



First Presbyterian Church

MOUNT AIRY, NORTH CAROLINA

Ash Wednesday
February 14, 2024

Prelude

Open Our Eyes/Be Thou My Vision Mark Hayes

Welcome and Invocation

God sent Christ into the world not to condemn the world but that the world might be saved through him.

God's love endures forever.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea; though the waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

God's love endures forever.

Let us pray:

Almighty God, you despise nothing you have made and you forgive the sins of all who trust in you. Create in us new and contrite hearts so that, truly repenting of our sins and acknowledging our brokenness, we may receive from you, the God of all mercy, full pardon and forgiveness; through your Son, Jesus our Redeemer, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Hymn of Worship*

#85

What Wondrous Love Is This

Old Testament Lesson

Psalm 51: 1-12

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

New Testament Reading

Romans 5: 1-11

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Rev Dr Fritz Ritsch

We Were Bought With a Price

Hymn of Response

#510

Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts

Invitation to a Holy Lent

Beloved people of God, every year during the time of the Christian Passover, we celebrate our redemption through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Lent is a time to prepare for this celebration and to renew our life in the paschal mystery. We begin this holy season by acknowledging our need for repentance and for the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ. We begin our journey to Easter with the sign of the ashes. This ancient sign speaks of the frailty and uncertainty of human life and marks the penitence of this community.

I invite you therefore, in the name of Christ, to observe a holy Lent by self-examination and penitence, by prayer and fasting, by works of love, and by meditating on God's Word.

Litany of Penitence

Holy and merciful God, we confess to you and to one another, and to the whole communion of saints in heaven and on earth, that we have sinned by our own fault in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone.

We have not loved you with our whole heart, mind and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.

We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven.

Have mercy on us, O God.

We have not listened to your call to serve as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

Have mercy on us, O God.

We confess to you all our past unfaithfulness. For the pride, hypocrisy and impatience in our lives,

Have mercy on us, O God.

For our self-indulgent appetite and our exploitation of other people,

Have mercy on us, O God.

For our anger at our own frustration and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,

Have mercy on us, O God.

For our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts, our dishonesty in daily life and work,

Have mercy on us, O God.

For our negligence in prayer and worship and our failure to commend the faith that is in us:

Have mercy on us, O God.

Accept our repentance, O God, for the wrongs we have done. For our neglect of human need and suffering and our indifference to injustice and cruelty:

Have mercy on us, O God.

For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us:

Have mercy on us, O God.

For our waste and pollution of your creation and our lack of concern for those who come after us:

Have mercy on us, O God.

Imposition of Ashes

Almighty God,

you have created us out of the dust of the earth. May these ashes remind us of our mortality and penitence and teach us again that only by your

gracious gift

are we given everlasting life

through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

*You are invited to come forward to receive the imposition of ashes. If you would like to remain seated for the imposition, please let an usher know. After all who desire the imposition of ashes have received them, we pray:

Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation, that we may show forth your glory in the world. By the cross and passion of our Savior, bring us with all your saints to the joy of Christ's resurrection. Amen.

Choral Anthem

Beloved, Let Us Love One Another William Dailey

The Lord's Supper

The Invitation

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts!

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right for us to give thanks and praise.

.....Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with the heavenly choirs and with all the faithful of every time and place, who forever sing to your holy name:

Holy, holy, holy Lord,

God of power and might,

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest!

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest!**

(prayer continues)

...Great is the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again!**

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, which 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, The power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

The Words of Institution and the Communion of the People

Prayer After Communion

Bless the Lord, O my soul!

**And all that is within me, bless God's holy
name!**

Bless the Lord, O my soul!

And forget not all God's benefits!

**God of abundance, with this bread of life and
cup of salvation you have united us with Christ,
making us one with all your people. Now send
us forth in the power of your Spirit that we may
proclaim your redeeming love to the world and
continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ
our Lord. Amen.**

Closing Hymn*

#76

My Song is Love Unknown

***Benediction**

This evening we welcome back guest musician Kelsey Carlisle as our pianist and accompanist.

*Please stand where indicated if you are able



The Minister: Jesus Christ of Nazareth

His Ministers: The Congregation

Interim Pastor: Rev. Dr. Fritz Ritsch

Office Administrator and Music Director: Anna Bush

Pianist: Jane Tesh

Director of Youth and Children's Discipleship:

Loida P. Slate, PhD

Director of First Steps: Mary Alice Leonard

Members of the Session

Clerk of the Session: Bob Keck

Elders

Class of 2023:

Mike Branch

Mark Brown

Taylor Pike

Margaret Cockerell

Beth Pequeno

Class of 2024:

Steve Yokeley

Lydia Taylor

David Rives

Gene Rees

Class of 2025:

Kelley Jackson

Thomas Reisinger

Jane Tesh

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