



Ash Wednesday

CARY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

FEBRUARY 22, 2023

7:00 P.M.

Ash Wednesday

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Gathering

Prelude

*Opening Words

God sent Christ into the world John 3:17; Ps. 46:1–3
not to condemn the world,
but that the world might be saved through him.
God's love endures forever.
God is our refuge and strength,
a present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear
though the earth should change,
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;
though the waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble with its tumult.
God's love endures forever.

*Prayer of the Day

Almighty God,
you despise nothing you have made
and you forgive the sins of all who trust in you.
Create in us new and contrite hearts,
that truly repenting of our sins,
and acknowledging our brokenness,
we may receive from you, the God of all mercy,
full pardon and forgiveness;
through your Son, Jesus Christ our redeemer,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. Amen.

*Hymn *O God of Love, The Fast You Choose*
KINGSFOLD 8.6.8.6 D (*Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples*)

***O God of love, the fast you choose is not some great display.
It's everything we gladly do to serve you day by day.
It's not a moment set apart when we will mourn our sin;
For you require a change of heart — A change from what has been.***

*Lord, we confess we often sing that you are our delight,
Then we go shouting words that sting; we bicker and we fight.
Oppressing others for our gain, we put our interests first.
We overlook our neighbors' pain while praying here in church.*

*You teach us what it means to be a church that worships you:
In setting captive people free, we praise you as you choose.
In sharing bread with hungry folk, bringing the homeless in,
And breaking every bitter yoke we worship you again.*

*God, bless us as we journey on to live in loving ways.
Then darkness will turn into dawn and gloom will turn to praise.
When justice is our offering, we also will be blest,
And we will know the fast we bring will be our very best.*

Word

Prayer for Illumination

Merciful God,
your word is our way of truth and life.
Create in us hearts that are clean
and put your Holy Spirit within us,
so that we may receive your grace
and declare your praise forever;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Scripture

Is. 58:1 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?

Is. 58:6 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 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.

Sermon

Is This the Fast That I Choose?

Paul Lang

*Hymn

Faith Begins by Letting Go

No. 684

1 Faith be - gins by let - ting go, giv - ing up what
2 Faith en - dures by hold - ing on, keep - ing mem - ory's
3 Faith ma - tures by reach - ing out, stretch - ing minds, en -

had seemed sure, tak - ing risks and press - ing on,
roots a - live so that hope may bear its fruit;
larg - ing hearts, shar - ing strug - gles, liv - ing prayer,

though the way feels less se - cure: pil - grim - age both
prom - ise - fed, our souls will thrive, not through mer - it
bind - ing up the bro - ken parts; till we find the

right and odd, trust - ing all our life to God.
we pos - sess but by God's great faith - ful - ness.
com - mon - place ripe with wit - ness to God's grace.

Invitation to Observe a Holy Lent

Beloved people of God:
every year at the time of the Christian Passover
we celebrate our redemption
through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Lent is a time to prepare for this celebration
and to renew our life in the paschal mystery.
We begin this holy season
by acknowledging our need for repentance,
and for the mercy and forgiveness
proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We begin our journey to Easter with the sign of ashes.
This ancient sign speaks of the frailty and uncertainty
of human life,
and marks the penitence of this community.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of Christ,
to observe a holy Lent
by self-examination and penitence,
by prayer and fasting,
by works of love,
and by meditating on God's word.
Now let us bow before God, our creator and redeemer,
and confess our sin.

Psalm 51

1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;
in your great compassion blot out my offenses.

**2 Wash me through and through from my wickedness,
and cleanse me | from my sin.**

3 For I know my offenses,
and my sin is ever before me.

**4 Against you only have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight;
so you are justified when you speak
and right in your judgment.**

5 Indeed, I was born steeped in wickedness,
a sinner from my mother's womb.

**6 Indeed, you delight in truth deep within me,
and would have me know wisdom deep within.**

7 Remove my sins with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be purer than snow.

**8 Let me hear joy and gladness;
that the body you have broken may rejoice.**

9 Hide your face from my sins, and
blot out all my wickedness.

**10 Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.**

11 Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

**12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.**

13 Let me teach your ways to offenders,
and sinners shall be restored to you.

**14 Rescue me from bloodshed, O God of my salvation,
and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness.**

15 O LORD, open my lips,
and my mouth shall declare your praise.

**16 For you take no delight in sacrifice, or I would give
it. You are not pleased with burnt offering.**

**[Unison] 17 The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit;
a troubled and broken heart, O God, you will not
despise.**

Litany of Penitence

Holy and merciful God,
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 God.

We have not listened 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 God.

We confess to you, O God, all our past unfaithfulness.
For the pride, hypocrisy, and impatience in our lives,
have mercy on us, O God.

For our self-indulgent appetites and ways
and our exploitation of other people,
have mercy on us, O God.

For our anger at our own frustration
and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,
have mercy on us, O God.

For our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts,
and our dishonesty in daily life and work,
have mercy on us, O God.

For our negligence in prayer and worship,
and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,
have mercy on us, O God.

Accept our repentance, O God, for the wrongs we have done.
For our neglect of human need and suffering
and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,
have mercy on us, O God.

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

For our waste and pollution of your creation
and our lack of concern for those who come after us,
have mercy on us, O God.

Restore us, O God of our salvation,
and show us your steadfast love.
**Turn to us in your mercy
and redeem us.**

Imposition of Ashes

Musical Offering

Touch Me with Ashes
Chancel Choir

Martin

*Touch me with ashes, teach me your way. Here in this silence, reach me, I pray.
Kneeling before you, Lord, I implore you: Kyrie eleison.*

*Grant me your mercy, show me your face. Here in this moment, clothe me in grace.
Kneeling before you, Lord, I implore you: Kyrie eleison.*

*Life is a vapor, a dream fading fast. Only the things of the Spirit will last.
We are like dust, with beginning and end, a flower that fades, a reed in the wind.*

*Lord, I am weary, weak and alone. Lord, I am listening; speak to my soul.
Kneeling before you, Lord, I implore you: Kyrie eleison.*

Sending

Blessing and Charge

May the God of peace
make you holy in every way
and keep your whole being—
spirit, soul, and body—
free from every fault
at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

***Response:** *Attend, and Mark the Solemn Fast*

***Attend, and mark the solemn fast which to the Lord is dear;
Disdain the false unhallow'd mask which vain dissemblers wear.***

***Go, bid the hungry orphan be with thy abundance blest;
Invite the wand'rer to thy gate, and spread the couch of rest.***

***Then, bright as morning, shall come forth,
in peace and joy, thy days;
And glory from the Lord above shall shine on all thy ways.***

***Postlude**



seeking:
honest questions
for deeper faith

Lenten Opportunities at Cary Presbyterian

As the season of Lent draws near, our community of faith offers a variety of ways to pursue a deeper connection with God, others, and self. Worship and faith formation offerings are inspired by resources from the amazing folks at *A Sanctified Art* entitled "**Seeking: Honest Questions for Deeper Faith.**" Along with the various gatherings listed below, we hope that these at-home resources will be helpful as well.

Lenten Devotional (Online version at <https://tinyurl.com/266ddhay>)

This amazing resource contains scripture, commentary, poetry, visual art, and written reflections. Our Faith Formation Offerings offer weekly opportunities to join conversations at CPC about the content of this devotional.)

Daily Devotional Cards

These simple and easy to use daily devotional cards include a reminder/affirmation for building a daily rhythm of prayer.

Seeking Spotify Playlist (Listen at <https://tinyurl.com/38c95k3k>)

This playlist, cultivated by *A Sanctified Art*, covers a wide range of genres, themes, and musical styles. May this serve as the soundtrack for your Lenten season.

Printed copies of the Lenten Devotional and Prayer Cards are available in the Narthex. Stay connected with the CPC App for devotionals, prayers, commentary, poetry, and art connected to the Seeking resources.

Holy Week at Cary Presbyterian

Palm Sunday - April 2, 10:30 a.m.

Maundy Thursday - April 6, 7:00 p.m.

Tenebrae Service - April 7, 7:00 p.m.

Lenten Adult Faith Formation Offerings at CPC

Pastor's Class (9:15-10:15 AM Fellowship Hall)

Led by Pastor Paul

Christianity & Islam: A Study

Pastor Paul will offer a survey of Islam and Christianity in the season of Lent during his Pastor's Class on Sunday mornings. Topics will include: Presbyterian guidelines for interfaith dialogue and study, The Bible and the Qur'an, The Pillars of Islam, and more.

Coffee & Conversation (9:30-10:20 AM in High School Youth Room)

Led by Pastor Alan

This group will explore the themes of Seeking: Honest Questions for Deeper Faith using the Lenten Devotional and Daily Prayer Cards. We'll also take some time each week to connect about what's been going on in our lives lately. Coffee will be available each week.

Seeking: Lent Reflections Class (5:00-6:00 PM Parlor)

Led by Pastor Kim

The Lent Reflections group will use materials from Sanctified Art, to explore the texts of the week, devotions, and other outside resources. Sanctified Art offers us "honest questions for deeper faith," and the group will have a chance to use this time to dive into honest questions together, both from the materials and from questions that pop up for each person throughout Lent. No obligation to come every week—anyone is welcome any time!

Ongoing Adult Faith Formation offerings include:

- Adult Bible Study: Exploring the journey to the cross in Matthew's gospel on Sunday mornings in the parlor.
- Wednesday Virtual Class: **The History of Christianity** - A study using videos from the Great Courses' *History of Christianity II: From the Reformation to the Modern Megachurch*. In class videos followed by discussion.

Offerings for Children and Youth

Sunday Morning Classes (9:30-10:20 AM)

Regular Sunday morning classes for preschoolers and children will use materials from *A Sanctified Art* "Seeking: Honest Questions for a Deeper Faith" following along with the weekly themes for worship. The lessons include variety of ways to connect- telling the story with visual and tangible materials, providing space for curiosity and wonder, and engaging further through crafts and games.

Children's Time During Worship

This time will also connect the children to the Seeking weekly themes and will include bible stories and children's books. Children's Bulletins will also be available.

Youth Lenten Conversation on Mondays 3:00-4:00 PM

Youth are invited to join Alan at the Starbucks in MacGregor Village (101 Edinburgh S Dr, Cary, NC 27511) for a weekly discussion of the Daily Devotional Cards. We'll pick a question each week to explore together.



Lenten Spiritual Formation Offerings

Wonder Wall in the Narthex

You are invited to engage with the themes/questions each week. Questions will also be posted on the FB page for those who wish to interact at home.

Seeking Art Installation

Visio Divina, Latin for “divine seeing,” is a method of meditation, reflection, and prayer through a process of intentional seeing. We invite you to engage with pieces of art by various artists provided by A Sanctified Art. These will be displayed in worship, and will remain in the Sanctuary/Narthex, along with Artist Statements that provide theological reflections on their process creating these works. They can also be found in the Seeking Lenten Devotional.

Labyrinth Walking

As the days grow longer and warmer, we invite you to walk the outdoor labyrinth on the church grounds. During Holy Week, the indoor labyrinth will also be available in the Fellowship Hall.

Today's Worship Service Participants

Ministers: Rev. Dr. Paul H. Lang, Pastor Kim Rubish

Music Director: Ed Yasick

Choir: Chancel Choir

Ushers: Jane Dunbar, Audrey Sausman

Tech: John Campbell, Ian Dunbar

Slides: Su Johnson

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