

First United Methodist Church of Freehold
Virtual Bulletin

Ash Wednesday
March 2, 2022

Prelude

Introduction to Lent:

The season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday as a day to remember our humanity and begin a period of repentance – a turning away from sin and evil – in preparation for the joy of Easter. We are joined in our humanity by Jesus who, though he was and is God, experienced the limits of human life in solidarity with us. In Lent, we recall Jesus' time in the wilderness when he was tempted to feed, save, and glorify himself. Instead, he humbled himself before God and began a ministry of feeding, healing, and saving others so that God might be glorified. We are called to recognize the ways we have been focused on ourselves, to repent, and to follow in Jesus' way of justice and compassion.

Call to Worship:

Leader: We come to worship today in search of living water.

People: We do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from God's mouth.

Leader: We come ready to turn towards the fountain of grace –

People: Knowing that, so often, we have tried to fill our own cups.

Leader: We come to remember and to learn again: that we are human.

People: We are humbled before God. We are loved by God. We are fed by God.

Leader: We come not to just receive but to give, as the prophet calls:

People: If we offer food to the hungry and provide for the afflicted, our light will rise in the darkness.

Opening Prayer: (In Unison)

God of all creation, as we begin a season of reflecting on ourselves, move us to repentance. Let our self-reflection turn into self-giving so that, like Jesus, we can faithfully serve one another. Amen.

Hymn: "I Surrender All" UMH #354

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 58:1-12 Jane Healton

Sermon: "The Cup of Fasting" Pastor, Wil Wilson

Invitation to the Observance of Lenten Discipline
Thanksgiving over the Ashes
****Imposition of Ashes***

Prayer of Confession and Pardon:

Maker of all, as we remember our humanity today, forgive us for forgetting the humanity of others. In our desire for help from you, we can become focused on ourselves and neglect the very things you care about. In this season of Lent, lead us in the way of repentance that is acceptable to you. May our prayers be matched by our actions, and as we receive grace, so let us give it freely. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Moment of Silent Confession

Words of Assurance:

Leader: We seek help from the Giver of Life, the Defeater of Death, who loves us so much that he gave his Son that we might live abundantly. We are forgiven in the name of Jesus, and for this we give you praise, O God!

All: We are forgiven in the name of Jesus, and for this we give you praise, O God!

Hymn: "Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus" UMH #349

Offertory

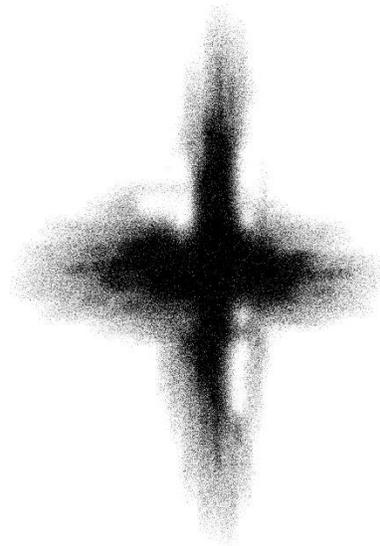
Prayer of Thanksgiving: (In Unison)

Loving Creator, receive the gifts of our earthly resources and accept the gifts of our love. May these earthly treasures lead others to follow your path of care for all humanity. And may our heavenly treasures inspire us to be your incarnation in the world. Amen.

Closing Hymn: "Spirit of the Living God" *UMH #393*

Benediction: Pastor, Wil Wilson

Going Forth



**Leading Us in Worship
Rev. William B. Wilson, Jr.
Music Director, Steven Russell
Liturgist, Jane Healton**

Today's Hymns:

I Surrender All **UMH #354**

All to Jesus I surrender;
all to him I freely give;
I will ever love and trust him,
in his presence daily live.

*I surrender all, I surrender all,
All to thee, my blessed Savior,
I surrender all.*

All to Jesus I surrender;
humbly at his feet I bow,
worldly pleasures all forsaken;
take me, Jesus, take me now.

*I surrender all, I surrender all,
All to thee, my blessed Savior,
I surrender all.*

All to Jesus, I surrender;
Make me, Savior, wholly thine;
let me feel the Holy Spirit,
truly know that thou art mine.

*I surrender all, I surrender all,
All to thee, my blessed Savior,
I surrender all.*

All to Jesus I surrender;
Lord, I give myself to thee;
fill me with thy love and power;
Let thy blessing fall on me.

*I surrender all, I surrender all,
All to thee, my blessed Savior,
I surrender all.*

All to Jesus I surrender;
now I feel the sacred flame.
O the joy of full salvation!
Glory, glory to his name!

*I surrender all, I surrender all,
All to thee, my blessed Savior,
I surrender all.*

Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus **UMH #349**

Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in his wonderful face,
And all the things of earth
Will grow strangely dim
In the light of his glory and grace.

Spirit of the Living God **UMH #393**

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Scripture Passage: Isaiah 58:1-12 (NRSV)

False and True Worship

58 Shout out, do not hold back!
Lift up your voice like a trumpet!
Announce to my people their rebellion,
to the house of Jacob their sins.
² Yet day after day they seek me
and delight to know my ways,
as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness
and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;
they ask of me righteous judgments,
they delight to draw near to God.
³ “Why do we fast, but you do not see?
Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?”
Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day,
and oppress all your workers.
⁴ Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight
and to strike with a wicked fist.
Such fasting as you do today
will not make your voice heard on high.
⁵ Is such the fast that I choose,
a day to humble oneself?
Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush,
and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?
Will you call this a fast,
a day acceptable to the LORD?
⁶ Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
⁷ Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?
⁸ Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly;
your vindicator^ᵐ shall go before you,
the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.
⁹ Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;
you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,

¹⁰ if you offer your food to the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness
and your gloom be like the noonday.

¹¹ The LORD will guide you continually,
and satisfy your needs in parched places,
and make your bones strong;
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters never fail.

¹² Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to live in.