

Celebration of Worship

February 25, 2009 – 7:00 p.m.

Ash Wednesday Service

We enter to worship;

we depart to serve

Ash Wednesday emphasizes a dual encounter: we confront our own mortality and we confess our sins before God within the community of faith. The form of the service and the texts that will be read are designed to focus our lives upon the dual themes of sin and death in the light of God's redeeming love in Jesus Christ. While the use of ashes as a sign of mortality, humility and penitence may be new to many of us, it has a significant history in Jewish and Christian worship. The imposition of ashes is a powerful nonverbal and experiential way of participating in the call to repentance and reconciliation. All who desire may come forward for the imposition of ashes at the appropriate place in the worship service.

GATHERING

Prelude Organist, Amanda Teachnor

Silent Meditation

Welcome and Explanation of Service

Invocation Mr. Phil Cook

Call to Worship *from Psalm 123:1-2*

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and all that is within me, bless God's holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all God's benefits.

Who forgives all your sins and heals your infirmities;

**Who redeems your life from the grave,
and crowns you with mercy and loving-kindness.**

◆ Hymn 422 "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind"

◆ Litany of Confession

Almighty God, we confess our shortcomings before you, for we have missed the mark and strayed far from your intention for our lives. "The Lord looks down from heaven on humankind to see if there are any who are wise, who seek after God. They have all gone astray." (Psalm 14:2)

Have mercy on us, dear Lord.

We have not lived up to our own standards much less those You have for us. We have sinned by what we have done and what we have left undone. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23)

Have mercy on us, dear Lord.

We have not loved you with all our heart, mind, soul and strength. We have not lived as compelling witnesses to your grace. "All, both Jews and Greeks are under the power of sin. There is no one who is righteous, not even one." (Romans 3:10)

Have mercy on us, dear Lord.

We repent of our sin, O God. And we ask your grace and forgiveness. Redeem us, dear Lord, by your loving kindness. "Let this be recorded for a generation to come, so that a people yet unborn may praise the Lord; that the Lord looked down from his holy height, from heaven the Lord looked at the earth, to hear the groans of the prisoners, to set free those who were doomed to die, so that the name of the Lord may be declared in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem, when peoples gather together, and kingdoms, to worship the Lord." (Psalm 102:18-22)

**Forgive us, restore us and renew us in your compassion,
because your steadfast love is forever. Blessed be the
God of grace: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

THE WORD

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Reading (Page 452) Psalm 51:1-17

◆ Hymn 282 "Wounded for Me" (Vs. 1&2)

New Testament Reading (Page 940) 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

Ash Wednesday Meditation

Dr. Dan Milford

Invitation to the Observance of Lenten Discipline

◆ Hymn "People Need the Lord" See insert

Prayer of Thanksgiving over the Ashes

◆ Imposition of Ashes
(All are invited to come forward to receive the imposition of ashes. During this portion of the service, we will also sing meditatively Hymn #283, "What Wondrous Love Is This?" and Hymn #284, "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded")

◆ Closing Prayer

◆ Hymn "There's a Wideness in God's Mercy" See insert

◆ Benediction

ALL MAY DEPART QUIETLY

◆ (Indicates appropriate place for congregation to stand)

We stand ready to welcome and receive those who would like to join with us in the journey of faith. Please speak to the pastor or one of the church members if you wish to join this congregation on the road to discipleship.

PRAYER LIST—NEW CONCERNS

Nathasha Greene Pickerel—Hospitalized with Type 1 diabetes
Brad Davis (friend of Evan Hilgendorf and Kendall Helton) and family on the death of his aunt.
Larry Filby (Matthew Shelton's friend)—On hospice from cancer
Bubba Escow (Matthew Shelton's friend)—Severe burns
George Lewis (Jim's father)—Recovering from stroke
Jeff Hershow (Pam Smithy's brother-in-law)—Brain surgery
Marty Bean (Thad Cannon's friend's son)—Open heart surgery
Larry Hoge—Recovering from heart surgery

Church Open for Prayer During Lent

"Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

Genesis 3:19

"Repent and hear the good news." Mark 1:15

During the season of Lent, we are reminded of our own mortality. We are reminded that it is not our will; but God who should guide our life, and the time we are given on this earth. In this holy season, we are invited to spend some time in reflection, introspection and penitence as we ask forgiveness for wanting things "our way" instead of looking to the ways of our Lord.

God invites us to look at life as an adventure, a journey. However, on this journey, we are only allowed to take one small back-pack that we can fill with whatever we like. Lent is the season where we get to review our packs, take out what we don't need any longer and put in what God wants for us.

We invite you to use this time of prayer each week to discuss your priorities with God and let Him be the guide of your packing list.

The church doors will be open for members who are looking for a quiet place to pray and reflect during Lent on **Wednesdays from 1:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.**

Soft music and the beauty and holiness of our sanctuary will inspire you and help you reflect. There will be a devotional prepared to help direct you through prayer if you desire to use it.

SERMON NOTES

OUR STAFF

Dan Milford—Pastor
Willa Barnes—Secretary
Marti Lowery—Director of Children's Ministries
Bill Zahringer—Director of Youth Ministries
Doug Ruffner—Director of Music
Amanda Teachnor—Organist and Accompanist
Krista Polanski—Treasurer
Kyla Rice—Children's Church Teacher

First Presbyterian Church



*At an acceptable time
I have listened to you,
and on a day of salvation
I have helped you.*

2 Corinthians 6.2