



Ash Wednesday - B
February 17, 2021


Key Scripture - 2 Corinthians 6:2

"At an acceptable time I have listened to you,
and on a day of salvation I have helped you."
See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the
day of salvation!



Theme - Arise from the Ashes

Welcome and Announcements

- † Newcomers please sign our guestbook 
- † Trinity is Welcoming, Open, Inclusive and Accessible.
 - Trinity is an Affirming Congregation
 - Our church building is closed during the Stay at Home Order except in the case of urgent requirement.
 - Pick up or delivery of packages or correspondence may be made at the Choir Door, corner of Market and Russell Streets on Tuesdays and Saturdays from 9:00 to 11:00 am. Deliveries may be made at other times by arrangement.
 - Brown Bags and Blessings continues

Acknowledging Traditional Territory

Smiths Falls is located on the traditional territory of the Algonquin peoples dating back countless generations. We are grateful for our neighbours and recognize the opportunity to exercise the Ministry of Reconciliation

Introit MV 201 "I Am The Bread of Life"

I am the bread of life broken for the world,
I am the cup poured out for all.
Those who believe in me will never die.
I am the life of the world.

Call to Worship

From the shadows of isolation and shutdowns
we gather to be with our God
who brings us the light of hope.
From the silence of our homes,
we gather to be with Jesus,
who will not let anything, now or ever, separate us.
From the hunger for human touch,
we gather to be with the Spirit,
who feeds us for the Lenten journey,
who marks us as God's very own.

Opening Prayer

There are no Palms from last year
but we do bring ashes
from an overwhelming year,
from dreams suspended,
from anniversaries, birthdays, graduations, weddings, and
funerals we could not attend.
from a year of telephone prayers, prayers written in emails
and cards and a constant yearning to be with those we love.

Gentle Jesus,
Take these ashes and mingle them with the prayers of this lost
year,
to mark us with that hope which has never left us.

As we gather wherever we are,
as we hold out our hands
we offer that prayer
we have been taught -

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn 107 "Sunday's Palms Are Wednesday's Ashes"

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 neighbours, their offences to forgive,
Have not listened to their troubles, nor have cared just how they live;
We are jealous, proud, impatient, loving over-much our things;
May the yielding of our failings be our Lenten offering.

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!

Invitation to the Lenten life

Not for the first time, yet fresh once more,
we accompany Jesus to Jerusalem.
Because of his experience in the wilderness,
we discover how we might have the strength
to turn our back on evil, so we can choose good.

By his example of fasting and prayer
in the midst of serving and caring for others,
we can learn that rhythm of faithful living
which allows us to work for justice and hope,
as we draw strength from the timeless acts
of silence, feasting on the word, and prayer.

As we remember our baptism,
as we gather at the feast of grace,
as we are marked as Christ's own,
we prepare ourselves to come to God,
on this holy day.

Prayer of Reconciliation

You mark us as your own,
so we can turn from greed to generosity,
so we can move from fear to faith,
so we can stand with the oppressed and forgotten,
to ensure that the justice we take for granted is shared with
them.

You mark us as your own,
so that we might follow Jesus,
who models for us how to turn away from evil to live as
people of hope and grace. Amen.

Assurance of Blessing

Here is the good news -
God does not remain socially distant from us, but comes close
to hear our prayers,
to fill our emptiness,
to walk through the ashes of uncertainty,
to journey with us in this holiest of seasons.

In the midst of pandemic uncertainty,
we can trust in the comforting,
the forgiving,
the restoring heart of the God who loves us.

Thanks be to God! Amen

Scripture Psalm 51 (VU 776)

Refrain -

*God, I call to you for help,
In your mercy hear my prayer.*

Have mercy on me, O God in your great kindness,
in the fullness of your mercy blot out my offences.

Wash away all my guilt, and cleanse me from my sin.

**For I acknowledge my faults,
and my sin is always before me.**

Refrain -

*God, I call to you for help,
In your mercy hear my prayer.*

Against you, you only, have I sinned, and done evil in your sight,

**so that you are justified in your sentence,
and blameless in your judgement.**

Guilty I have been from my birth,
a sinner from the time of my conception.

**But you desire truth in our 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 the sounds of joy and gladness,
let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.

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

Refrain -

*God, I call to you for help,
In your mercy hear my prayer.*

Put a new heart in me, O God.

and give me again a constant spirit.

Do not cast me away from your presence,

do not take your holy spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation,

and strengthen me with a willing spirit.

**Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will return to you.**

O God, open my lips,

and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Refrain -

*God, I call to you for help,
In your mercy hear my prayer.*

You desire no sacrifice, or I would give it;

you take no delight in burnt offerings.

The sacrifice you accept, O God, is a broken spirit;

a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise

Refrain -

*God, I call to you for help,
In your mercy hear my prayer.*

Meditation "Canon In D" (Pachelbel)

Invitation to the Table

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of a season of fasting. Prior to the fast, we feast. Shrove Tuesday is such a Feast.

Today, we mark the beginning of this Fasting Season with a Spiritual Feast, a representation of Jesus Feast in the Upper Room, in which Jesus took Bread and the Cup and shared it with his Disciples. May we find in this observance the sustenance of Christ's enduring presence to abide with us in these long, lonely days.

Wherever we are found,
we are invited to this feast.

This is the Table of Grace.

It is the table which reminds us
that in the uncertainty of our lives,
God's grace has never departed.

It is the table where we are fed
by the justice, the hope, the life
which flows from the heart of Jesus.

It is the Table where every
child of God is welcome,
for here the Spirit fills us with peace and community,
even as we may be apart from one another.

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The God of ashes is with us in these moments.

And our God is with you, as well.

In the midst of our uncertain lives,
may we offer God our hearts hungering for hope.

For God has promised to fill them to overflowing.

In the silence of these days alone,
may we find the words to praise our God.

Even when the words do not come to us,
 God knows our hearts and souls.
In the pandemic of chaos, you spoke,
 chasing shadows with light,
 filling rivers and oceans with living waters,
 pouring the waters into rivers and seas,
 sowing seeds of wonder into the fields.
You shaped us out of the dust,
 giving us beauty and joy.
But we wanted more,
 clutching temptation's gifts.

In Jesus, you remind us of your great love,
 longing to keep your covenant promise.

With our sisters and brothers everywhere,
 in the silence of our loneliness
 and in the shadows of uncertainty,

 we sing songs of praise -

**In the midst of uncertainty, your presence is constant.
In our isolation, you are by our side.
In every change, you abide.**

All glory and praise is due to you.

Your never-failing love is sealed upon our hearts
 as we continue to walk through uncertainty,
 as we would be marked with ashes
 we remember that mystery known as faith -

**Christ came to us,
Christ was raised for us,
Christ will bring us to new life.**

Now, at the Table of grace and life,
we pray you would pour out your Spirit,
not only on the gifts of the feast,
but on your people,
wherever we may be in this moment.

Like our dreams and hopes this past year,
the bread is broken and offered to us.
We pray that it might strengthen us
that we might continue to serve
the most lonely in our midst:
neighbors who grieve and
people struggling with injustice.

In these moments we are given
the cup which overflows with grace, so that we might
see you in our lives,
feel you holding our hands,
trust that you are bringing healing and hope.

And when this pandemic becomes history,
when we can once again gather
with our sisters and brothers around
the glad feast of hope and life,
we will sing your praises over and over,
God in Community, Holy in One. Amen.

Hymn MV 106 "I Am The Dream"

I am the dream and you the dreamer.
I am the song and you are the rhyme.
You are the tune sung in ev'ry silence.
You are the now in the endless stream of time.

I am the bell and you the silence.
You are the yearning I cannot curtail.
I am the blest and you the blessing.
You are the wilds in which I lose my trail.

You are the word and I the echo.
You are the leader and I am the led.
You are the joy and I the laughter.
You are the rock on which I lay my head.

Imposition of the ashes

By the grace of our God
who has been with us in every moment,
we can take the ashes of last year,
both real as well as metaphorical
mixing them with the oil of grace
so that we can touch our heads, our hands,
our hearts, our souls, our hopes;
reminding us that, from the dust
of a year which has passed by us,
God touches us with the gifts
of reconciliation and hope
of justice and restoration
of generosity and grace-filled hearts,
so that we might once again, and always,
live as the people God longs for us to become.

Hymn 105 "Dust And Ashes Touch Our Face"

Dust and ashes touch our face,
mark our failure and our falling.
Holy Spirit, come, walk with us tomorrow,
take us as disciples,
washed and wakened by your calling.

Refrain-

***Take us by the hand and lead us, lead us through the desert sands,
bring us living water, Holy Spirit, come.***

Dust and ashes soil our hands --
greed of market, pride of nation.
Holy Spirit, come, walk with us tomorrow,
as we pray and struggle
through the meshes of oppression.

Refrain-

***Take us by the hand and lead us, lead us through the desert sands,
bring us living water, Holy Spirit, come.***

Dust and ashes choke our tongue
in the wasteland of depression.
Holy Spirit, come, walk with us tomorrow.
through all gloom and grieving
to the paths of resurrection.

Refrain-

***Take us by the hand and lead us, lead us through the desert sands,
bring us living water, Holy Spirit, come.***

Prayer

May we never forget that,
 though we are dust and will return to dust,
That through the Cross
 God continues to create life and hope
 from the dust of the stars, as well as us. Amen.

Hymn 111 "As The Sun With Longer Journey"

As the sun with longer journey melts the winter's snow and ice,
 With its slowly growing radiance warms the seed beneath the earth,
May the sun of Christ's uprising gently bring our hearts to life.

Through the days of waiting, watching in the desert of our sin,
 Searching on the far horizon for a sign of cloud or wind,
We await the healing waters of our Saviour's victory.

Praise be given to the Maker of the seasons' yearly round:
 To the Speaker through the Spoken in their living Breath of love
As the ever turning seasons roll to their eternal rest.

Benediction

This Ash Wednesday,
 we bear the smudges of uncertainty,
 yet we will still trust in God's promises.

This Ash Wednesday,
 we may share the Feast by ourselves,
 yet we will join the Host at the Table
 in caring for the vulnerable.

This Ash Wednesday, we may continue
 to journey into an unknown future,
 yet we will do so in faith
 and with the Spirit who lights the way.

Choral Amen

Postlude "Amazing Grace"