELEBRATION THROUGH THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Pastor: O Lord, open our eyes, our ears our minds, and our hearts.

People: that we might behold wondrous things out of your word.

CHORAL RESPONSE

'Thy Word'

No. 601 (Refrain only)

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."

FIRST LESSON

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

'Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus'

No. 349

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in his wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace.*

Pastor: The Lord be with you,

People: and also with you.

Pastor: A reading from the Gospel of St. Matthew.

People: Glory to You, O Lord.

*THE GOSPEL IS READ

Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-21

*THE GOSPEL RESPONSE

Pastor: The Gospel of the Living Christ.

People: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

CELEBRATION THROUGH PROCLAMATION

SERMON

'What Do You Hear?'

Rev. Russel Shuluga

INVITATION TO THE OBSERVANCE OF LENTEN DISCIPLINE

*Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:
the early Christians observed with great devotion
the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection,
and it became the custom of the Church that before the Easter celebration
there should be a forty-day season of spiritual preparation.*

*During this season converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism.
It was also a time when persons who had committed serious sins
and had separated themselves from the community of faith
were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness,
and restored to participation in the life of the Church.*

*In this way the whole congregation was reminded
of the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ
and the need we all have to renew our faith.*

*I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church,
to observe a holy Lent:
by self-examination and repentance;
by prayer, fasting, and self-denial;
and by reading and meditating on God's Holy Word.
To make a right beginning of repentance,
and as a mark of our mortal nature,
let us now bow before our Creator and Redeemer.*

SILENT PRAYER**THANKSGIVING OVER THE ASHES**

*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, so that we may remember that only by your gracious gift are we given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.***

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

(During the singing of the hymn, you are invited to come forward for the imposition of ashes)

HYMN

'Just as I Am, Without One Plea'

No. 357

***Just as I am, without one plea, but that thy blood was shed for me,
and that thou bidst me come to thee, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.***

***Just as I am, and waiting not to rid my soul of one dark blot,
to thee whose blood can cleanse each spot, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.***

***Just as I am, though tossed about with many a conflict, many a doubt,
fightings and fears within, without, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.***

***Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind; sight, riches, healing of the mind,
yea, all I need in thee to find, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.***

***Just as I am, thou wilt receive, wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
because thy promise I believe, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.***

***Just as I am, thy love unknown hath broken every barrier down;
now, to be thine, yea thine alone, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.***

*Sing out! We're made of common dust;
One day, to dust we shall return!
Yet, God, you've placed your mark on us
And so for you our spirits yearn.*

*This gift of ashes we receive
Reminds us we belong to you.
You call us to repent, believe,
and seek your Way in all we do.*

*The dust and dirt of children's play,
of youthful times, of working years
Are part of life — and life's decay;
We wash the dust with sorrow's tears.*

*We sing, O God, of what you give:
This ash reminds us we are yours.
In life we're claimed, in death we live!
In Christ our life, your love endures.*

CELEBRATION THROUGH CONFESSION

CALL TO CONFESSION

Pastor: Come humbly and make your confessions in the assurance God hears and forgives.

People: We are unworthy of the love shown to us in Christ; yet God calls, and so we come in the faith.

Pastor: God accepts us and wants our living to be as holy as possible without artificial display.

People: From the depths of our hearts we expose ourselves to God for what we truly are and pray that we may be cleansed for faithful discipleship.

*Lord, listen to your children praying,
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying,
Send us love, send us power, send us grace.*

GENERAL CONFESSION

Pastor: Creator God, you fashioned us out of dust, breathing your Spirit into us, so we might sing your praise.

People: But we have denounced your gift of life in order to be our own gods, clinging to death-dealing idols of our own making.

Pastor: We have denied our creaturely status, seeking to lord it over those we label "less-than."

People: We squelch all who are different through ignoring, belittling, murdering, and bombing.

Pastor: We believe survival-of-the-fittest lies, discounting the weak, and profiting by others' pain.

People: Not trusting in your providence, we stop our ears to cries of those in need because we're afraid we won't have enough.

Pastor: We have been unfaithful stewards, O Lord.

People: We live in a state of sin among a people of sin.

Pastor: Save for your grace, we perish.

People: Remember our making, Creator God; remember we are dust.

All: Have mercy on us according to your loving kindness. Breathe new life into us once more, so we might be the people you created us to be. Restore unto us the joy of your salvation that we might do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with the Lord Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray, Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Friends, the promises of God are true:
In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross
that we might be dead to sin and alive to all that is good.
In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.
Live now as new people, free to love God and neighbor.

HYMN OF ASSURANCE

'Grace Alone'

TFWS No. 2162 (Refrain only)

*Grace alone which God supplies, strength unknown he will provide.
Christ in us our Corner stone; we will go forth in grace alone...*

CELEBRATION THROUGH SENDING

*BENEDICTION

Go forth to begin again. Go to walk this journey of faith with Jesus Christ, knowing that God's grace goes with you. Go in peace. Amen.



*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

'Danish Amen'

No. 898

A-men, a-men, a – men.

*RECESSIONAL HYMN

Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days'

No. 269 VS. 1 & 4

*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.*

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

*POSTLUDE

'Lamb of God Our Savior'

J. S. Bach

WE TAKE THE LIGHT OF CHRIST INTO THE WORLD