

First Church at Worship

Lent begins with a solemn call to fasting and repentance as we begin our journey to the baptismal waters of Easter. As we hear in today's readings, now is the acceptable time to return to the Lord. During Lent the people of God are invited to reflect on the meaning of their baptism into Christ's death and resurrection. The sign of the ashes suggests our human mortality and frailty. What seems like an ending is really an invitation to make each day a new beginning, in which we are washed in God's mercy and forgiveness. With the cross on our brow, we long for the spiritual renewal that flows from the springtime Easter feast to come.

THE GATHERING

The congregation is invited to gather in silence tonight as a time of reflection as we prepare our hearts and minds for worship.

* CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

* THE SILENT PROCESSION

* THE HYMN No. 269 *Land of Rest*
"Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days"

* THE COLLECT

Almighty and ever-living God, you hate nothing you have made and you forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and honest hearts, so that, truly repenting of our sins, we may obtain from you, the God of all mercy, full pardon and forgiveness; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen.*

CHORAL ANTHEM "Remember" Larry Harris

Remember now that from dust you came and to dust you shall return
Remember that short are your days upon the earth.
Come back to the Lord with all your heart. Leave the past in ashes;
And turn to God with prayer and fasting.
For He is slow to anger and ready to forgive.
Remember.

THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON OT Pgs. 846-847
Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

This is the word of God for the people of God
Thanks be to God.

ACT OF PRAISE Eddie Espinosa

"Change My Heart, O God"
Cherub and Wesley Treble Choir
Jade Edwards and Ross Fallaw, soloists

Change my heart, O God, make it ever true.
Change my heart, O God, may I be like you.
You are the Potter, I am the clay.
Mold me and make me, this is what I pray.
Change my heart, O God, make it ever true.
Change my heart, O God, may I be like you.

THE EPISTLE LESSON NT Pgs. 191-192
2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

This is the word of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

* THE GOSPEL LESSON NT. Pgs. 5-6
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

This is the word of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

THE MEDITATION "Walking With Jesus" Rev. Kyle Randle

INVITATION TO THE OBSERVANCE OF LENTEN DISCIPLINE

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ: Christians have always observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection. It became the custom of the church to prepare for Easter by a season of penitence, fasting, and prayer. This season of forty days provided a time in which converts to the faith were prepared for baptism into the body of Christ. It is also the time when persons who had committed serious sins and had been separated from the community of faith were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to the fellowship of the church. The whole congregation is thus reminded of the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the need we all have to renew our baptismal faith. I invite you, in the name of the Lord, to observe a holy Lent, by self-examination, penitence, prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, and by reading and meditating on the Word of God. To make a right beginning, and as a mark of our mortality, let us now pray before our Creator and Redeemer.

THANKSGIVING OVER THE ASHES

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Let us pray: 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 we may remember that only by your gracious gift are we given everlasting life: through Jesus Christ our Savior. *Amen.*

IMPOSITION OF THE ASHES

The congregation is invited to come forward to receive ashen cross.

THE ABSOLUTION

The almighty and merciful God, Source of our salvation in Christ, who desires not the death of a sinner but rather that we turn from wickedness and live; accept your repentance, forgive your sins, and restore you by the Holy Spirit to newness of life. *Amen.*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

After each petition, please respond

Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great

THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you all.
And also with you.

All may exchange signs of peace.

OFFERTORY

Doxology No. 95

THE CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST NO. 13

Taking the Bread and Cup
The Great Thanksgiving
The Lord's Prayer
Giving the Bread and Cup

* THE HYMN No. 357 *Woodworth*
"Just As I Am, Without One Plea"
Verses 1, 4, 6

* DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor all people; love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.
Thanks be to God.

* CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

* GOING FORTH

All depart in silence

* CONGREGATION STANDING.



First United Methodist Church

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Ash Wednesday
February 13, 2013
6:30 p.m.

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Welcome to First United Methodist Church

Come, brothers and sisters, let us consider the dust and ashes of which we were formed. What is the reality of our present life and what shall we become tomorrow? In death where is the poor and where the rich? Where is the slave and the master? They are all ashes. The beauty of countenance has withered, and the strength of youth has been cut down by death. . . . All has withered as the grass of the field and has vanished. Come . . . Let us fall on our knees in humble prayer before Christ.

*“Verses During the Last Kiss: Funeral of the Dead”
Orthodox Liturgy*