



United Methodist
Church of Summit



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February 22nd, 2023

Ash Wednesday

Welcome to the United Methodist Church of Summit! We invite you to join us on a journey of faith, worshiping and serving God.

GATHERING MUSIC

Voluntary on "Near to the Heart of God"

GREETING

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

Many Voices: And also with you.

One Voice: Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.

Many Voices: God's mercy endures forever.

***CENTERING PRAYER:** *(in unison)*

Merciful God, we stand before you fearful and lost, doubting how you could possibly receive us into your holy presence, especially when every word on our lips seems to be tainted, even our good deeds filled with mixed intentions. Forgive us, O Lord, when we fail to remember the depth of your mercy and grace. Purify us, so that we might recover the boldness to say, "Here I am; send me!" By your help, may we embark on our Lenten journey with peace and strength. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN:**

Change My Heart, O God

TFWS# 2152

SCRIPTURE READING: Isaiah 6:1-8 NRSV

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory." The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. And I said: "Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!" Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: "Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out." Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I; send me!"

HYMN OF REFLECTION:

Sunday's Palms are Wednesday's Ashes TFWS #2138

GOSPEL PROCLAMATION: Matthew 6:1-6 NIV

Giving to the Needy

"Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Prayer

"And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

MEDITATION:*"The Art of Ashes"*

Rev. Laura Steele

ANTHEM*"What Wondrous Love Is This"*
Chancel Choir

L. Larson

Invitation to the Observance of Lenten Discipline

Friends, today we enter into a centuries-long tradition, a season of spiritual preparation. What is old, becomes new. We prepare by looking within ourselves - what are our questions, doubts, struggles, and our sins? We prepare by looking at our neighbors – how have we hurt them, harmed them, held them at arm's -length? We prepare by looking to the cross – where our relationships are restored and our humanity is renewed. No one is beyond needing God's grace, mercy, and forgiveness. And, praise God, no one is beyond receiving it. God is committed to loving every part of who you are –even the parts that are painful for you to face.

So, you get to make the decision today, as millions have made before you. You get to say, "yes" to this gift of Lent. You get to say, "yes" to this gift of a season to get fully in touch with your humanity. You get to move closer to God through practices such as prayer, meditation, silence, and fasting. You get to choose both if and how you will prepare for the transformation that lies ahead in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Will you say yes to this invitation? (*a brief silence is kept*)

Thanksgiving 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, so that we may remember that only by your gracious gift are we given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

Imposition of the Ashes

(*all persons are invited to come forward in silent reflection*)

Declaration of Pardon and Peace

One Voice: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

Many Voices: In Jesus Christ, we all have peace.

The Lord's Prayer (*in unison*)**Closing Hymn***Take Time to Be Holy*

UMH #395

Dismissal with Blessing

One Voice: May God, who has forgiven and fed us, now make us strong for these days ahead. May Jesus lead us, and may we be faithful to follow. May the Spirit lead us into the wilderness and purify our hearts.

Many Voices: Amen!

POSTLUDE*Variations on "Give Me Jesus"*

*Please join us Wednesday evenings from 6:30pm-7:30pm throughout the Lenten season
for Soup Supper Dinner Church! Starts next week!*