

Service For Ash Wednesday

March 2, 2022

First Presbyterian Church, Trinity United Methodist Church
and Christ Episcopal Church, Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

PRELUDE:

Judy Brist

WELCOME:

Gene Peissig

I am Gene Peissig of the Presbyterian Church. Conducting the service tonight are Rev. Eddie Crise of Trinity United Methodist Church and Rev. Aaron Zook of Christ Episcopal Church. Our musician is Judy Brist.

Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent for many in the Christian church. The forty days of fasting (not counting Sundays) begin with this service, set aside for reflection, repentance, and recommitment to a deeper faith in Christ. We do that by worshiping together, partaking in Communion, and receiving the sign of the cross in ashes on our foreheads or the back of our right hands, signifying that we are mortal with the words from Genesis, ("Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.")

You may choose not to receive the ashes. That is okay too. The point of this service is to reflect on our lives, and our sin, in humble recognition before God, deepen our personal commitment, and draw us closer to Christ.

Our Order of worship will be different tonight. We will begin with a responsive reading of Psalm 51, followed by the confession, meditation, communion and imposition of ashes. The collection plates will not be passed tonight but are available at the doors. The collection will go to CareLink. Make out your check to Central Lutheran Church with CareLink in the memo line.

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Psalm 51

Rev. Aaron Zook

One: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love.

All: Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be purer than snow.

One: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

All: The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God you will not despise.

One: Let us worship God!

CALL TO CONFESSION:

Gene Peissig

If we claim that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. But, if we confess our sin, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sin, and will cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Let us confess our sin before God and our neighbors.

(I John 1; 8 & 9)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION:

Gene Peissig

One: We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

All: We confess that when we practice our piety, we want others to know it.

One: We urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain.

All: We confess the propensity to focus on how much we give of ourselves.

One: For our sake God made him to be sin who knew no sin.

All: We confess our prayers lack sincerity unless there is something we want.

One: So that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

All: The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS:

Rev. Aaron Zook

One: Paul reminds us that “We are the temple of the living God; as God said, ‘I will live in them and walk among them, and I will be their God and they shall be my people. Therefore come out from them and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean; Then I will welcome you, and I will be your father, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.’”

ANTHEM: “God So Loved the World”

Stainer

Singers from the Methodist and Presbyterian Church Choirs directed by Bill Bocian

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING:

Rev. Aaron Zook

Psalm 51:1-17

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment. Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me.

You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you. Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.

O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt-offering, you would not be pleased. The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING:**Rev. Eddie Crise****Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21**

"Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

"So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

MEDITATION:**Rev. Eddie Crise****HOLY COMMUNION AND IMPOSITION OF ASHES:****Rev. Crise and Zook**

(Please come forward to receive the communion elements and the mark of the cross. With the words, "*Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return,*" ashes will be applied to your forehead.)

THE LORD'S PRAYER**Rev. Eddie Crise**

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever.**

BENEDICTION:**Rev. Aaron Zook****POSTLUDE:****Judy Brist**