



Ash Wednesday Service

with Imposition of Ashes

February 22, 2023, 12 & 7 p.m.

First United Methodist Church of Riverside

7:00 p.m. The Rev. J. T. Kim, Pastor

GATHERING

PRELUDE: "Deep River," African-American spiritual arranged by Jeffery L. Nall / Robert Phillips, Organist

*TRINITY BELLS

***INTROIT:** "Seek the Lord" by Hal H. Hopson / The Aldersgate Chorale directed by Yvonne Flagg

***CALL TO WORSHIP** (Adapted from Joel 2) / **All** / Led by Bob Nelson, Liturgist

(Liturgist) Come, young and old . . . Sanctify yourselves before the Lord.

(People) We gather to hear the word of God.

(L) Come, and do not delay . . . Return to God.

(P) We gather to be in the presence of God.

(L) Come, cry out to God . . . Trust in God's mercy.

(All) We gather to renew our spirits, as we acknowledge our failings before God. Amen!

***HYMN: #269** "Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days" by Claudia F. Hernaman (Verses 1 & 2 only) / Led by Yvonne Flagg

Verse 1

**Lord, who throughout these forty days,
for us didst fast and pray,
teach us with thee to mourn our sins,
and close by thee to stay.**

Verse 2

As thou with Satan did contend,
and did the vict'ry win,
O give us strength in you to fight,
in thee to conquer sin.

SCRIPTURE READING: Joel 2:12-14 (NRSV) / Liturgist

Return to the Lord, Your God

¹² Yet even now, says the Lord,
return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;

¹³ rend your hearts and not your clothing.

Return to the Lord, your God,
for he is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love,
and relents from punishing.

¹⁴ Who knows whether he will not turn and relent,
and leave a blessing behind him,
a grain-offering and a drink-offering
for the Lord, your God?

(Liturgist) This is the word of God for the people of God.

(All) Thanks be to God! Amen!

ANTHEM: "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" by Gilbert M. Martin

SERMON "MEMENTO MORI" / The Rev. J. T. Kim, Pastor

INVITATION TO THE OBSERVANCE OF LENTEN DISCIPLINE /

Pastor J. T. Kim

(Pastor) Dear brothers and sisters in Christ: the early Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church that before the Easter celebration there should be a forty-day season of spiritual preparation.

During this season, converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism. It was also a time when persons who had committed serious sins and had separated themselves from the community of faith were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness and restored to participation in the life of the

Church. In this way the whole congregation was reminded of the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ and the need we all have to renew our faith.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to observe a holy Lent: by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's Holy Word. To make a right beginning of repentance, and as a mark of our mortal nature, let us now bow before our Creator and Redeemer.

(All) Amen.

THANKSGIVING PRAYER OVER THE ASHES

(Pastor) 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, so that we may remember that only by your gracious gift are we given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

(All) Amen.

PRAYER RESPONSE: "Your Will Be Done" by Paul Sjolund

INTRODUCTION TO THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES

(Pastor) The apostle Paul writes: "We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake [God] made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain." Ash is a traditional sign of your own mortality and repentance. Tonight, the mark of the cross is made upon your foreheads in ash as a sign of our desire to be reconciled with God.

(Pastor) Come before God.

(All) We come confessing our failings.

(P) Come before God.

(A) We come acknowledging our need.

(P) Come before God.

(A) We come facing our mortality.

(P) Come before God.

(All) We come ready to receive God's forgiveness and fullness of life.

Amen!

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

(Pastor) You are now invited to come forward to receive a cross marking on your forehead. When the Pastor or Lay Leader says, "*Marked with the cross, be reconciled to God,*" please respond to it by saying, "**Amen.**"

IMPOSITION OF ASHES: "Bye and Bye," African-American spiritual arranged by William Farley Smith

SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF PARDON

(Pastor) May the almighty and merciful God, who desires not the death of a sinner but that we turn from wickedness and live, accept your repentance, forgive your sins, and restore you by the Holy Spirit to newness of life.

(All) Amen.

***HYMN: #269 "Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days"** by Claudia F. Hernaman (Verses 3 & 4 only)

Verse 3

**As thou didst hunger bear and thirst,
so teach us, gracious Lord,
to die to self, and chiefly live
by thy most holy word.**

Verse 4

**And through these days of penitence,
and through thy passiontide,
yea, evermore, in life and death,
Jesus, with us abide.**

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING (Adapted from Matthew 6) / Liturgist
(Liturgist) Knowing how much God has given us, let us come with grateful hearts to offer our tithes and our gifts.

(All) Amen!

(Liturgist) I invite the ushers to collect our offering.

OFFERTORY: "Listen to the Lambs," African-American spiritual arranged by Adolphus Hailstork

***DOXOLOGY: #95** “Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow” by Thomas Ken

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING** (Adapted from Matthew 6)
/Liturgist

Abundant God, we bring these gifts to you in thanksgiving and praise. Bless these gifts, that they may help your children everywhere. As we offer you our hearts, fill us with the treasure of your love and grace. In the name of Christ, we pray. Amen.

***HYMN: #269** “Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days” by Claudia F. Hernaman (Verse 5 only)

Verse 5

**Abide with us. that so this life
of suffering over past,
an Easter of unending joy
we may attain at last!**

***RESPONSIVE BENEDICTION**

(Pastor) With the ash of repentance, we have entered Lent.

(All) With contrite hearts, we await our Lord.

(P) Go forth and make preparations to receive the power of God.

(All) Amen!

POSTLUDE: “Were You There?” – African-American spiritual arranged by Gilbert M. Martin

NOTE: This Ash Wednesday worship liturgy has been adapted from *The United Methodist Book of Worship*, pp. 321-324, and from *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2020*. Copyright © 2019 by Abingdon Press. Used by permission.

Music Copyright License Information

Prelude: "Deep River," African-American spiritual arranged by Jeffery L. Nall. ©2014 Jeffery L. Nall, permission for livestreaming granted through Creative Commons Attribution, Noncommercial.

Introit: "Seek the Lord" by Hal H. Hopson; ©1981 The Sacred Music Press, OneLicense Song #999352, OneLicense #A735776.

Hymn: #269 "Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days" by Claudia F. Hernaman. Public Domain.

Anthem: "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" by Gilbert M. Martin; ©1970 Theodore Presser Co., OneLicense Song #207157, OneLicense #A735776.

Prayer Response: "Your Will Be Done" by Paul Sjolund; ©1966, 1990 Fred Bock Music Company, OneLicense Song #FBC-A0127589, OneLicense #A735776.

Imposition of Ashes: "Bye and Bye," African-American spiritual arranged by William Farley Smith. ©1996 Abingdon Press, CCLI Song #7080027, CCLI License #11231812.

Offertory: "Listen to the Lambs," African-American spiritual arranged by Adolphus Hailstork. ©2003 Concordia Publishing House, OneLicense #A735776.

Doxology: "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow," by Thomas Ken, attributed to Louis Bourgeois. Public Domain.

Postlude: "Were You There?" – African-American spiritual arranged by Gilbert M. Martin. ©1993 The Sacred Music Press, CCLI Song #1814359, CCLI License #11231812.