



Ash Wednesday Service
February 17, 2021
7:30 PM
St. Paul's United Methodist Church
1965 Ferguson Road
Allison Park, PA 15101
412.486.7006
www.stpaulsumc.com

Prelude "Sweet Hour of Prayer," arr. Rex Koury Alaine Fink
Tune: SWEET HOUR by William Bradbury; this setting © 1994 Lorenz Publishing Co.

Greeting and Welcome Pastor Jeff
One: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
All: And also with you.
One: Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.
All: God's mercy endures forever.

Unison Prayer Pastor Jeff
O God, we turn our faces toward you in a special way this day, seeking wisdom for the Lenten journey ahead and for the paths we walk in life. We come seeking your mercy and forgiveness. Through our worship, through our penitence, visit us with your salvation and help us find the heart of faith within ourselves. Lead on, O God, and journey with us, we pray. Amen.

Hymn "Lord, Who Throughout These 40 Days" ST. ANNE
Words by Claudia F. Hernaman, 1873; music attr. to William Croft, 1708, harm. by W.H.Monk, 1861. Public domain.

**Lord, who throughout these forty days for us didst fast and pray,
teach us with thee to mourn our sins and close by thee to stay.**

**As thou with Satan didst contend, and didst the victory win,
O give us strength in thee to fight, in thee to conquer sin.**

**As thou didst hunger, bear, and thirst, so teach us, gracious Lord,
to die to self and chiefly live by thy most holy word.**

**And through these days of penitence, and through thy passiontide,
yea, evermore in life and death, Jesus, with us abide.**

**Abide with us, that so, this life of suffering over past,
an Easter of unending joy we may attain at last.**

Words for the Lenten Journey

Part 1: Psalm 51: 1-7 (read responsively) Pastor Karen

One: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;
All: according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.
One: Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!
All: For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.
One: Against you, you only, have I sinned, and done that which is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless in your judgment.
All: Behold, I was born into iniquity, and I have been sinful since my mother conceived me.
One: Behold, you desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.
All: Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Meditation Pastor Karen

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Part 2: Psalm 51: 8-13 Pastor Chad

One: Make me hear with joy and gladness; let the bones which you have broken rejoice.
All: Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.
One: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.
All: Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your holy Spirit from me.
One: Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.
All: Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

Meditation Pastor Chad

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Part 3: Psalm 51: 14-17 Pastor Jeff

One: Deliver me from death, O God, God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.
All: O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth your praise.
One: For you have no delight in sacrifice; were I to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.
All: The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Meditation Pastor Jeff

Acknowledgements

Lenten burlap hangings created by Kim Lenz.

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Blessing the Dust – A Blessing for Ash Wednesday by Jan Richardson

All those days
you felt like dust,
like dirt,
as if all you had to do
was turn your face
toward the wind
and be scattered
to the four corners
or swept away
by the smallest breath
as insubstantial –
did you not know
what the Holy One
can do with dust?
This is the day
we freely say
we are scorched.
This is the hour
we are marked
by what has made it
through the burning.

This is the moment
we ask for the blessing
that lives within

the ancient ashes,
that makes its home
inside the soil of
this sacred earth.
So let us be marked
not for sorrow.
And let us be marked
not for shame.
Let us be marked
not for false humility
or for thinking
we are less
than we are
but for claiming
what God can do
within the dust,
within the dirt,
within the stuff
of which the world
is made
and the stars that blaze
in our bones
and the galaxies that spiral
inside the smudge
we bear

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