

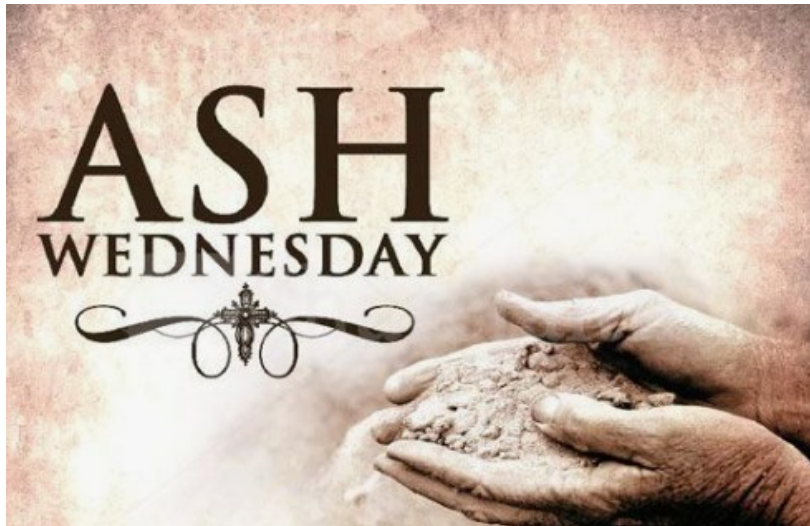
ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

February 22, 2023

Spirit of the Wilderness Episcopal &

First Congregational, UCC

Grand Marais, MN



Ash Wednesday

Receive this cross of ash upon your brow,
Brought from the burning of Palm Sunday's cross.

The forests of the world are burning now
And you make late repentance for the loss.
But all the trees of God would clap their hands
The very stones themselves would shout and sing
If you could covenant to love these lands
And recognize in Christ their Lord and king.
He sees the slow destruction of those trees,
He weeps to see the ancient places burn,
And still you make what purchases you please,
And still to dust and ashes you return.
But Hope could rise from ashes even now
Beginning with this sign upon your brow.

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Words to Enter Worship

We gather in the dimness of evening to be with the God who brightens the shadows of our lives.

We gather in the quiet of this place to be with Jesus, knowing that nothing past, present or future separates us.

We gather to be marked as disciples to be fed for the journey through Lent, to be sealed by the Spirit as God's own.

Opening Hymn – #207 Just as I Am

- 1 Just as I am, without one plea,
but that thy blood was shed for me,
and that you called inviting me,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.
- 2 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.
- 3 Just as I am, you will receive,
will welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
because your promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.
- 4 Just as I am, your love unknown
has broken evert barrier down;
Now to be yours, and yours alone,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Litany of Penitence

Response:

One: Lord have mercy

Many: Christ have mercy

Prayer of Lament

One: Let us come into prayer.

All: Merciful God, we gather as the body of Christ aware that we have not always done our best to follow Jesus in proclaiming the kingdom; healing people, our communities, and the world; and working for justice. We acknowledge that our actions and words too often focus on our own comfort and our well-being. We confess that our hearts and minds do not reflect your love and light as well as they should. Be with us, O LORD, this evening, be with us and restore our hearts and community. Bind us together with sighs too

deep for human words offered by your Spirit. Send us with renewed conviction and faith to be your people, blessed and blessing the world.

One: Be still and know that there is a God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.

Many: **We come to be still and listen, filled with love and compassion, preparing ourselves to be salt, light, and leaven.**

One: Lord have Mercy

Many: **Christ have mercy**

Time of Silence

Scripture Reading Genesis 3:19

by the sweat of your face, you will eat bread—
until you return to the fertile land,
since from it you were taken;
you are earth,
to the earth you will return.”

Matthew 4:1-11

4 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. **2** He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. **3** The tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” **4** But he answered, “It is written, ‘One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’ ”

5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, **6** saying to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, ‘He will command his angels concerning you,’ and ‘On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’ ”

7 Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ”

8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, **9** and he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.”

10 Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! for it is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.’ ”

11 Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

Meditation

Temptation

Imposition of Ashes

Those who wish to have ashes may come to Pastor Enno or Vicar Mary Ellen

Response and Prayers

Evening prayer:

**You wait on this evening, Patient God, for us to come back:
to stop going away from you on our self-focused travels;
to set aside our empty fears;
to cease shaping you in our image,
so we can discover you closer than we ever dared imagine.**

You wait for us this night, Companion of our hearts, for us to follow once more:

**The dust of life: leaving the shuttered corners of our lives;
refusing to go from one failed promise to another;
coming out of the panic rooms we have built in our souls,
so you can take us by the hand to lead us to resurrection life.**

You wait in scattered ashes of our lives, Spirit of silence, for us to find you:

so you can embrace us with joy and hope in every moment

Invitation to Lenten Journey

Closing Hymn #286: Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness

Refrain:

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness
Blow through the wilderness
Calling and free
Sprit, Spirit of restlessness
Stir me from placidness, wind
Wind on the sea

1. You moved on the waters
You called to the deep
Then you coaxed up the mountains
From the valleys of sleep
And over the eons
You called to each thing
Awake from your slumbers
And rise on your wings

Refrain

2. You swept through the desert
You stung with the sand
And you goaded your people
With a law and a land
And when they were blinded
With idols and lies
Then you spoke to your prophets
To open their eyes

Refrain

3. You sang in a stable
You cried from a hill
Then you whispered in silence
When the whole world was still
And down in the city
You called once again
When you blew through your people
On the rush of the wind

Refrain

4. You call from tomorrow
You break ancient schemes
From the bondage of sorrow
All the captives dream dreams
Our women see visions
Our men clear their eyes
With bold new decisions
Your people arise

Refrain

Benediction

Lent Series-- Building Hope

March 1— Ignatian Examen

Psalm 19, 63, 83, 101, 139

March 8— Cultivating gratitude

Psalm 8, 33, 36, 47, 67, 95, 145

March 15-- Prayer as reframing Ways to pray

Psalm 23, 88, 92, 122, 148

March 22—Finding vulnerability vs. defensiveness

Psalm 4, 17, 46, 133, 140

March 29—Learning to love our enemies

Psalm 27, 37, 56, 137

We will gather at 6:00 pm each Wednesday night in the Fellowship Hall.