

Ash Wednesday
February 22, 2023: 6:30 pm

We Gather Together

Welcome & Announcements

***Call to Worship**

Braden T.

God is our refuge and strength, a present help in trouble.
Therefore, we will not fear:

though the earth should change,
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;
though the waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

God's love endures forever.

***Prayer**

Neiciah P.

Almighty God, you despise nothing you have made,
and you forgive the sins of all who trust you.

Create in us new and contrite hearts,
that truly repenting of our sins,
and acknowledging our brokenness,
we may receive from you, the God of all mercy,
full pardon and forgiveness;

through your Son, Jesus Christ our redeemer,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. Amen.

***Call to Confession**

Graham A.

Would any be in a right relationship with God? Are there any who
wish to rest in God's loving embrace? Then let us turn away from
our sins, freely confessing them to God and one another.

***Confession**

Rowan W., Claire B., Eddie H., Graham A.

Holy and merciful God, we confess to you and to one another, and to the whole communion of saints in heaven and on earth, that we have sinned by our own fault in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.

We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven.

God, have mercy on us.

We have not listened to your call to serve as Christ served us.

We have not been true to the mind of Christ.

We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

God, have mercy on us.

We confess to you, our God, all our past unfaithfulness.

For the pride, hypocrisy, and impatience in our lives,

God, have mercy on us.

For our self-indulgent appetites and ways and our exploitation of other people,

God, have mercy on us.

For our anger at our own frustration and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,

God, have mercy on us.

For our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonesty in daily life and work,

God, have mercy on us.

For our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,

God, have mercy on us.

Accept our repentance, O God, for the wrongs we have done. For our neglect of human need and suffering and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,

God, have mercy on us.

For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us,

God, have mercy on us.

For our waste and pollution of your creation and our lack of concern for those who come after us,

God, have mercy on us.

Restore us, O God of our salvation, and show us your steadfast love.

Turn to us in your mercy and redeem us.

God, forgive us. Lord, hear our prayer.

Silent Confession

(In the silence of our hearts we confess our sins to God.)

God's love has been poured into our hearts through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

I declare to you, in the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

***Response to God's Forgiveness**

Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.**

God's Word Is Proclaimed

Old Testament Lesson Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

Eddie H.

New Testament Lesson Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Homily "A Middle Way"

Pastor Ken Locke

We Respond to God's Word

Sacrament of Holy Communion

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us lift up our hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God our thanks and praise.

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise,
eternal God, creator and ruler of the universe. You are our God, and
we are the creatures of your hand.

**From dust you made us, breathing into us the breath of life,
setting us in your world to love and serve you.**

When we rejected your love and ignored your wisdom, you did not
reject us. You loved us still and called us to return to you.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with the heavenly choirs and with all the faithful of every time and place, who forever sing to the glory of your name.

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is He who comes
In the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest,
Hosanna in the highest.**

You are holy, O God of majesty; and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

Out of your great love for the world, you sent Jesus to us to set us free from the tyranny of evil. He lived as one of us, sharing our joys and sorrows.

By his dying and rising, he releases us from bondage to sin and frees us from the rule of death.

Remembering all your mighty and merciful acts, we take this bread and this cup, and celebrate with joy the redemption won for us in Jesus Christ.

Accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving as a living and holy offering of ourselves, that our lives may proclaim the One crucified and risen.

**Christ has died; Christ is risen;
Christ will come again.**

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these your gifts of bread and cup, that the bread we break and the cup we bless may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ.

By your Spirit unite us with the living Christ and with all who are baptized in his name, that we may be one ministry in every place.

Lead us, O God, by the power of your Spirit to live as our Lord requires:

Doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with you, our God.

Keep our eyes fixed on Jesus Christ until this mortal life is ended, and all that is earthly returns to dust.

Give us strength to serve you faithfully until the promised day of resurrection, when, with the redeemed of all the ages, we will feast with you at your table in glory.

Through Christ, all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, with the Holy Spirit in the holy church, now and forever. Amen.

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, Who art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who have sinned against us.

And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever.

Amen.

Invitation to Observe a Holy Lent

Claire B.

Beloved people of God:

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.

(Pastor)

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 meditating on God's word.

May God be with us on this holy journey. Amen.

Imposition of Ashes

(Please take a few moments of silence to contemplate what you have heard and experienced in this service. When you are ready, you may receive the imposition of ashes as you leave the sanctuary. We invite you to stop at the table in the narthex to light a candle and offer a prayer to God – for those who live in darkness of Spirit, for the eternal light of God's love, and for your witness during these forty days.)