

February 14, 2018

Ash Wednesday



*The assembly gathers in silence
and remains seated throughout the service except where indicated.*

OPENING LITANY

The world is dark around us.

It is a darkness of our own creation: greed, hatred, violence: brokenness.
Yet in the darkness, God seeks us out and beckons us
to a place where our souls can be quiet.

Here, in this place, O God, remove every evil and heal us.
Set our feet on the path to your light.

Bring us back into the comfort and closeness of your embrace, O God.
Your cleansing love, O God, purifies our darkness, restoring it to us:
Warm, comforting, restful: complete.

PSALM 51

*The antiphon is sung once by the cantor, then repeated by all in harmony.
Thereafter it is sung in harmony by all where indicated.
The verses are sung by the cantor.*

Antiphon

Create in me a clean heart, O God
 and renew a right spirit with - in me.

Cantor:

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,
cleansing me / from my sin.

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is e- / ver before me.
Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil / in your sight,
so that you are justified / in your sentence
and blameless when / you pass judgment.

Antiphon (All)

Cantor:

Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mo- / ther conceived me.
You desire truth in the 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 whi- / ter than snow.

Let me hear / joy and gladness;
let the bones that you have / crushed rejoice.
Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all / my iniquities.
Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and put a new and right spi- / rit within me.

Antiphon (All)

Cantor:

Do not cast me away / from your presence,
and do not take your holy spi- / rit from me.
Restore to me the joy of / your salvation,
and sustain in me a / willing spirit.

(continued on next page)

Then I will teach transgress- / sors your ways,
and sinners will re- / turn to you.
Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, O God of / my salvation,
and my tongue will sing aloud of / your deliverance.

Antiphon (All)

Cantor:

O Lord, o- / pen my lips,
and my mouth will de- / clare your praise.
For you have no de- / light in sacrifice;
if I were to give a burnt offering, you would / not be pleased.
The sacrifice acceptable to God is a / broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will / not despise.

Antiphon (All)

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Vanessa Bradby

*All children may come forward and sit in the front row.
After the children's sermon they may return to their seats.*

SACRED STORIES

Old Testament

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

Blue 800

Psalm

Psalm 103:8-18

The LORD is full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and of great kindness.
He will not always accuse us,
neither will he keep his anger for ever.
He has not dealt with us according to our sins,
nor rewarded us according to our wickedness.
For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is his mercy upon those who fear him.
As far as the east is from the west,
so far has he set our sins from us.

(continued on opposite page)

As a father has compassion on his children,
so is the Lord merciful towards those who fear him.
For he knows of what we are made;
he remembers that we are but dust.
Our days are but as grass;
we flourish as a flower of the field;
For as soon as the wind goes over it, it is gone,
and its place shall know it no more.
But the merciful goodness of the LORD is from of old
and endures for ever on those who fear him,
and his righteousness on children's children;
On those who keep his covenant
and remember his commandments to do them.

Gospel

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Blue 5

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Vanessa Bradby

HYMN #353 **"Lord, I Want to Be a Christian"** *I Want to Be a Christian*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Silence

In the softness of evening,
in the solace of silence we come to you, O Lord.
We come for acceptance;
we come for community;
we come for forgiveness and love.
O Lord, hear our prayer.

(continued on next page)

Silence

In the serenity of day's end,
in the restfulness of worship, we come to you, O Lord.
We come to you for respite;
we come to you for completion;
we come to you for forgiveness and love.

O Lord, hear our prayer.

Silence

In the quiet of the night,
in the comfort of darkness we come to you, O Lord.
We come for peace;
we come for comfort;
we come for forgiveness and love.

O Lord, hear our prayer.

Silence

We come, O Lord of Light,
seeking the illumination of your Word.
We come for the path we can't find;
we come for the life we don't have.
We come to you when we are faced with death,
for you alone give breath and being.

O Lord, hear our prayer.

RECEIVING OF ASHES

*All may come forward to receive ashes on the forehead, standing or kneeling,
then return to their seats.*

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

God does not desire the death of sinners, but rather that they may turn from their sin and live. Therefore we implore God to grant us true repentance and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that those things we do this day may be pleasing to God, that the rest of our lives may be lived faithfully, and that at the last we may come to God's eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

HYMN #228

"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"

Beecher

BLESSING

With God, the darkness brings comfort not fear, love not hatred, righteousness not punishment. Walk in the darkness of your life as in the light, for both the dark and the light belong to God, as do you. Go in peace.

Amen.

The assembly departs in silence.



Cantor: Erik Lien

Olivet Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
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