

Cahaba Springs

March 2, 2022

Ash Wednesday

Prelude

Opening Comments

* Spoken Call to Worship

Minister: The holy season of Lent has begun.
People: And **what a blessing it is to begin this season in this way.**
Minister: Now more than ever, we need each other-
People: **each other's faith, each other's presence, each other's compassion.**
Minister: Lent is, with the Spirit's help, a time when we open ourselves up to change.
People: **During Lent, we ask the Spirit to turn our lives toward God and towards the good of our neighbor.**
Minister: During Lent, we contemplate both the love and the sufferings of Jesus.
People: **We also contemplate our own temptations and our own short comings and that we are mortals, and we shall one day die.**
All: **On Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, we are asked to face without flinching the unyielding realities of the human experience.**

* Hymn 422

*Just as I Am,
Without One Plea*

WOODWORTH

Opening Prayer

Almighty and Everlasting God, by your Spirit, you breathed into us the breath of life and by your Son you brought about our redemption. Today we acknowledge you as our creator and as our Redeemer. We also acknowledge to you the frailties of our lives and the pain caused by our sinfulness. Walk with us on our Lenten journey and guide us by your Spirit to where we need to be. In Jesus Name we pray. Amen.

Prayer of Confession (Unison)

Compared with your will, O God, our ways are crooked and not straight, our desires are selfish and not generous, our devotion is shallow and not deep. We have used your name without seriousness and have lived without gratitude for all your gifts. Forgive us, we ask, and turn our hearts to true repentance. Let the Spirit of Christ convert and dwell in us, that we may honor you with our entire being. Do this for your name's sake.

(Silent Prayers of Confession)

Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Leader: God is a God of holiness and justice.
People: **God is also a God of mercy and forgiveness.**
Leader: God has promised to forgive our sin when we humbly seek His forgiveness with contrite hearts.
People: **God will hear our prayers and remove our guilt as we bow before Him in Jesus Name.**
Leader: Hear and believe the Good News of the Gospel. In Jesus name, I declare that our sins are forgiven.

Meditation *"Practicing Piety During Lent"* Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

Blessing and Distribution of the Ashes

Minister: Bless by your Holy Spirit, O God, these ashes. May all who receive them, and all who look upon them, be moved to repentance and renewal and to gratitude and praise. May these ashes be no empty sign; but by your mercy, may all who bear them live what they signify- your steadfast love for our mortal flesh, your power to save, and your boundless mercy. Praise be to you, O God. In life and in death we belong to you. Amen
People: **May these ashes be for us a sign of our mortality and repentance, and a reminder that only by your grace are we given eternal life.**

-Those wishing to receive ashes please come forward and be signed with ashes and the words:

"Christ died that you may live"

Prayers of the Faithful

Leader: Let us pray to the Lord.

People: **May our prayer be acceptable to God, our Rock and our Redeemer.**

Leader: Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation that we may show forth your glory in the world.

People: **By the cross and passion of your Son, our Lord, Bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.**

Leader: Father in heaven, the greatness of Your love is beyond words to describe. By the power of Your Spirit, liberate us from all self-centeredness, that we may be free to love to love others as Christ loves us . . .

People: **Lord, hear our prayer . . .**

Leader: Lord God of Hosts: Make of us pilgrims throughout these Forty days. Lead us through disciple to discipleship, through fasting to feasting, through privation to freedom. Free us from our own struggles, so that we may more fully serve one another . . .

People: **Lord, hear our prayer . . .**

Leader: Loving Master and faithful friend – help us to be obedient and joyful, humble, and caring, merciful and loving. Anchor us in your life-giving word and make us radiant for You – fitting ambassadors of your message of reconciliation. . .

People: **Lord, hear our prayer . . .**

Leader: Father of all mercy – as we work together with Christ, help us to not to accept your grace in vain, but to remember that now is the day of salvation, and to call upon you and serve you as you desire . . .

People: **We ask these things in his most glorious name. Amen.**

*Closing Hymn 649

*Amazing Grace,
How Sweet the Sound*

AMAZING GRACE

*Benediction

*Postlude

