

BLAIRSTOWN COMMUNITY ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

First United Methodist Church
Rev. David Tillisch



First Presbyterian Church
Rev. David Harvey

7:00 PM

ORDER OF WORSHIP

February 22, 2023

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

PRELUDE:

MaryRose Clark

WELCOME:

Pastor David Harvey

CHORAL INTROIT: "Cast Thy Burden Upon the Lord" by Felix Mendelssohn Chancel Choir

*** CALL TO WORSHIP:**

Leader: God of gifts and God of grace, fill us with pure hearts that we may see Jesus.

People: Fill us with humble hearts that we may hear Jesus.

Leader: Fill our hearts with love that we may know Jesus.

People: Fill us with hearts of passion that we may become like Jesus.

Leader: Fill our hearts with faith that we may forgive like Jesus.

People: Fill us with hearts of forgiveness that we may serve like Jesus.

Leader: Fill our hearts with discernment that we may see the way of Jesus.

People: Fill us with hearts of integrity that we may worship you in spirit and in truth.

Leader: With great gratitude and gladness, let us worship God.

*** HYMN:** *Sunday's Palms Are Wednesday's Ashes* No. 2138 *Sing the Faith*

***Sunday's palms are Wednesday's ashes as another Lent begins;
thus we kneel before our Maker in contrition for our sins.
We have marred baptismal pledges, in rebellion gone astray;
now, returning, seek forgiveness; grant us pardon, God, this day!
We have failed to love our neighbors, their offences to forgive,
Have not listened to their troubles, nor have cared just how they live,
We are jealous, proud, impatient, loving over much our things,
May the yielding of our failings be our Lenten offerings.
We are hasty to judge others, blind to proof of human need;
and our lack of understanding demonstrates our inner greed;
we have wasted earth's resources; and want and suffering we've ignored;
come and cleanse us, then restore us; make new hearts within us, Lord!***

* Please stand if you are able.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION: *(in silence and in unison)*

Merciful God, whose Son, Jesus the Christ, is the light of the world: In his penetrating light we acknowledge our darkness; in his constant grace our careless love; in his generous giving our grasping; in his equal justice our dire prejudice; in his fortitude our fear of failure and fear of the unknown; in his inclusive love our exclusive division; in his sacrifice our sins.

Forgive our sin, O God. Make us mindful of our own mortality, our fallibility, and our life's brevity, for in Christ's cross is our forgiveness; in his resurrection is our enduring hope. This pardon and promise we claim in penitence and in faith; Amen.

*** ASSURANCE OF PARDON:**

Leader: Friends, have you heard? Have you believed?
Have you accepted the good news of the Gospel?

People: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Let us forgive one another.

*** CELEBRATION OF CHRIST'S FORGIVENESS:** *No. 298 There's a Wideness in Christ's Mercy (v. 1)*

*There's a wideness in Christ's mercy, like the wideness of the sea;
There's a kindness in Christ's justice, which is more than liberty;
There is no place where earth's sorrows are more felt than up in heaven;
There is no place where earth's failings have such kindly judgement given.*

*** EXCHANGE OF CHRIST'S PEACE:** *Share Christ's peace by using the peace sign
or by waving to those in the Sanctuary*

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE: *Psalm 51: 1-4, 6-14* (Please read responsively)

Leader: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindness; in your great compassion and mercy blot out my transgressions.

People: Wash me through and through from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

Leader: For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

People: Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, and so you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment. You desire truth in my inward being; you teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

Leader: Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

People: Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.

Leader: Hide your face from my sins, and wipe away all my guilt.

People: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

Leader: Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.

People: Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.

Leader: Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

People: My God, My God, my deliverer, deliver me from bloodshed, and I shall sing the praises of your salvation. Open my lips, that my mouth may proclaim your praise.

SCRIPTURE: Jonah 3: 1–10 Pastor David Tillisch

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 6: 6, 19–21 Pastor David Harvey

ANTHEM: “*What Wondrous Love Is This*” Chancel Choir

MEDITATION: *Making Wednesday’s Ashes* Pastor David Harvey

HYMN: *Ash Wednesday Comes, And Lord, We Hear* © 2011 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette
TALLIS' CANON 8.8.8.8 (#542 The Presbyterian Hymnal "All Praise to Thee, My God, This Night")

***Ash Wednesday comes, and Lord, we hear The word for which our spirits yearn;
Amid this world’s distress and fear, We hear your loving call: "Return!"***

***"Return to me with all your heart" With fasting, weeping, mourning, too.
O God, we seek a brand new start, A new beginning here with you.***

***You call to us — the old, the young; You summon nations strong and weak.
When we have drifted toward the wrong, You call us back, your way to seek.***

***O God most merciful and kind, Your love is not a prize we earn;
Yet in our life with you we find The joy that comes when we return.***

INVITATION TO THE OBSERVANCE OF THE LENTEN DISCIPLINE: Pastor David Tillisch

Friends in Christ, every year at the time of the Christian Passover we celebrate our redemption through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Lent is a time to prepare for this celebration and to renew our life in the paschal mystery. We begin this holy season by acknowledging our need for repentance, and for the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We begin our journey to Easter with the sign of ashes. This ancient sign speaks of the frailty and uncertainty of human life and marks the penitence of this community.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of Christ, to observe a holy Lent by self-examination and penitence, by prayer and fasting, by works of love, and by reading and meditating on the Word of God.

PRAYER FOR THE ASHES & LORD’S PRAYER:

Leader: Our heavenly Father, in love and mercy you have created us, given life to us, and promised to be with us on the paths that life’s journey brings. As we begin our Lenten journey, may this ancient practice of imposing ashes remind us of our human mortality, our personal fragility, and human fallibility, as well as reassure us of the gift of eternity, promised by Jesus himself. This we pray in Christ’s name.

People: Give us grace to accept our human finitude.

Leader: Give us faith to face the future with fortitude.

People: Give us hope to believe in eternal life with certitude.

All: Give us love that we may love with Jesus’ magnitude. This we pray in Jesus’ name, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever, who taught us to pray, saying, “Our Father, Amen.” (*using sins and sin*)

IMPOSITION OF THE ASHES

DEPARTING IN GOD'S NAME

*** HYMN:**

No. 422 God, Whose Love Has No Ending

***God, whose giving knows no ending, From Your rich and endless store,
Nature's wonder, Jesus' wisdom, Costly cross, grave's shattered door:
Gifted by You, we turn to You, Offering up ourselves in praise;
Thankful song shall rise forever, Gracious donor of our days.
Skills and time are ours for pressing Toward the goals of Christ, your Son:
All at peace in health and freedom, Races joined, the church made one.
Now direct our daily labor, Lest we strive for self alone;
Born with talents, make us servants Fit to answer at Your throne.
Treasure too You have entrusted, Gain through powers Your grace conferred;
Ours to use for home and kindred, And to spread the gospel Word.
Open wide our hands, in sharing, As we heed Christ's ageless call,
Healing, teaching, and reclaiming, Serving You by loving all.***

*** DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING**

*** CHORAL BENEDICTION:** *"In Jesus Name"* by Charles F. Brown

Chancel Choir

POSTLUDE:

MaryRose Clark



ASSISTING DURING THIS EVENING'S ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP

Greeter: Stephanie Burke

Choir Director: Maggie Morokutti

Usher: Bill Olivier

Organist: MaryRose Clark

Pastors: Rev. David Harvey & Rev. David Tillisch

*Special thanks to the Chancel Choir, for their gift of music,
and to all who assisted in the Ash Wednesday service of worship.*

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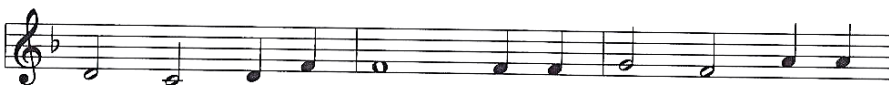
Phone: (908) 362-5254

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2138 Sunday's Palms Are Wednesday's Ashes



1. *Sun-day's palms are Wednes-day's ash - es as an -
 2. We have failed to love our neigh - bors, their of -
 3. We are hast - y to judge oth - ers, blind to



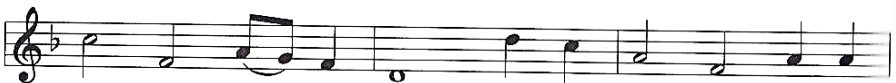
oth - er Lent be - gins; thus we kneel be - fore our
 fenc - es to for - give, have not lis - tened to their
 proof of hu - man need; and our lack of un - der -



Mak - er in con - tri - tion for our
 trou - bles, nor have cared just how they
 stand - ing dem - on - strates our in - ner



sins. We have marred bap - tis - mal pledg - es, in re -
 live, we are jeal - ous, proud, im - pa - tient, lov - ing
 greed; we have wast - ed earth's re - sourc - es; want and



bel - lion gone a - stray; now, re - turn - ing, seek for -
 o - ver - much our things; may the yield - ing of our
 suf - fering we've ig - nored; come and cleanse us, then re -



give - ness; grant us par - don, God, this day!
 fail - ings be our Len - ten of - fer - ings.
 store us; make new hearts with - in us, Lord!

**The first line of the hymn recalls the custom of burning remaining palm leaves of the previous year to form the ashes for this observance.*

WORDS: Rae E. Whitney
 MUSIC: Attr. to B. F. White

BEACH SPRING
 87.07.11

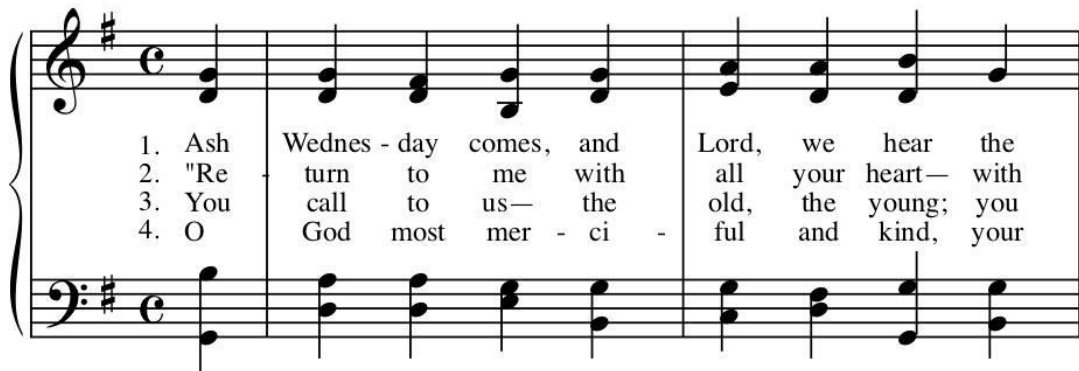
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REPENTANCE, *see further:*

- 2275 Kyrie (Dvořák/Schram)
 2277 Lord, Have Mercy

Ash Wednesday Comes and, Lord, We Hear

TALLIS' CANON LM ("All Praise to Thee, My God, This Night")



1. Ash Wednes - day comes, and Lord, we hear the
2. "Re - turn to me with all your heart— with
3. You call to us— the old, the young; you
4. O God most mer - ci - ful and kind, your



word for which our spir - its yearn; a - mid this world's dis -
fast - ing, weep - ing, mourn - ing, too." O God, we seek a
sum - mon na - tions strong and weak. When we have drift - ed
love is not a prize we earn; yet in our life with



ness and fear, we hear your lov - ing call: "Re - turn!"
brand new start, a new be - gin - ning here with you.
toward the wrong, you call us back, your way to seek.
you we find the joy that comes when we re - turn.

Biblical Text: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

Tune: Thomas Tallis, Adapt. Parker's *Whole Psalter*, c. 1561

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