

Ash Wednesday Service

CALL TO WORSHIP:

ONE: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

ONE: Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.

ALL: God's mercy endures forever.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION:

O God, maker of every thing and judge of all that you have made, from the dust of the earth you have formed us and from the dust of death you would raise us up. By the redemptive power of the Cross, create in us clean hearts and put within us a new spirit, that we may repent of our sins and lead lives worthy of your calling; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Old Testament Reading: Psalm 51: 1-7

¹Have mercy on me, O God, because of your unfailing love. Because of your great compassion, blot out the stain of my sins. ²Wash me clean from my guilt. Purify me from my sin. ³For I recognize my rebellion; it haunts me day and night. ⁴Against you, and you alone, have I sinned; I have done what is evil in your sight. You will be proved right in what you say, and your judgment against me is just. ⁵For I was born a sinner — yes, from the moment my mother conceived me. ⁶But you desire honesty from the womb, teaching me wisdom even there. ⁷Purify me from my sins, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 6: 1-6, 6: 16-21

⁶“Watch out! Don't do your good deeds publicly, to be admired by others, for you will lose the reward from your Father in heaven. ²When you give to someone in need, don't do as the hypocrites do — blowing trumpets in the synagogues and streets to call attention to their acts of charity! I tell you the truth, they have received all the reward they will ever get. ³But when you give to someone in need, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. ⁴Give your gifts in private, and your Father, who sees everything, will reward you. ⁵“When you pray, don't be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. ⁶But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

¹⁶“And when you fast, don't make it obvious, as the hypocrites do, for they try to look miserable and disheveled so people will admire them for their fasting. I tell you the truth, that is the only reward they will ever get. ¹⁷But when you fast, comb your hair and wash your face. ¹⁸Then no one will notice that you are fasting, except your Father, who knows what you

do in private. And your Father, who sees everything, will reward you. ¹⁹“Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.

HYMN OF REFLECTION: “The Old Rugged Cross” Celebration Hymnal – No. 327

Devotional: “What Are We Giving God?” Rev. William Kren

Prayer 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; that we may remember that it is only by your gracious gift that we are given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

Imposition of Ashes: (All who wish to receive ashes are invited to come forward)

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

Words of Penitence and Reconciliation:

Leader: Almighty God does not desire the death of sinners, but rather that they turn from their wickedness and live.

People: Therefore we implore God to grant us true repentance and the Holy Spirit.

Leader: That those things which we do this day may be pleasing to God,

People: The ashes are our pledge to take up the cross of Jesus.

Leader: That we live faithfully, and that one day, we may come to God's eternal joy.

ALL: Through Jesus the Christ. Amen.

HYMN OF GOING FORTH: “Amazing Grace” Celebration Hymnal – No. 343