



SAMPSON'S MILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Ash Wednesday, February 14, 2024

A Taizé Service with the Imposition of Ashes

Prelude

Welcome and Introduction to the Service

Gathering Music

Sing, Praise, and Bless the Lord

Sing, praise, and bless the Lord. Sing, praise, and bless the Lord.

Peoples! Nations! Alleluia!

(repeat)

*The Call to Worship (Please stand.)

One: Turn away from the calls of worldly success.

All: Repent and turn back to God.

One: Turn away from the desire to have what everyone else has.

All: Repent and turn back to God.

One: Turn away from pride and hate, lust and greed.

All: Repent and turn back to God.

One: As we enter Lent on this Ash Wednesday, may we turn instead toward God.

All: In doing so, may we also seek forgiveness, healing and wholeness. Amen.

Song

Bless the Lord, My Soul

Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's holy name.

Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me into life.

Unison Prayer of the Day

We bring our burdens and our sins to You, O Christ, who bears the heavy load for us. We place upon You our excuses, our shortcomings, our anger, and our desire, knowing that You can remove these sins from us and restore us to life. We confess that we have gone astray. We confess that we have not loved You fully and have not loved our neighbor as ourselves. We confess that we have not fully loved even our very selves.

Forgive us of our sins. Help us to turn back to You. Restore what has been broken. Transform what has been twisted. Find what has been lost, so that we may be the living, loving image of You in creation. In Your precious name we pray. Amen.

Song

Come and Fill Our Hearts with Your Peace

Come and fill our hearts with your peace.

You alone, O Lord, are holy.

Come and fill our heart with your peace. Alleluia.

Scripture Readings

Psalm 51

Luke 23:26-32

Meditation

“Witness at the Cross: Simon of Cyrene”

Pastor Jessica

Special Music

Create in Me a Clean Heart
Choir

Invitation to a Holy Lent

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 and faith in the paschal mystery. We will begin our journey to Easter with the sign of ashes – an invitation to confess our sins and fragility, trusting also in the abundance and assurance of God’s grace and promise to make beautiful things out of the dust.

This Lent, we will follow Jesus to the cross and behold those who bore witness to it – through the taunts of the soldiers, the priests and bystanders, the women who kept close, the beloved disciple who takes on Jesus’ mother, the two criminals on the left and the right side of Jesus, and the kindness and sacrifice of unlikely conscripts - Simon, Joseph of Arimathea, and Nicodemus. By these witnesses and their accounts, may we enter the story of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection this Lent anew.

Song

O, Lord Hear My Prayer
O Lord, hear my prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer.
When I call, answer me.
O Lord, hear my prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer.
Come and listen to me.

***A Prayerful Litany for Lent**

One: Loving Lord, at the beginning of this Lenten season, we are met with the challenge of handing over every bit of our lives that do not come from You. To rid ourselves of what clutters our lives, and all that distracts us from the simple truth of Your love for us.

All: If we don't give anything up for Lent, then let us at least give up this: that we might cease living in ways that disconnect us from You, for every one of our steps is like a circle around Your temple. Perhaps this Lent, we can give up our way and give ourselves to Your way for us.

One: So, lead and guide us on this Lenten way. May we walk with Jesus toward the hill just outside of Jerusalem. May we bear witness to Jesus' outstretched work at Calvary. May we take up our cross and follow, spending each moment of our lives living responsively to You, just as Christ Himself did. For that is not only the way of the cross but it is the way of faith.

All: Amen.

***Seeing Ourselves Among the Witnesses and the Imposition of Ashes**

All are invited forward to receive the Imposition of Ashes. As you do, we invite you to "see" yourself as a witness at the cross by taking a look in the mirror marked with a cross. Then, receive your ashes on your forehead or hand before returning to your seat.

The Closing Prayer and The Lord's Prayer

Sending Song

Jesus, Remember Me

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

**You are invited to leave the sanctuary when you feel called to do so. You may linger in song and silence for as long as you like. You may continue in prayer. You are invited to leave when ready in silence, in the fullness of God.*