

**Ash Wednesday**  
February 14, 2024

Prelude and Chimes

**\*Call to Worship**

Leader: Let us look to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was waiting endured the cross.

People: Sing verse 1 of Hymn #345: "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"

**Scripture Reading**

- Psalm 51
- 1 John 1:5-10

**\*Hymn #202:** "O God, How We Have Wandered"

**Contemporary Word:** "The Echo of Ashes" by Joyce Rupp

**Confession of Sin**

As disciples of Jesus Christ we are called to struggle against everything that leads us away from the love of God and neighbor. Repentance, fasting, prayer, study, and works of love help us to return to that love.

I invite you, therefore, to commit yourselves to love God and neighbor by confessing your sin and by asking God for strength to persevere in your Lenten discipline.

Let us pray.

**Most 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.**

We have not loved you with all our heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven.  
**Have mercy on us, O God.**

We have been deaf to your call to serve as Christ has served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.  
**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.**

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways and our exploitation of other people.  
**We confess to you, O God.**

Our anger at our own frustration and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves.  
**We confess to you, O God.**

Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts and our dishonesty in our daily life and work.  
**We confess to you, O God.**

Our negligence in prayer and worship and our failure to commend the faith that is in us.  
**We confess to you, O God.**

Accept our repentance, O God for the wrongs we have done. For the neglect of human need and suffering and our indifference to injustice and cruelty.  
**Accept our repentance, O God.**

For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us.  
**Accept our repentance, O God.**

For the waste and pollution of your creation and our lack of concern for those who come after us.  
**Accept our repentance, O God.**

Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us.  
**Favorably hear us, O God, for your mercy is great. Amen.**

### **The Ashes of Forgiveness**

Ashes are a symbol of purification. As a fire burns, it can separate what is valuable from what is valueless, just as an assayer's fire can separate a base metal from one that is precious. In this same way, these ashes are pure. They are a symbol of the new space that is now present within us for a new life. Let us claim the new life Jesus offers by praying to our God.

**God of love and mercy, we come to you in prayer, seeking to change our hearts and minds. We confess the baggage of idols, bitterness, and self-concern that we so often drag along with us, struggling under its weight all the while we attempt to follow Christ. Cleanse us from our attachment to these old things. Burn away their power in us and purify our hearts. In place of old ways, fill us with the new fire of your Holy Spirit. Open up new opportunities to follow Jesus in loving you and our neighbors. In Jesus' name we ask these things. Amen.**

Friends, receive the good news of our faith, for in the name of Jesus, I announce our sins are forgiven. The old has died. Behold the new has come!

## **The Sign of the Cross**

Those who wish, now come forward and receive the mark of these ashes as a sign of your forgiveness and new life.

*The old has died. The new has come.*

**\*Hymn #546:** "Jesus, Lover of My Soul"

## **\*Benediction**

Now to the one who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of God's glory with exceeding Joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen.

**\*Postlude**