

✠ ENTRANCE ✠

For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.
(Matthew 18:20^{NRSV})



Prelude

***Opening Prayer**

***Call to Worship (Responsively)**

Return to God with all your heart, mind, and soul.

We turn our hearts to you, O God.

Return to this season called Lent - a season of fasting and prayer, reflection and introspection.

We turn our thoughts to you, O God.

Return to yourself, and to the treasure that is Christ living within you.

We turn our souls to you, O God.

Turning and returning, with heart, mind, and soul wide open,

Let us worship the God of love.

***Confession of Sins (in Unison)**

Our hearts are heavy when we turn away from you. We weep for the sins that separate us from love and from one another. We mourn for the lost innocence of lives gone astray. Lighten our hearts, O God. Cleanse our lives with your mercy, that our hearts may be restored and our lives reclaimed by your forgiveness and grace. In Christ's name, we pray.

***Words of Assurance**

This is the true treasure: Hearts that belong to God; Christ, who holds our hearts; and God, who holds our lives in the very heart of holiness. May your hearts be light, dear friends, for in the name of Christ, we are forgiven and made new!

Opening Hymn

"Holy, Holy, Holy"

#68 BH

✠ PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD ✠

Old Testament Reading

Psalms 51:1-17;

Gospel Reading

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21;

PREPARING FOR ASH WEDNESDAY AND FOR LENT.

✠ RESPONSE TO THE WORD ✠

***Hymn**

"Are You Washed in the Blood"

#229 BH

Concerns and Prayers/Lord's Prayer

***Affirmation of Faith**

Apostles' Creed

***Response**

"Glory Be to the Father"

Call to the Imposition of Ashes

As you are ready, come forward to receive a blessing of ashes. May these ashes be a symbol of our willingness to put to death all the things that are killing us. From the ashes, receive anew God's Easter promise of mercy and love.

Thanksgiving over the Ashes

Merciful God,

you ask us to mend our hearts, not our clothing. In the dust of these ashes, we come face-to-face with the shortcomings of our own humanity. Help us resist the temptation to wash away the dust, for we know that it was from the dust itself that you created us. Wash our hearts and mark us with ashes on the outside, that we might be made clean on the inside. Amen.

IMPOSITION OF ASHES (People are invited forward to receive the sign of the cross in ashes)

"Repent, believe the Gospel and be reconciled to God."

"For dust you are and to dust you shall return."

✠ SENDING FORTH ✠

***Closing Hymn**

"The Old Rugged Cross"

#230 BH

***Benediction**

**With hearts renewed, with lives restored,
we go forth to love and renew God's world.**

Amen

Postlude

