



Vienna Presbyterian Church
February 22, 2023
12:00 pm and 7:00 pm

A Caring Fellowship Bringing Christ into Our Diverse Community through Discipleship and Service.

Prelude

*Call to Worship (Based on Joel 2:12-18)

Leader: Blow the trumpet! Call a solemn assembly! Gather the people!

People: Sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, including infants. Let even the bride and bridegroom rise from their nuptials. Gather everyone!

Leader: Ministries: weep! Pray to the Lord on behalf of the people, "Spare your people, O Lord. Don't let others look at us and wonder where you are, O Lord. Spare, o spare, your people!"

People: "Return to me with all your heart," says the Lord. "Yet even now, return to me! Rend your hearts with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning."

Leader: O Lord, we turn to you. Turn now to us, and forget not your heritage, for you are God – gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.

*Hymn #81 *Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days*

Prayer of Contrition

Save us, O God,

From the blindness,

which is not even aware that it is sinning;

From the pride,

which cannot admit that it is wrong;

From the self-will,

which can see nothing but its own way;

From the self-righteousness,

which can see no flaw within itself;

From the callousness,

which has sinned so often that it has ceased to care;

From the defiance,

which is not even sorry for its sins;

From the evasion,

which always puts the blame on someone or something else;

From the heart so hardened,

that it cannot repent.

Give us at all times,

Eyes which are open to our faults;

A conscience which is sensitive and quick to warn;

A heart that cannot sin in peace,

but is moved to regret and remorse.

So grant that being truly penitent we may be truly forgiven,

so that we may find that your love is great enough

to cover all of our sin; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Scripture: Isaiah 58:1-12
 Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

A Time of Silent Reflection

We invite you to use this time to still your heart and reflect back over the last year to name for yourself the places where you have sinned, where your heart has been broken, where you have lost touch with Christ. Please take a moment to write your own personal confession on the heart you were given.

Observance of the Lenten Discipline

Litany of Penitence: Psalm 51

Leader: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

People: Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

Leader: For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

People: 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.

Leader: Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me.

People: You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

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

People: Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.

Leader: Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

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

Leader: Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.

People: Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.

Leader: Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

People: Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.

Leader: O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

People: For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.

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

People: Do good to Zion in your good pleasure; rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, then you will delight in right sacrifices, in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings; then bulls will be offered on your altar.

Imposition of the Ashes

If you wish to receive ashes, please come down the center aisle. Please take your personal confession of sin, written on the paper heart, rip it in half (rend your heart) and lay it at the foot of the cross. Pastor Hope will then place the ashes on your forehead unless you extend your hand indicating that you would rather receive them on the back of your hand.

Assurance of Pardon (Ezekiel 36:25-27)

Leader: Hear the promise of God: "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you will be clean from all your uncleanness, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my spirit within you, and make you follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances."

Friends, the promises of God are true:

People: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross that we might be dead to sin and alive to all that is good.

Leader: In the name of Jesus Christ you are forgiven. Live now as new people, free to love God and neighbor.

*Hymn #333 *Seek Ye First*

*Benediction

Postlude

*Please stand if you are able

Ash Wednesday (from the Latin *Die Cinerum*, meaning "Day of Ashes") is the first day of Lent. On this day, Christians focus intensely on their utter and complete sinfulness and the necessity of Christ's suffering and death for their salvation. Ashes are referred to many times in the Old Testament as a sign of sorrow, mourning, repentance, and mortality. Churches use ashes during Ash Wednesday worship as part of a tradition called the Imposition of Ashes. According to this ancient custom, ashes (traditionally made by burning palm fronds used on Palm Sunday of the previous year) are mixed with a small amount of olive oil and applied to the forehead of each worshiper. This mark, in the sign of the cross, is a powerful reminder of our depraved and sinful nature and total dependence on God for forgiveness and salvation.