

In light of the promises and presence of the Christ, let us renounce the burdens of fear and selfishness that can weigh us down. Instead, let us allow the renewing fire of the Holy Spirit to purify our souls.

February 26, 2020

ASH WEDNESDAY

6:15 PM

GATHERING MUSIC

Everyone is invited to let the music prepare hearts for a renewing encounter with Spirit.

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

WORDS OF WELCOME

Pastor Mike Holland

CALL TO WORSHIP

Michelle Trumbo, Elder

One: On Ash Wednesday, another church season begins: Lent.

Lent is a holy comma in our rushed and often busy lives.

Many: Another opportunity for us to enter into a deeper relationship with our Truer Selves, and with Goddess, and with the world.

One: We are invited to make space to listen to the Spirit and in doing so, to transform our lives and be the change we want to see in the world.

Many: We are invited in new ways to observe how much we hold on to old ideas and beliefs, to reflect on how tempting is the need for control over our and other's lives, and to let go to freedom.

One: We are invited to discover the endless grace of Sophia and the possibility of new beginnings. We are called anew to follow Christ.

Many: We are invited to see both the needs and potential of the world and allow it to challenge and change our attitudes and actions.

One: Lent is yet another chance to grow in faith and be transformed.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

Michelle Trumbo, Elder

Spirit of the living God, elusive as the wind, gentle as a dove, cleansing as fire. Hear the silences between our words. Heal the hurts, the wounds and losses of our lives and those for whom we pray. As our lungs breathe in and out, may true needs, deep longings, unfulfilled hopes, and paralyzing fears be exhaled into Your heart as a blessing. We offer ourselves as we enact tonight's ritual to release and then to reaffirm our true being as children of the divine. Strengthen us in the years and days ahead that we might grow more spiritual, refining ourselves and shining in loving service. Amen.

RINGING OF THE SINGING BOWL

QUIET TIME OF MEDITATION AND PRAYER

SONG

Cares Chorus

I cast all my cares upon You. I lay all of my burdens down at your feet. And anytime that I don't know just what to do, I will cast all my cares upon You.

READING:

Genesis 2:4-7 a Paraphrase

Stephanie Brown, Elder

⁴These are the generations of the heavens and the earth as they were created. In the day that YHWH made the earth and the heavens, ⁵when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; ⁶but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground— ⁷then YHWH formed humans from the dust of the ground, and breathed into their nostrils the breath of life; and they became living beings.

REFLECTION

Pastor Mike Holland

PRAYER OF ASSURANCE (Unison)

Vibrant and compassionate God, we receive the mark of the ashes as a reminder of the creative power to meet hurt with compassion and mortality with eternity. Anoint us with oil into lives of loving ministry so that we may carry good news into the world. We give thanks for these empowering gifts; may they grow in us as we grow in service to others and to the Earth. Amen

IMPOSITION OF THE ASHES

Ashes are an ancient symbol of our human frailty and our mortality. But the ashes are mixed with oil, which is a biblical symbol of healing and divine calling. The mixing of oil and ashes is a reminder that God works in those places where we need healing, forgiveness, and release. We are anointed to minister and to serve as well. Those who wish may come forward and receive the mark of these ashes.

When ready, please leave in silence. Thank you for attending the service



Ash Wednesday