

Ash Wednesday
Little Prairie United Methodist Church
February 14 2024, 7:00 pm



Love Between the Ashes

2980 130th ST E, P.O. Box 276, Dundas, MN 55019

507.663-6150

www.littleprairieumc.org

Our vision: Creating a welcoming community that worships well, disciples well, and serves well; transforming the world for Jesus Christ.

WELCOME AND GATHERING

Gathering Music

*"Sweet Hour of Prayer" by William B. Bradbury arr. Mark Hayes
Luann Alderks*

Welcome

Pastor Penny Bonsell

Call to Worship

Even now, return to me, says God. Let the sirens in the streets rage; let the trumpet from the church house blow. Let those consumed with darkness, gloomy from bad fortunes know that:

Even now, God says, return to me.

Let the abused and abusing hear, the defiant and disobedient revere. Let the sinner and the scornful draw near. Return from your ignorance, return from your injustice. Return from your apathy, return from your agony.

Even now, God says, return to me.

Return from your selfishness, return from your greed. Return from your neglect, return out of your need.

Even now, God says, return to me.

Return to me, with a clean heart. Return to me with fasting, weeping and mourning.

Return to me, God says, for I am gracious and merciful; I am slow to anger and full of steadfast love. Return to me, God says, for I am your God.

Hymn *Take Time to Be Holy UMH # 395*

All

Opening Prayer

Creating God, still Center of the world you have made,

we come to you in this season of turning and returning.

We do not know how to seek you with our whole hearts, but we know you are our source and our destiny.

In the midst of life, we return to you, we turn toward you.

We thank you that you receive even the broken heart, the troubled conscience, the conflicted spirit.

Seeking you in secret, may we honor you in public, through Jesus Christ, our path homeward to you. Amen.

THE WORD

Psalm 51:1-17

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

The Word of God for the People of God. **Thanks Be to God**

Message

Love Between the Ashes

Pastor Penny Bonsell

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

Hymn *Sunday's Palms Are Wednesday's Ashes TFWS #2138*

All

Invitation to the Observance of Lenten Discipline

Thanksgiving Over The Ashes

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

Imposition of Ashes *"Just As I Am, Without One Plea" by William B. Bradbury*
arr. Mark Hayes

Luann Alderks

Confession and Pardon

Merciful God, we confess that too often we make choices about what we should and should not do based on what others will think of us. We seek the validation of family, friends, and even strangers instead of resting in our sacred worth and identity in you. And so, we travel the path of least resistance when we know that path does not align with yours.

Forgive us, God, when we perform for one another instead of living with integrity in you.

Merciful God, we confess that we place too much value on money, prestige, and influence. We live in a society that tells us we need more and more and more in order to live secure and satisfied lives, and we choose to live according to this lie to the detriment of ourselves and our neighbors.

Forgive us, God, when we treasure wealth, status, possessions, and power over and above contrition, humility, generosity, and mutuality.

Merciful God, we confess that we do not love you rightly. While we may love you with part of our lives, we do not love you as God with our whole lives. We resist your call to surrender our lives into your hands and to trust that you will care for us as individuals and as a community better than we could ever do on our own.

Forgive us, God, when we point our hearts toward selfish gain instead of the lasting worth of life with you.

Offer prayers of silent confession.

Receive this good news:

We love because God first loved us.

In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.

In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.

Repent and believe, for God's grace empowers us live in the humility of the beautiful and freeing truth that God is God, and we are not.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Sharing the Peace

Offering and Silent Prayer *"More Love to Thee" by Elizabeth P. Prentiss*
arr. Tom Fettke

Luann Alderks

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Holy God of compassion and mercy; help us enter this holy season with the hearts you desire and with the sacrifices that please you – more than our letting go of bad habits.

As we bring our tithes and offerings, may they be given not for the praise of others, but from our hearts to yours.

In this season of denial and repentance, help us take on what brings you joy: sharing with the hungry, offering shelter and clothing to the homeless and poor, and showing compassion to all we meet for carrying life's unshared burdens.

In doing so, may light arise in the darkness. In Christ, we pray. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer *sung*

Hymn *Jesus the Very Thought of Thee UMH #175*

All

SENDING

What are your hands doing?

For there your heart will be.

Where do your feet take you?

For there your heart will be.

Where does your attention direct you?

For there your heart will be.

Go, now, to follow God with your hands, your feet, and your attention, that you may be blessed to find your heart—and your treasure—where God is. **Amen. Shalom.**

UPCOMING EVENTS

Fri, Feb 16, 5:30pm: Youth Group

Sat. Feb 17, 9 am: Soul Sisters (see Theresa Siemers for details)

Mon. Feb 19, 8:30 am: Breakfast Club, L& M (every Monday)

Mon. Feb 19, 7pm Admin Council

Wed. Feb 21, 5:30 pm: Lenten Soup Suppers begin

Fri. March 22, 3-8:00 pm: Fish Dinner. Tickets required.

If you would like to help, talk to Christina Keilen, Emily Burt, or Lori Larson

See our website for more details at www.littleprairieumc.org.