

Ash Wednesday

February 14, 2024

9:00 a.m.

+ Indicates those times when all who are able may stand.
Bold indicates congregational response.

Ringing of the Bell

Pastor's Welcome

Prelude "I Surrender All" Smith

Call to Worship *Inspired by Joel 2*

Gather the people.

Prepare a holy meeting.

Today, we acknowledge the fragility and preciousness of life.

Gather the people. Return to God with our whole selves—mind, body, and spirit.

We rend our hearts not our clothes.

We open ourselves to the pain of the world with compassion and grace in the way of Jesus.

Gather the people.

Seek the Holy One gathered with us.

We offer a sacrifice of praise.

Dust to dust, ashes to ashes, we are here to worship!

Gathering Prayer

Let us pray.

Giver of Life, we honor your presence among us. Receive our words praising you, our prayers seeking you, and our hopes needing you. Bind us as a community that declares the greatness of your name, affirms the belovedness of your holy creation, and witnesses and workers in the kingdom. Dwell in the places that we gather as we encounter you anew. Amen.

First Reading of Scripture

Psalms 51

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church...

Thanks be to God!

+ Opening Hymn No. 51

"How Great Thou Art"

Litany of Confession

Dear God, thank you for all that is good, for our creation and our humanity, for the stewardship you have given us of this planet earth, for the gifts of life and of one another, for your love which is unbounded and eternal. O thou most holy and beloved, we repent the wrongs we have done. We have wounded your love...

O God, heal us.

We stumble in the darkness,

Light of the world transfigure us.

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

Have Mercy on us, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out our transgressions. Wash us thoroughly from our iniquity and cleanse us from our sin.

Create in us a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within us. Cast us not away from your presence and take not your Holy Spirit from us.

Eternal Spirit, living God, in whom we live and move and have our being, all that we are, have been and shall be is known to you, to the very secrets of our hearts and all that rises to trouble us. Living flame, burn into us, cleansing wind, blow through us, fountain of water well up within us, that we may love in praise in deed and in truth. Amen.

Second Reading of Scripture

Mark 14:32-42 CEB

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church...

Thanks be to God!

Special Music "Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley"

Chancel Choir

Reflection

Imposition of Ashes

Pastoral Prayer and The Prayer of Our Savior

The New Zealand Book of Prayer (This book of Prayer weaves the high liturgy of the Anglican Church with the deep and rich earth-based spirituality of the Māori People and the wider Polynesian Culture)

Let us pray...

**Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:**

**The hallowing of your name echo through the universe;
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world;
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings;
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.**

**With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.**

**From trial too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and forever. Amen.**

+ Closing Hymn No. 424 *“How Can I Keep from Singing?”*

+ Benediction

+ Postlude *“Andante Espressivo”* Haydn

The Litany of Confession was reprinted from *Book of Worship*, 2002 by permission of the United Church of Christ, Local Church Ministries, Worship and Education Ministry Team.

The Call to Worship and Opening Prayer was written by The Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology, United Church of Christ. <https://www.ucc.org/worship-way/ash-wednesday-year-b/>



+ Ash Wednesday +
February 14, 2024 6:30 p.m.
Zion United Church of Christ
Union, Missouri