

ORDER OF SERVICE

Ash Wednesday, February 22, 2023 • 7:00 PM



PRELUDE

Laurel Underwood, organ

WELCOME

Emily Mitchell

OPENING PRAYER OF PREPARATION

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

All: **who made heaven and earth.**

One: Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me?

All: **Hope in God; for we shall again praise him, our help and our God.**

HYMN "Softly and Tenderly"

THE PRAYER OF CONFESSION (based on Psalm 51 and Psalm 103)

All: **Have mercy on me, O God, because of your unfailing love.**

Because of your great compassion, blot out the stain of my sins.

One: Our God is merciful and gracious, slow to get angry, and full of unfailing love.

All: **Wash me clean from my guilt. Purify me from my sin.**

For I recognize my shameful deeds — they haunt me day and night.

One: God will not constantly accuse us, nor remain angry forever.

All: **Against 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.

One: God has not punished us for all our sins, nor does he deal with us as we deserve.

For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him;
as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

All: **I was born a sinner — from the moment my mother conceived me.**

One: God is like a father to his children, tender and compassionate to those who fear him.

For he understands how weak we are; he remembers that we are only dust.

All: **You desire honesty from the heart; teach me to be wise in my inmost being.**

One: For our days on earth are like grass; like wildflowers, we bloom and die.

The wind blows, and we are gone — as though we had never been here.

All: **Restore to me the joy of your salvation and make me willing to obey you.**

One: For the love of the Lord remains forever with those who fear him. His salvation extends to
the children's children of those who are faithful to his covenant; those who obey his
commandments.

All: **The sacrifice you want is a broken spirit.**

A broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

One: Our God is merciful and gracious.

All: **Bless the Lord, O my soul.**

HYMN #370 "Just As I Am" vs. 1, 3, 4

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

HYMN #298 "There's a Wideness In God's Mercy"

SCRIPTURE READING Joel 2:12–17 NRSV

Jamie Froebe

MEDITATION

LENTEN LITANY (adapted from William Arthur Ward)

One: Fast from judging others;

All: **Feast on the Christ indwelling them.**

One: Fast from emphasis on differences;

All: **Feast on the unity of all life.**

One: Fast from apparent darkness;

All: **Feast on the reality of light.**

One: Fast from thoughts of illness;

All: **Feast on the healing power of God.**
 One: Fast from words that pollute;
 All: **Feast on phrases that purify.**
 One: Fast from discontent;
 All: **Feast on gratitude.**
 One: Fast from anger;
 All: **Feast on patience.**
 One: Fast from pessimism;
 All: **Feast on optimism.**
 One: Fast from worry;
 All: **Feast on trust.**
 One: Fast from complaining;
 All: **Feast on appreciation.**
 One: Fast from negatives;
 All: **Feast on affirmatives.**
 All: **Fast from unrelenting pressures;**
 One: Feast on unceasing prayer.
 All: **Fast from hostility;**
 One: Feast on nonviolence.
 All: **Fast from bitterness;**
 One: Feast on forgiveness.
 All: **Fast from self-concern;**
 One: Feast on compassion for others.
 All: **Fast from personal anxiety;**
 One: Feast on eternal Truth.
 All: **Fast from discouragement;**
 One: Feast on hope.
 All: **Fast from facts that depress;**
 One: Feast on truths that uplift.
 All: **Fast from lethargy;**
 One: Feast on enthusiasm.
 All: **Fast from suspicion;**
 One: Feast on truth.
 All: **Fast from thoughts that weaken;**
 One: Feast on promises that inspire.
 All: **Fast from idle gossip;**
 One: Feast on purposeful silence.
 All: **Gentle God, during this season of fasting and feasting, gift us with your presence so we can be a gift to others in carrying out your work. Amen.**

SONG OF RESPONSE "Create In Me a Clean Heart"

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

SOLO "Sign Us with Ashes"

Laurel Underwood, piano

SPECIAL MUSIC "In the Shadow of Your Wings" (inspired by Psalm 57:1)

CLOSING PRAYER

One: God of love, as in Jesus Christ you gave yourself to us,
 so may we give ourselves to you, living according to your holy will.

All: **Keep our feet firmly in the way where Christ leads us;
 make our mouths speak the truth that Christ teaches us;
 fill us with the life that is Christ within us.**

One: Through Jesus Christ our Lord,
 who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
 one God, forever and ever,

All: **Amen.**

HYMN "Come Ye Sinners Poor and Needy"

BENEDICTION