

GATHERING, WELCOME, AND SERVICE NOTES

SILENT PRAYER

A CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION [from Psalm 51]

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love;
According to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.
Wash away all my iniquity
and cleanse me from my sin.
Surely you desire truth in the inner parts;
you teach me wisdom in the inmost place.
Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation
and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

*HYMN No. 496

Sweet Hour of Prayer

*OPENING PRAYER

SCRIPTURE LESSON pg. 901, 1414

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

ANTHEM

Prayer for Pardon and Cleansing

(Robert Wilson)

*GOSPEL LESSON pg. 960, 1503

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

SERMON

INVITATION TO THE OBSERVANCE OF LENT

THANKSGIVING OVER THE ASHES

*IMPOSITION OF ASHES

PRAYER OF RESPONSE

Gracious God, out of your love and mercy you breathed into the dust the breath of life, creating us to serve you and our neighbors.
In this season of repentance, restore to us the joy of our salvation and strengthen us to face our mortality, that we may reach with confidence for your mercy, in Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

*HYMN No. 395

Take Time to Be Holy

*DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

*POSTLUDE

*GOING FORTH TO LOVE AND SERVE THE LORD



"When on Ash Wednesday we hear the words, 'Remember, you are dust,' we are also told that we are brothers and sisters of the incarnate Lord. In these words we are told everything that we are: nothingness that is filled with eternity; death that teems with life; futility that redeems; dust that is God's life forever."
(Karl Rahner, The Eternal Year, p. 62)

A Word about Lent

Lent is a time to do spiritual inventory. Below are many time-honored disciplines to help you in this season of growth. Sundays are not counted as part of the Lenten season. Sundays are feast days and never fast days. Sundays at any time of the year, including Lent, celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus.

Use this guide to reflect on your own spiritual journey. How might you be more attentive to God's movement in your life and the word in these forty days?

Prayer in Public and Private

Consider how you can increase your practice of prayer, both publically and privately.

Scripture

Consider your own practice of Bible reading. How might you enhance your Scripture reading during Lent?

Fasting

Two Kinds of Fasting for Lent

The Normal Fast. Abstaining from all forms of food, but not from water, for a period of time.
The Partial Fast. Here the emphasis is upon restriction of diet rather than complete abstinence. One may abstain from eating certain meals; for example, dinner. One may abstain from eating certain foods and drinking certain drinks; for example, meat and coffee.

Mercy

In Scripture, mercy, almsgiving, fasting and prayer are sometimes tied together. Lent is a time to inventory our generosity. How can you use this season to expand your practice of generosity toward others?



Berea Friendship
United Methodist Church

February 17, 2010