

Wednesday, February 22, 2023

Ash Wednesday

Prelude

Welcome *Pastor Jeff will give announcements and welcome*

****Call to Worship** (*Liturgist parts are indicated in **BOLD** and ***)

****Good Evening, I am Nancy Cooley. Would you please stand as you are comfortable and able to join me in the responsive Call to Worship?**

****Leader: We have left many important pursuits to gather here.
In these moments, worship is of the first importance.**

People: Together, we begin a season of self-examination.
We begin a humble walk with God through Lent.

****Leader: This is a time for building spiritual disciplines.
Those disciplined by Christ become disciples.**

People: We seek to follow in the steps of Jesus.
We want to walk in the paths where Christ leads.

****Leader: May God empower us here with genuine righteousness.
Let patience, kindness, and truthful speech prevail.**

People: We seek knowledge and the will to live by it.
We seek community and the capacity to share it.

****Will you join us in our opening song, "Take Time to Be Holy",
page #395 in the blue hymnal, the words will be on the screen.**

Opening Song *"Take Time to Be Holy"* UM Hymn #395

****Opening Prayer** *Opening Prayer read by Nancy Cooley*

Would join with me in Prayer?

O God, maker of every thing and judge of all that you have made, from the dust of the earth you have formed us and from the dust of death you would raise us up. By the redemptive power of the cross, create in us clean hearts and put within us a new spirit, that we may repent of our sins and lead lives worthy of your calling; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Jennifer Schumaker) **Scripture Reading

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

**Blow the trumpet in Zion;
sound the alarm on my holy mountain!
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,
for the day of the Lord is coming, it is near—
a day of darkness and gloom,
a day of clouds and thick darkness!
Like blackness spread upon the mountains
a great and powerful army comes;
their like has never been from of old,
nor will be again after them
in ages to come.**

**Yet even now, says the Lord,
return to me with all your heart,
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
rend your hearts and not your clothing.
Return to the Lord, your God,
for he is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love,
and relents from punishing.
Who knows whether he will not turn and relent,
and leave a blessing behind him,**

**a grain offering and a drink offering
for the Lord, your God?**

Blow the trumpet in Zion;

sanctify a fast;

call a solemn assembly;

gather the people.

Sanctify the congregation;

assemble the aged;

gather the children,

even infants at the breast.

Let the bridegroom leave his room,

and the bride her canopy.

Between the vestibule and the altar

let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep.

Let them say, "Spare your people, O Lord,

and do not make your heritage a mockery,

a byword among the nations.

Why should it be said among the peoples,

'Where is their God?'"

This is the word of God, for the people of God. Thanks be to God.

Message

Pastor Jeff Williams

Invitation to Lenten Discipline: Matthew 6:1-6,16-21

Jennifer Schumaker

As this is a reading of the gospel, please stand as you are comfortable and able.

Matthew 6:1-6,16-21 NRSV

“Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

“So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

“And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

“And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

This is the word of God, for the people of God. Thanks be to God.

Imposition of Ashes and Oil Pastor Jeff Williams

Confession and Pardon (ALL) Pastor Melissa Wagner

**Righteous God,
in humility and repentance
we bring our failures in caring, helping, and loving,
we bring the pain we have caused others,
we bring the injustice in society of which we are a part,
to the transforming power of your grace.
Grant us the courage to accept the healing you offer
and to turn again toward the sunrise of your reign,
that we may walk with you in the promise of peace
You have willed for all the children of the earth,
and have made known to us in Christ Jesus. Amen.**

Closing Song *"Grace Greater than Our Sin"* UMC Hymn #365

Blessing for the Week Pastor Melissa Wagner

Postlude