

First Presbyterian Church

*22 South Main Street
Cranbury, NJ 08512*

Ash Wednesday Service

March 5, 2014

7:30 P.M.

Office Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Phone: 609-395-0897

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Website: www.cranburypres.org

AN ORDER FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

PRELUDE

Voluntary in E Minor

John Stanley
Organ

INTROIT

"Have mercy on me, O God"

Donovan Klotzbecher
The Chorale

CALL TO WORSHIP

Dr. Louis Mitchell

Christ came 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 present help in 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 worship God!

HYMN #92 (Hymnal)*

"Beneath the Cross of Jesus"

UNISON PRAYER*

Gracious God, out of your love and mercy you breathed into dust the breath of life, creating us to serve you and our neighbors. Call forth our prayers and acts of tenderness, and strengthen us to face our mortality. Create in us new and contrite hearts, that truly repenting of our sins, and acknowledging our brokenness, we may obtain from you, the God of all mercy, full pardon and forgiveness; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Joel 2: 1-2; 12-17

pew bible pgs. 846-847

ANTHEM

"When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"

Gilbert M. Martin
The Chorale

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Matthew 6: 1-6; 16-21

pew bible pgs. 5-6

ASH WEDNESDAY MEDITATION

Rev. Suzanne Schafer-Coates

RESPONSE TO THE WORD OF GOD

HYMN #80 (Hymnal)*

"Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley"

INVITATION TO OBSERVE THE LENTEN DISCIPLINE

Dr. Mitchell

Friends in Christ, every year at 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 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 reading and meditating on the Word of God. Let us bow before God, our Creator and Redeemer and confess our sin.

RESPONSIVE READING

Psalm 51

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, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever 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.

Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother 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 whiter 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 spirit within me.

Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.

Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.

O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

For you have no delight 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.

Do good to Zion in your good pleasure; rebuild the walls of Jerusalem,

then you will delight in right sacrifices, in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings; then bulls will be offered on your altar.

LITANY OF PENITENCE

Rev. Schafer-Coates

Let us Pray:

Holy and merciful God, we confess to you and to one another, with 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, and 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, O God, all our past unfaithfulness: The pride, hypocrisy, & impatience in our lives,

we confess to you, O God.

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways and our exploitation of other people,

we confess to you, O God.

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

we confess to you, O God.

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

we confess to you, O God.

Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,

we confess to you, 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,

accept our repentance, O God.

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

accept our repentance, O God.

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

accept our repentance, O God.

Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us.

Favorably hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES

PRAYER

Dr. Mitchell

Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth. May these ashes be for us a sign of our mortality and penitence, and a reminder that only by your gracious gift are we given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

As the music is played, those who wish to do so may come forward for the Imposition of Ashes. It is an ancient sign of frailty, repentance, and renewal. The ashes used tonight are from the palms used in worship on Palm Sunday.

UNISON PRAYER

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. God of compassion, through your Son Jesus Christ you reconciled your people to yourself. Following his example of prayer and fasting, may we obey you with willing hearts and serve one another in holy love, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

HYMN #85 (Hymnal)*

“What Wondrous Love Is This”

CHARGE AND BLESSING*

Rev. Schafer-Coates

POSTLUDE

Fughetta in D

J. S. Bach

Organ

*THOSE WHO ARE ABLE MAY STAND

WELCOME to the First Presbyterian Church of Cranbury. First time visitors please fill out one of the cards in the pew and leave it with an usher at the end of the service. We invite you to make us your church home. Sunday School for all ages is at 9:15 a.m. Our Sunday Worship Service is at 10:30 a.m. followed by a time of fellowship. The Meadow Lakes Ministry Worship Service is at 11:00 a.m. Ushering tonight are Pat Bohrs and Lil Conley.