

Church in the Forest

at Erdman Chapel, Stevenson School
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Ash Wednesday

February 18, 2015 • 6:00 pm

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The minister welcomes the congregation and invites us to stand

Minister: God sent Christ into the world not to condemn the world,

People: But that the world should be saved through him.

Minister: Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

A hymn follows

Claudia F. I. Hernaman, 1873; alt.

Day's Psalter, 1

1. Lord, who through-out these for - ty days For us didst fast and pray,
2. As Thou with Sa - tan didst con-tend, And didst the vic-tory win,

Teach us with Thee to mourn our sins, And close by Thee to stay.
O give us strength in Thee to fight, In Thee to con-quer sin.

After the hymn, the people may be seated and the service continues

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Isaiah 58:1–12

Sherry St. Clair

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 103: 8–14

Responsively

The Lord is full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and of great kindness.

**He will not always accuse us,
nor will he keep his anger for ever.**

He has not dealt with us according to our sins,
nor rewarded us according to our wickedness.

**For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so is his mercy great upon those who fear him.**

As far as the east is from the west,
so far has he removed our sins from us.

**As a father cares for his children,
so does the Lord care for those who fear him.**

For he himself knows whereof we are made;
he remembers that we are but dust.

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON

Matthew 6:1–6

The minister continues

A LITANY OF PENITENCE

Most holy and merciful Father:

**We confess to you and to one another,
and to the whole communion of saints in heaven and on earth,
that we have sinned by our own fault in thought, word and deed;
by what we have done and by what we have left undone.**

We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others, as we have been forgiven.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

We have been deaf to your call to serve, as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

Have mercy on us, O Lord.

We confess to you, Lord, all our past unfaithfulness: the pride, hypocrisy, and impatience of our lives,

We confess to you, O Lord.

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people,

We confess to you, O Lord.

Our anger at our own frustration, and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,

We confess to you, O Lord.

Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonesty in daily life and work,

We confess to you, O Lord.

Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,

We confess to you, O Lord.

Accept our repentance, Lord, for the wrongs we have done; for our blindness to human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,

Accept our repentance, O Lord.

For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us.

Accept our repentance, O Lord.

For our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us,

Accept our repentance, O Lord.

Restore us, Good Lord, and let your anger depart from us;

favorably hear us, for your mercy is great.

Accomplish in us the work of your salvation;

that we may show forth your glory in the world.

By the cross and passion of your Son our Lord,

bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.

Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desires not the death of sinners, but rather that they may turn from their wickedness and live, has given power and commandment to his ministers to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins. He pardons and absolves all those who truly repent, and with sincere hearts believe his holy Gospel.

Therefore, we beseech him to grant us true repentance and his Holy Spirit, that those things may please him which we do on this day, and that the rest of our life, hereafter may be pure and holy so that at the last we may come to his eternal joy, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

And now, at the last, as our Savior Jesus Christ has taught us, we pray:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,

for ever and ever. Amen.

THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Please come forward for the imposition of ashes as the music begins.

The minister then continues

THE EXHORTATION

Dear People of God: The first Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church to prepare for them by a season of penitence and fasting. This season of Lent provided a time in which converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism. It was also a time when those who, because of notorious sins, had been separated from the body of the faithful were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to the fellowship of the Church. Thereby, the whole congregation was put in mind of the message of pardon and absolution set forth in the Gospel of our Savior, and of the need which all Christians continually have to renew their repentance and faith.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Lord, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word. And to make a right beginning of repentance, and as mark of our mortal nature, let us now pray to the Lord, our maker and redeemer.

Silence

Almighty God,

you have created us out of the dust of the earth: Grant that these ashes may be to us a sign of our mortality and penitence, that we may remember that it is only by your gracious gift that we are given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Please stand and the hymn follows on the next page

Henry Francis Lyte, 1847

William Henry Monk, 1861

A - bide with me: fast falls the e - ven - tide;
Swift to its close ebbs out life's lit - tle day;

The dark - ness deep - ens; Lord, with me a - bide!
Earth's joys grow dim, its glo - ries pass a - way;

When oth - er help - ers fail and com - forts flee,
Change and de - cay in all a - round I see.

Help of the help - less, O a - bide with me.
O Thou who chang - est not, a - bide with me.

The minister concludes

Minister: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: And also with you.

Minister: We depart in silence to love and serve the Lord.

Presiding Minister	The Rev. Dr. William B. Rolland		
Assistant Minister and Bible Study	The Rev. Ken Feske		
Music Director	Melinda Coffey Armstead		
Office Administration	Sherry St. Clair	Publications	Mary Wiltse
Lector	Sherry St. Clair	Crucifer	Judy Fletcher
Altar Care	Martha Jordan		