



LOOP CHURCH

CHICAGO

Ash Wednesday, February 14, 2018

*The season of Lent is a time of discipline, penitence,
and renewal, in preparation for the events of Holy Week.*

*During Lent, Christians fast, pray, and meditate as a way of following Jesus,
imitating his 40 days in the wilderness, struggling with temptation and vocation.
The Lenten journey towards Easter begins today, on Ash Wednesday.*

*The “imposition of ashes” is a central part of today’s service.
You will be invited to come forward to receive ashes on your forehead
marked in the shape of a cross.*

*In Scripture, ashes serve as a symbol of mortality, and as a sign of mourning and repentance.
But the ashes are located next to the baptismal water, as a reminder that your baptism is a sign
and a seal that God has claimed you. Neither sin nor death has the final word.*

WE GATHER - *(Please enter and exit our worship space in silence tonight.)*

Rend your hearts and not your garments;
turn back to the Lord your God
who is gracious and compassionate,
long-suffering and abounding in love.

Joel 2:13

Greeting

Pastor: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.

People: **God's mercy endures forever.**

Opening Prayer

Gathering Hymn

Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing

LUYH 521

WE HEAR THE WORD OF GOD

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Lesson: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 *(Bible page 740)*

(Silence for reflection)

Song of Confession and Lament

God Be Merciful to Me

LUYH 623

New Testament Lesson: 2 Corinthians 5:20-6:10 *(Bible page 940)*

(Silence for reflection)

Song of Dependence

Not What My Hands Have Done

LUYH 624

Gospel Lesson: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 *(Bible page 787)*

(Silence for reflection)

Song of Trust and Praise

My Soul Finds Rest

LUYH 370

INVITATION TO THE OBSERVANCE OF LENTEN DISCIPLINE

(compiled from various sources including Reformed Worship magazine, RCA seasonal worship resources, and UMC Discipleship Resources: Worship Planning)

Invitation

Pastor: So, Sisters and brothers in Christ:
Every year at Easter we celebrate with joy our redemption and renewal through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The season of Lent is a time to prepare for this celebration and to make room in our lives for the Spirit of God to renew us in this mystery.

People: We begin this holy season by acknowledging our need for repentance and our need for the love and forgiveness shown to us in Jesus Christ.

Pastor: I invite you, therefore, in the name of Christ, to observe a Holy Lent, by self-examination and penitence, by prayer and fasting, by practicing works of love, and by reading and reflecting on God's Holy Word. Let us begin our Lenten journey by together confessing our sins and seeking the forgiveness and new life that is promised to us in Christ Jesus. To make a right beginning of repentance, and as a mark of our mortal nature, let us now bow before our Creator and Redeemer.

(Silence for a time of personal repentance.)

Thanksgiving Over the Ashes

Imposition of Ashes

(If you desire, please come forward for the imposition of ashes)

WE REPENT IN DUST AND ASHES

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

People: O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth.

You are compassionate beyond comparison,
loving beyond imagination,
and faithful beyond our betrayal.

Just as the psalmist declares, "our sin is ever before us."

We, too, admit our transgressions:
we have become stained with wrongdoing,
sacrificing the goodness of your love for the demise of
this world.

We have abandoned your law, caring less for your
creation and more for our own ambition.

Wash us clean, God of mercies, and deliver us from
bloodshed.

Help us to hear your voice calling us back,
remind us of your love bringing us home,
and renew our spirits that we might believe the
covenant again.

For the sake of Jesus Christ, we pray in our hearts...

(Silent reflection)

Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

THE PEACE

*Let us offer one another signs of reconciliation and love by saying to one another
"The peace of Christ be with you" and responding "And also with you".*

THE LORD'S PRAYER and CLOSING HYMN

Abana in Heaven

LUYH 911

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

GOING FORTH *(please exit the worship space in silence)*