

First Congregational United Church of Christ

March 5, 2025

Ash Wednesday

Full
to
the
Brim

*With all
that you
are*



THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

March 5, 2025 7:00 PM

Ash Wednesday Worship led by the Confirmands and the Sanctuary Choir

PRELUDE

Prelude in B Minor from Notebook for Wilhelm Friedemann Bach

J.S. Bach

Transcribed by Alexander Siloti (1863-1945)

Dr. Nathan Birkholz, *piano*

RINGING OF THE BELL

WELCOME AND GREETING

INTROIT

Remember that You Are Dust

Mark Mummert (b. 1965)

Introduced by the Sanctuary Choir and **repeated several times by All**

The musical notation is written on a single treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It consists of two lines of music. The first line begins with a first ending bracket labeled '1*' over the first two measures, and a second ending bracket labeled '2' over the last two measures. The lyrics are: 'Re - mem - ber that you are dust, and to'. The second line of music continues the melody and ends with a double bar line. The lyrics are: 'dust you shall re - turn.'

**Please rise in body or spirit.*

*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Even now, declares the Lord, return to me with all your heart."
Roll up your sleeves. Let down your guard.

All: Come in from the storm.

One: Make yourself at home.

All: Pull up to the table.

One: Release the tension in your jaw. Take a deep breath.
Return to God with all your heart.

All: May it be so.

***OPENING HYMN**

Lord Jesus, Who Through Forty Days

ST. FLAVIAN

1 Lord Je - sus, who through for - ty days for us did fast and pray,
2 As you with Sa - tan did con-tend, and did the vic-tory win,
3 And through these days of pen - i - tence, and through this Pas-sion - tide,
4 A - bide with us, till when this life of suf - fering shall be past,

Teach us with you to mourn our sins, and close by you to stay.
O give us strength to per - se - vere, in you to con-quer sin.
Yes, ev - er - more, in life and death, O Christ, with us a - bide.
An Eas - ter of un - end - ing joy we may at - tain at last.

Unflagging in her zeal for religious education of children, Claudia F. I. Hernaman wrote some 150 hymns. This one appeared in her Child's Book of Praise (1873).

Tune: ST. FLAVIAN C.M.
Day's The Whole Booke of Psalms, 1562

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**All: Holy God, we confess: we don't return to you fully.
We share with you the pieces of our lives that are convenient.
We put on different hats in different rooms.
We forget that we are called, invited, and loved with all that we are –
including our mess, our beauty, our faith, and our doubt.
Forgive us, and give us hearts that long to return.**

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

**One: Friends, God sees you. God hears you. God loves you. You are forgiven and
claimed with all that you are. Rest in that good news.**

All: Thanks be to God, Amen.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM 51

Bargo and Delmonte, arr. Navarro

Refrain introduced by the Choir and **then repeated by All**

Stanzas (page 4) sung by cantors and choir

Sanctuary Choir, cantors, and full congregation

Refrain Gm6 Cm6/G E^bmaj7 Dm B^b/D

Have mer - cy on * me, O God, in your kind-ness.

Cm7/E^b Gm Cm/A Dsus D

In your com - pas - sion, blot out my of-fense.

Gm6 Cm6/G E^bmaj7 Dm B^b/D

Wash me, O God, from the stain of my guilt,

Cm/A Dsus D Gm *Fine*

and cleanse me from my sin.

*My offences truly I know them. My sin is always before me.
Against you alone have I sinned, what is evil in your sight I have done.*

Refrain

*Create in me a pure heart; put a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from your presence, nor deprive me of your Spirit.*

Refrain

*Defend me, O God, my Savior. My tongue shall sing out your goodness.
O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.*

Refrain

BRIEF MEDITATION *"Lasting Treasure"*

Pastor Nick Hatch

SCRIPTURE READING Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

"Beware of practicing your righteousness before others in order to be seen by them, for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. "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. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you." 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. 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." And whenever you fast, do not look somber, like the hypocrites, for they mark their faces 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, 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. "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

MUSICAL REFLECTION

Jesus, Priceless Treasure

J. Cruger, harm. J. S. Bach

Sanctuary Choir

*Jesus, priceless treasure, perfect, joyful leisure, jewel, bright and true:
how my heart has fretted, my desire so whetted, longing after you!
Lamb of God, my own betrothed, nothing in this life so moves me,
holds me gently, soothes me.*

*You provide my refuge from the driving deluge of the devil's band.
Let the tempter trail me, enemies assail me, Jesus is at hand!
When the rain of fear and pain, when the storms of hell beset me,
Jesus will protect me.*

*Quiet, fears and sadness, for the Lord of gladness, Jesus enters in.
Sickness, death, and mourning, love of God transforming,
gives sweet peace within.
I have borne this worldly scorn, yet in grief I find my treasure,
Jesus, perfect pleasure.*

SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

THANKSGIVING OVER THE ASHES

BREAKING THE BREAD AND POURING THE WINE

ASHES & COMMUNION

*As we join together in singing the congregational songs, please come forward to receive
communion and the imposition of ashes imposed by yourself or a pastor.
You are welcome to receive only communion if you wish.*

CONGREGATIONAL SONGS (as needed)

Dust and Ashes Touch Our Face

DUST AND ASHES

Stanzas sung by choir or cantors; **Refrains sung by All**

Refrain:

Take us by the hand and lead us, lead us through the de - sert sands,
bring us li - ving wa - ter, Ho - ly Spi - rit, come.

*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

*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

*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

Hymn #197 - Lord Have Mercy

DOMINE DEUS

Sung several times by All

Lord, have mer-cy, Lord, have mer-cy, Lord, have mer-cy on us.
(hum)

Sung several times by All

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'O Lord, Hear My Prayer'. It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are: 'O Lord, hear my prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer, when I call an - swer me. O Lord, hear my prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer. Come and lis - ten to me.' The score ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

UNISON PRAYER AFTER IMPOSITION

Merciful God, this night we bow our heads before you, our brows marked with the ashes that betray our origins as creatures of dust. We were destined to be dust, but you intervened on our behalf. There are no words to thank you for such love. Grant us strength to live lives worthy of such grace. With the cross as a sign, help us love one another as you have loved us, striving for the protection and redemption of all people. In the name of Christ, Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN

I Want Jesus to Walk with Me

SOJOURNER

1 I want Je - sus to walk with me;
2 In my tri - als, Lord, walk with me; walk with
3 When I'm in trou - ble, Lord, walk with me;

I want Je - sus to walk with me;
me; in my tri - als, Lord, walk with me; walk with
when I'm in trou - ble, Lord, walk with me;

me; all a - long my pil - grim jour - ney,
when my heart is al - most break - ing,
when my head is bowed in sor - row,

Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me.
Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me. walk with me.
Lord, I want Je - sus to walk with me.

(If you would like to make an offering as part of your spiritual Lenten practices you are welcome to place the offering in the plates as you exit the sanctuary. Or you can visit our webpage and click "Give" to make your weekly offering, or text FCUCC GIVE to 73256.)

***UNISON BENEDICTION**

We believe in an expansive love that healed the sick, welcomed the children, and saw this world as it could be. We believe that that expansive love runs over the edges of our lives, smoothing our rough places, and pulling us home. We call that expansive love Yaweh and Mother God, Jesus and Divine Creator. Thanks be to God for a Love like that. Amen.

Please depart in silence.

TONIGHT'S WORSHIP LEADERS

Pastor Nick Hatch, *Co-Pastor*

Pastor Katherine Willis Pershey, *Co-Pastor*

2024-25 Confirmation Class

Dr. Nathan Birkholz, *organist*

Sanctuary Choir with cantors

John M. Albrecht, *Director for Music Ministries*

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Full to the Brim

The scriptures for this Lenten season are filled with parables and promises of God's abundant and expansive grace. Jesus as a mother hen, a prodigal son welcomed home, a fig tree nurtured with care and hope, precious oil poured out lovingly and



freely, stones shouting out with praise — these sacred texts are brimming with a gospel of grace. We've done nothing to deserve or earn this grace, and yet, like water, it spills over.

Full to the Brim is the theme of our Lenten worship as well as the Lenten Devotionals that are available in the narthex for daily prayer. It is an invitation into a radically different Lent. It is an invitation into the fullness of life we experience in Jesus. It's an invitation to be authentically who you are, to counter scarcity and injustice at every turn, to pour out even more grace wherever it is needed. It disrupts the scarcity mentality that can take root inside of us. When we allow ourselves to be filled to the brim with God's lavish love, that love spills over. Like water, it rushes and flows, touching everything in its path.

We recognize that traditional iterations of Lent often emphasize restraint. The origins of Lent were that one was to leave their old life behind to fast and prepare to be baptized into a new way of living. In essence, this was a practice of stepping away from the rat race, corrupt power, scarcity mentality, and empty rituals in order to live a more expansive and full life of faith. And so, Full to the Brim trusts the promise of our baptisms — God has already claimed us as God's own and nothing we can do will ever change or erase that.

Full to the Brim doesn't ignore or deny sin and suffering. It doesn't absolve accountability for wrongdoing. Instead, it contextualizes our faith. If love is our beginning, how can we live our lives led by love's promises? It reminds us to live fully — as we pursue justice and hope, or express grief and gratitude.

And so, this Lent, let us trust — fully — that in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we belong to God. Let us increase our capacity to receive and give grace. Let us discover the expansive life God dreams for us.

**We are “The Church of the Open Door,” a welcoming and inclusive Christian community.
No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.**



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