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March 6, 2019

Ash Wednesday

7:00 p.m. Worship Service

St. Luke's — Celebrating 186 Years

1833-2019



St. Luke's United Methodist Church Vision

Welcoming ALL ...

Caring ... Serving ... Growing

If you have a prayer request, please fill out a prayer card and hand it to an usher.

* *Asterisk denotes the invitation to stand if able. **Bold text to be read by the people.***

Preparing Our Hearts for Worship

Prelude "Savior, Thy Dying Love" by Van Denman Thompson
Sylvia Ward, organ Tune by Robert Lowry

Introit "Cast Thy Burden Upon the Lord" Benjamin Harlan
St. Luke's Singers Family Choir; Keith Rippe, director

Lighting of the Candles: *Bringing the Light of Christ Into Our Worship*

Welcome/Announcements/Greetings/Introductions

Called to Worship

Invitation to Lenten Discipline

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ: the early Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church that before the Easter celebration there should be a forty-day season of spiritual preparation.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to observe a holy Lent:
by self-examination and repentance;
by prayer, fasting, and self-denial;
and by reading and meditating on God's Holy Word.

To make a right beginning of repentance,
and as a mark of our mortal nature,
let us now kneel (bow) before our Creator and Redeemer.

Opening Prayer [§] (in unison):

**Purifying Mystery, your light exposes in us all that we hide.
Awaken us and all your Holy Church to spiritual combat.
Lead us to purity of soul and body in these forty days.
Fortify us to take an honest look at ourselves
and to name our secret sins and our ruts of disobedience.
Let abstinence from our addictions free us for prayer and the fire of love.
Perfect us by steady gaze toward your pure mercy and grace
so that we may come to the Passion of Jesus
and the resurrection of Easter in pure joy.
In confidence we commend ourselves and all our passions
and cares to your never failing mercy.**

Let us continue in prayer:

**We intercede for the world and the church:
Especially for those we have hurt by our preoccupations ...
For those who live sacrificially so that others
may know your justice and compassion ...
For a just peace in and among nations ...
For professionals who help others stand in the light ...
For the church in every place ...
For the concerns and cares of our lives ...**

Called to Reflection

Old Testament Reading: Joel 2: 1-17
Epistle Reading: 2 Corinthians 5: 20b - 6:10
*Gospel Reading: Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-21
And all God's people said: **Thanks be to God!**

Message

“Sanctify the Congregation”

Pastor Chuck

Called to Confession

Prayer of Confession (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.**

Pause here.

Examine your life, and confess your sins to God.

**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.**

Words of Assurance:

The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. Friends, in the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

Amen.

Thanksgiving Over the Ashes:

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray together:

Holy God, whose Spirit drives us into the wilderness to confront our priorities with a holy fast; grant that as we are about to do battle with our demons and the power of evil, we may be defended by your grace through Jesus Christ. Amen. §

Imposition of the Ashes

Hymn during imposition of ashes: “Give Me a Clean Heart”

TFWS 2133

Sent to Serve

Carrying the Light of Christ to the World

*Hymn of Dedication

“I Have Decided to Follow Jesus”

TFWS 2129

* Blessing:

Friends, you have been set apart for a special purpose during this Holy Lent.

We are set apart for prayer. We will pray.

What will you pray about?

We will pray that God sends laborers into the neighborhoods around us: Laborers who can share God’s love and bring folks home to God.

Who do you suppose those laborers will be?

They will be us!

Go, therefore, into all the world, and share the good news about God’s love with all whom you meet. And may the blessing of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be with you today and always. Amen.

Postlude

“He Leadeth Me”
Sylvia Ward, organ

by William B. Bradbury

Note: Please feel free to use language in worship that is inclusive and affirms a diverse imagery for God.

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