

Little Falls United Methodist Church

Ash Wednesday Worship

February 22, 2023

7:00 PM



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*A Welcoming Community of Faith, Hope, Mission
& Outreach sharing Christ's love since 1825.*

*Ash Wednesday emphasizes a dual encounter. We encounter our own mortality,
and we encounter God through confessing our sins within the community of faith.*

Online Worship

Website: www.littlefallsumc.org

YouTube: www.youtube.com/channel/UCOzxLc7UQjeMNprjm9u8gtQ

You can join Online Worship using your home phone or cell phone.

Call 646-876-9923; enter the Meeting ID 917 9067 6301; and enter the Passcode 139139.

GATHERING & PRAISE

PRELUDE

WELCOME

‡CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: From dust you have come,

All: And to dust you shall return.

Leader: But about that day or hour

All: No one knows.

Leader: Not even the angels in heaven,

All: Nor the Son, but only the Father. Lord of all, we submit ourselves to your merciful care this day.

OPENING PRAYER

Ash Wednesday

UMH 353

All: O God, maker of everything 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.

‡OPENING HYMN *Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days* UMH 269

Lord who throughout these forty days
For us did fast and pray
Teach us with You to mourn our sins
And close by You to stay

As You with Satan did contend
And did the victory win
O give us strength in You to fight
In You to conquer sin

As You did hunger and did thirst
So teach us gracious Lord
To die to self and so to live
By Your most holy word

And thro' these days of penitence
And thro' Your passion tide
Forevermore in life and death
O Lord with us abide
Abide with us that through this life
Of doubts and hope and pain
As Easter of unending joy

We may at last attain

LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Pastor: Merciful Savior, open our hearts and minds by the power of your Holy Spirit, and wherever we need You most this holy night, enter in and change us, we pray. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Isaiah 58:1-12

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 want God on their side.

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 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 lose the bonds of injustice, to undo the straps 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.

RESPONSIVE READING Psalm 51:1-17 UMH 785

Prayer for Cleansing and Pardon

¹ Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;
**according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.**

² Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin.

- 3 For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.**
- 4 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.
- 5 Behold, I was born iniquity, and I have
been sinful since my mother conceived me.**
- 6 You desire truth in the inward being;
therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.
- 7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.**
- 8 Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.
- 9 Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.**
- 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and put a new and right spirit within me.
- 11 Do not cast me away from your presence,
and do not take your holy spirit from me.**
- 12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and sustain in me a willing spirit.
- 13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will return to you.**
- 14 Deliver me from bloodshed, O God,
O God of my salvation,
and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.
- 15 O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare your praise.**
- 16 For you have no delight in sacrifice;
if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.
- 17 The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.**

‡GOSPEL LESSON **Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21**

Concerning Almsgiving

6 “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.

2 “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. 3 But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Concerning Prayer

5 “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. 6 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.

Concerning Fasting

16 “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. 17 But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 18 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.

Concerning Treasures

19 “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

MESSAGE ***Remember Where You Are From*** **Rev. Jin Kook Kim**

Good evening, Church Family! We gathered here for Ash Wednesday Service. Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent. And Lent is the season that we remember Jesus’ death, suffering, and grace. I am glad that you are here. I believe you are here to give yourselves to God remembering Jesus’ love and grace that he showed us on the cross and in our lives. This evening, I pray that all of us find the meaning of Lent and consider how we can observe the Lenten season for our spiritual growth.

My three kids go to a Korean school every Saturday. They learn the Korean language, culture, and history at the Korean school. My wife and I intentionally let them learn the Korean language, culture, and history because we believe that they can see their roots as Korean from what they learn. One day, one of them asked us, “Daddy, am I Korean or American.” I said you are Korean American because you were born in the U.S. and have been here but daddy and Mommy came from Korea. You have both American citizenship and Korean citizenship. You are special!” They learn English, culture, and history at school. They can find their roots as Americans from what they learn from school. Our root is our identity. Our root is the foundation of our being. Our roots teach us where we are from and how to live. We let our kids go to a Korean school because that is a good opportunity for them to see their roots as Korean as they see their roots as American in their regular schools.

It is very important for us to see and know our roots. You would know and learn your family history, culture, and tradition. You would keep them in your lives because those are your roots and your roots are important.

It is very important for us to know our roots as Christians. What are our roots? Where are we from? We are from God. We are created in God’s image. So, we are precious and invaluable to God. We are God’s beloved children because God loves us so much. Lent helps us to remind ourselves of our roots that we are God’s beloved children as God showed us through Jesus on

the cross. Our root is that we are saved by God through Jesus' sacrificial love. We turned away from God for our own things. We committed sins before God. We were sinners and we were going to death. A part of our roots is that we were sinners before God who should confess our sins and ask God's forgiveness. We should put ashes on us to repent our sins. That is why we put ashes on our heads today as a sign of our repentance for our sins and our confession that we are sinners. Lent is the time for us to remember that we were sinners. We betrayed God and turned away from God. We hurt God's heart by committing sins in our lives. And we were going to death.

Another part of our root is that we are saved by God. Although we betrayed God by committing sins before God, God still loved us and saved us through Jesus' sacrificial love on the cross. God sacrificed God's only Son, Jesus Christ to save us. Jesus sacrificed himself to save us, enduring pain, suffering, mockery, and death. When we were drowning, Jesus held our hands and pull us up as Jesus pulled Peter when he was drowning. Lent is the time for us to remember that we are saved by God through Jesus Christ. We were saved by God's love and grace.

Little Falls Church family,

We know that knowing and remembering our roots is important. Lent is a great time and opportunity for us to remember our roots, where we are from. We are from God and we shall return to God. We could not return to God because of our sins. However, our gracious and merciful God saved us to return to God through Jesus Christ on the cross. Let us remember our roots, where we are from. Let us remember we were sinners who betrayed God and turned away from God. Let us remember our roots that we should put ashes on us to repent our sins. Let us remember our roots that we are saved by God through Jesus Christ. Jesus sacrificed himself to save us paying a great cost. How can we remember our roots? What would be the best way to remember our roots rather than forget everything and go back to the previous life, the life before we were saved?

There would be many ways to remember our roots. Please consider what would be the best ways for you to remember your roots as Christians. To remember our roots as Christians, I would like to suggest meditating on the cross, Jesus' cross, holding the stone, and looking at the cross on the stone as often as you can during the Lenten season. Holding the stone and looking at the cross, say in your heart, "I was a sinner once but God saved me." To remember our roots, I also would like to suggest joining Sunday Worship, the Lenten Study, and Special Worship services because we will consider the meaning of Jesus' cross through the sermon series, "Witness on the cross," for the next six Sundays, and the Lenten study, "Luke" and the messages for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday service. You can also practice spiritual disciplines such as fasting, praying, reading the Bible and Christian literature, helping others, etc. Please put your heart into the discipline when you practice them as we read the scripture. God knows if we put our hearts on them or not. God sees our hearts.

Church family, let us remember our roots. Let us remember where we are from. Remembering our roots will be a firm foundation for our faith journey and our lives. Remember: We are God's beloved children. We were sinners once, but God saved us through Jesus Christ. Amen.

REFLECTION HYMN

Just as I Am, Without One Plea

UMH 357

Just as I am without one plea,

but that thy blood was shed for me,
and that thou bidst me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am and waiting not
to rid my soul of one dark blot,
to thee whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am though tossed about
with many a conflict, many a doubt,
fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind;
sight, riches, healing of the mind,
yea, all I need in Thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
because thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, thy love unknown
hath broken every barrier down;
now, to be thine, yea Thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (from the UM Book of Worship)

Pastor: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world. Most Merciful God, we are children of dust and unworthy of the favors and goodness you shower upon us. We have not loved you as you have loved us, nor have we lived as we ought, and our years are soon gone.

All: O God, have mercy upon us.

Pastor: Lift us above every past regret and present failure; reveal to us our true selves. Give us grace to accept your mercy, and the courage to live by your promises.

All: Grant us your forgiveness and peace. We have no other hope, except in You. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Pastor: God's love is never ending. God is always present with and for us. As we journey through the days of Lent, may we come to know even more completely the depth and wideness of God's love. In the love of Christ, you are forgiven.

All: In the love of Christ, you are also forgiven. Amen.

THE LENTEN ASHES

Silent Prayer of Preparation and the Lord's Prayer

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

‡ THE ASHES & THE CROSS & THANKSGIVING

‡CLOSING HYMN

Amazing Grace

UMH 378

Verse 1

Amazing grace how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost but now am found
Was blind but now I see

Verse 2

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear
And grace my fears relieved
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed

Verse 3

The Lord has promised good to me
His Word my hope secures
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures

Verse 4

Through many dangers toils and snares
I have already come
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far
And grace will lead me home

Verse 5

Yea when this flesh and heart shall fail
And mortal life shall cease
I shall possess within the veil

A life of joy and peace

Verse 6

When we've been there ten thousand years
Bright shining as the sun
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first begun

‡SENDING FORTH

Pastor: O God of our salvation, as we go forth into this season of repentance and reflection, of turning and returning, may we trust in your mercy, seek Christ's reign in our lives, and rely upon the Spirit's power.

***All: Through Jesus Christ, who is the path to forgiveness and new life, we pray.
Amen.***

‡POSTLUDE

‡ All who are able, please stand.