

Welcome!

First Congregational Church of Webster Groves
United Church of Christ



Seek Christ in each. Serve God in all.

MARCH 2, 2022
ASH WEDNESDAY



We respond to God's call by welcoming everyone regardless of ability, age, ethnicity, race, gender identity, sexual orientation or socio-economic background.

To proclaim in word and deed the love of Christ, we affirm that all may share in the full life, ministry, fellowship, responsibilities and blessing of our congregation.

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

Order of Worship

An asterisk () indicates that worshipers are invited to stand in body or in spirit.*

*We are requiring that everyone wear a mask in the sanctuary and the halls
at First Congregational Church.*

PRELUDE

GREETING

Rev. David Denoon, *Pastor*

*CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive – Liturgist; **People**)

Rev. Denoon

Come, you who are toiling, you who are bound-up;
Come, Liberating God, hear our cries for mercy!
Come, you who are lost, you who are hopeless;
Come, Redeeming Christ, turn us to your light!
Come, you who are angry, you who are hurting;
Come, Cleansing Spirit, enter into our hearts!
Come, for confession, for forgiveness, for restoration!
Come, O Holy One, free us, heal us, bless us!

*HYMN

Sunday's Palms Are Wednesday's Ashes

Rae E. Whitney

Sunday's palms are Wednesday's ashes as another Lent begins;
Thus we kneel before our Maker in contrition for our sins.
We have marred baptismal pledges, in rebellion gone astray;
Now, returning, seek forgiveness; grant us pardon, God, this day!

We have failed to love our neighbors, their offenses to forgive,
Have not listened to their troubles, nor have cared just how they live,
We are jealous, proud, impatient, loving overmuch our things;
May the yielding of our failings be our Lenten offerings.

We are hasty to judge others, blind to proof of human need;
And our lack of understanding demonstrates our inner greed;
We have wasted earth's resources; want and suffering we've ignored;
Come and cleanse us, then restore us; make new hearts within us, Lord!

RITUAL OF APPROACH

Call to Confession

Rev. Merrimon Boyd

Confession of Sin (Responsive)

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.**

You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

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

Administration of Ashes

Rev. Denoon

Individuals are invited to come forward and to receive ashes either on their forehead or the back of their hand, according to their preference. Participation is voluntary.

Musical Meditation

Jesus, Remember Me

J. Berthier (Taizé)

The congregation is invited to sing the phrase, "Jesus remember me when you come into your kingdom," while ashes are administered.

Words of Assurance (Responsive)

Rev. Boyd

Create in us clean hearts, O God, and put new and right spirits within us.

Restore to us the joy of your salvation, and sustain in us willing spirits.

Purge us, and we shall be clean; wash us, and we shall be purer than snow.

O God of our salvation, our tongues will sing aloud of your deliverance.

THE WORD SHARED

Halley Kim, *Pastoral Assistant*

From the Gospels

Matthew 6:1-6, 9-13, 16-18

NRSV, ad.

Jesus said, "Beware of practicing your justness before other people in order to be seen by them; surely, for then you have no reward from your Creator in heaven.

"So when you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before yourself, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, in order that they may be praised by other people. 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, in order that your alms may be secret; and your Creator who sees in secret will reward you.

"And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, in order that they may be seen by other people. Truly I tell you, they have received their recompense.

"But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Creator who is in secret; and your Creator who sees in secret will reward you.

"Pray, then, in this way:

Our Parent in heaven,

hallowed be your name.
Send your dominion.
Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And do not bring us to the time of trial,
but rescue us from the evil one.

“And when you fast, do not be sullen like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces in order 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, in order that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Creator who is in secret; and your Creator who sees in secret will reward you.”

Response.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the people.

People: Thanks be to God. Amen.

ANTHEM

Dust and Ashes Touch Our Face

Brian Wren

MEDITATION

Our Prayer

Rev. David Denoon, *Pastor*

RITUAL FOR THE SACRAMENT OF CHRIST’S TABLE

Story of the Last Supper

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Silent Prayer

Prayer of Our Savior (Unison)

Our Mother in heaven, make your name holy. Reveal your love, and teach us your way; make earth alike with heaven. Provide bread for today, so that we do not worry about tomorrow. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Keep us from things that would keep us from you, but deliver us from the evil one. For here is your love: where power and glory are shared, now and forever. Amen.

Consecration

Communion

Communion will be served in the pews, first the bread, then the cup.

Bread is gluten-free. Grape juice is red. Wine is white.

Please wait to consume each element until the invitation of the Pastor.

If this presents a hardship, please consume immediately.

**Prayer after Communion (Unison)*

Sovereign Jesus Christ, you have put your life into our hands; now we put our lives into yours. Take us, renew and remake us. What we have been is past; what we shall be, through you, still awaits. Lead us on. Take us with you. Amen.

***HYMN**

Rebuilding Starts with Weeping

Amanda Udis-Kessler

(Tune: O SACRED HEAD)

Rebuilding starts with weeping, with tears that fall like rain,
With full and honest grieving for years of loss and pain,
For suffering and sorrow that never had to be.
Rebuilding starts with weeping for all who are not free.

Rebuilding starts with loving, with care for every soul,
With yearning in compassion that all may yet be whole,
That enemy and neighbor may know a better day.
Rebuilding starts with loving, for love will show the way.

***BENEDICTION**

Benediction, a Poem

Ginny Brown-Daniel

POSTLUDE

During the Postlude, we encourage you to greet those around you safely, or to remain at your seat to enjoy the music until it has ended. In the spirit of diversity, please be attentive to the possibility that one who is seated may be meditating.

An offering plate is located on the small table in the Narthex. Donations placed there will be combined with others to purchase **sewing machines for apprentice tailors in South Sudan** being trained by the peacekeeping forces of the military of Ghana. We learned of this project from the Rev. Gershon Dotse, former member of this church and a military chaplain. Learn more at **FirstChurchWG.org/donate/south_sudan**. If donating with a check, please make it payable to "FCCWG," and write the word "Tailors" in the Memo line. You can also give electronically on the website's Donate page, selecting "Special Project" from the pulldown menu, and inserting the word "Tailors" in the Comments line.



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