

ASH WEDNESDAY

February 17th, 2021

Prelude: ***With These Ashes*** G. Chiusano/Hochman/M. Chiusano
 Recording provided to YouTube by The Orchard Enterprises
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KORMTrG1vk>

CALL TO WORSHIP

- † Leader (Sue): The time has come to join with Jesus as he journeys to Jerusalem.
- † **PEOPLE (EVELYN):** **Our journey is a trek inside, a march to the depths of our souls; by looking inward, Christ frees us to look outside of ourselves, to him and to the world.**
- † Leader: Lent is a time of sorrow and mourning, a time of repentance and forgiveness, a time of sackcloth and ashes.
- † **PEOPLE:** **Lent is a time to spend in prayer and reflection, in meditation and contemplation, in self-denial and God-affirmation.**
- † Leader: Jesus calls us, his friends, to go with him as he goes with us.

WORDS OF HONESTY ASKING FOR GOD'S GRACE

- † Leader (Sue): What is the truth about us, O God? It's complicated. We are made in your image, supremely good, the pinnacle of creation! And yet we are also mired in selfishness, vengefulness, resentment, lust and greed.
- † **PEOPLE (EVELYN):** **We can dream of a world where abundance is shared, where peace is a reality, where the earth is a garden, where justice is for everyone; we live in a world where abundance is hoarded by a few, where peace is shattered by violence, where the earth is threatened by pesticides and plastics, and where justice is elusive for too many.**
- † Leader: Help us to be honest with ourselves, O God, so that we can be more honest with you. Help us to see our own faults as we examine our lives, so that we can ask for your help in setting us straight.
- † **PEOPLE:** **Walk with us on this journey, O Lord Jesus, as we travel into our souls and seek to free the light that is within. Amen**

————— Silent Reflection —————

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

† Leader (Sue): Through the prophet Jeremiah, God says, “With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back; I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path, in which they shall not stumble.” In Jesus Christ, our paths are made straight, and our feet shall stumble no more.

† **PEOPLE (EVELYN): Thanks be to God, who gives us forgiveness in Jesus Christ.**

Song of Grace

O God, How We Have Wandered

Hassler

1. O God, how we have wandered and hidden from your face;
In foolishness have squandered your legacy of grace.
But how, in exile dwelling, we turn with fear and shame,
As distant but compelling, you call us each by name.

2. And now at length discerning the evil that we do,
By faith we are returning with hope and trust in you..
In haste you come to meet us, and home rejoicing bring,
In gladness there to greet us with calf and robe and ring.

3. O God of all the living, both banished and restored,
Compassionate, forgiving, our peace and hope assured.
Grant now that our transgressing, our faithlessness may cease.
Stretch out your hand in blessing, in pardon, and in peace.

(Kevin Nichols, 1980; alt.)

Readings

First Reading

Job 42: 1-6

Then Job replied to the LORD: “I know that you can do all things; no purpose of yours can be thwarted. You asked, ‘Who is this that obscures my plans without knowledge?’ Surely I spoke of things I did not understand, things too wonderful for me to know. You said, ‘Listen now, and I will speak; I will question you, and you shall answer me.’ I had heard of you with the hearing of the ear, but now my eyes have seen you. Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes.”

Readings (continued)**Second Reading (read by Pastor Allan) Psalm 51: 1-17***A Psalm of David, when the prophet Nathan came to him, after he had gone to Bathsheba*

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you alone have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment. Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me. You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart. Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you. Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased. The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Gospel Reading Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-21

Jesus said, "Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Parent 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 Parent 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 Parent who is in secret; and your Parent 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 Parent who is in secret; and your Parent 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.

Homily**A Broken and Contrite Heart**

Pastor Allan Lane

Hymn of Reflection***Teach Me, O Lord, Your Holy Way***

Anon.

1. Teach me, O Lord, your holy way, and give me an obedient mind,
That in your service I may find my heart's delight from day to day.

2. Help me, O Savior, here to trace the sacred footsteps you have trod;
and fully trusting in my God, to grow in goodness, truth, and grace.

4. Bless me in every task I face, begun, continued, done for you;
Fulfill your will in all I do, and grant me your abundant grace.

(William Matson, 1866; alt.)

OFFERING OF ASHES

† ALLAN: Jeremiah the prophet wrote "O my poor people, put on sackcloth, and roll in ashes; make mourning as for an only child, most bitter lamentation." Here are the ashes of repentance and mourning. (Prepares ashes)

† **PEOPLE (EVELYN): Thanks be to God. Amen.**

LITURGY OF THE ASHES

† Leader (Sue): The ashes we have before us represent the burdens of our lives: the sin that constrains us, the guilt that enshrouds us, the worry that afflicts us, the troubles of our age that encumber us.

† **PEOPLE (EVELYN): We hand them over to Christ, who will bear them away. He marks us with his sign and frees us to be his people.**

† Leader: Let us take up our cross and carry it on our foreheads, disciples of Christ marked as belonging to him forever. Amen

RESPONSE AFTER RECEIVING THE ASHES

† LEADER (SUE): The journey has begun with the ashes of repentance.

† **PEOPLE (EVELYN): The journey has begun with the promise of healing.**

† LEADER: The journey may be long, and the journey may be dangerous.

† **PEOPLE: The journey may be long, but we have Christ with us; we bear his sign on our foreheads.**

† LEADER: The ashes will wash away, as our sins were washed away in baptism. But the sign of Christ has marked us as his own, now and forever. Amen

HOLY COMMUNION

- **Words of Institution**
- **Prayer of Consecration**
- **The Invitation**
- **Receiving the Bread and Cup**

Closing Song

O Jesus, I Have Promised

Mann

1. O Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;
remain forever near me, my Savior and my Friend:
I shall not fear life's struggles if you are by my side,
nor wander from the pathway if you will be my guide.
2. O let me hear you speaking in accents clear and still,
above the storms of passion, the murmurs of self-will!
O speak to reassure me, to hasten or control!
O speak, and make me listen, O guardian of my soul!
3. O Jesus, you have promised to all who follow you
that where you are in glory your servant shall be, too;
And, Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;
O give me grace to follow my Savior and my Friend.
(John E. Bode, 1868; alt.)

Benediction

Postlude

Theme from Days of Heaven

Morricone

Special Thanks

READERS — EVELYN SEAGER & SUE MAIER

SLIDE RUNNER — KATE KLONOWSKI

ZOOM HOST — SUE MAIER

