

Lenten Information

- Lent is a season of the Christian year celebrating the 6 ½ weeks prior to Easter. During this season, 40-days are set aside to fast, practice abstinence from an activity, or take on a new Spiritual Discipline in preparation for Easter.
- The 6-days of the season not set aside for fasting are days of dispensation, usually on Sundays during Lent, when a person celebrates the presence of Jesus in a day of worship and feasting. Days of worship are days of plenty; the fast, or abstinence, is suspended on these days as a symbol of Christ's abundant presence with us.
- During the 40-days of Lent, one remembers the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness. The hunger and thirst for the thing from which we abstain reminds us of our longing for God. Our Sundays of feasting with Christ in worship is an appetizer that draws us toward the joy of the resurrection.
- Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent. Ashes are a symbol of repentance and mourning (see Genesis 3:19 and Psalm 51). Traditionally, Christians come forward as a sign of their desire for forgiveness and are marked by ash either on the forehead or hand as a symbol of the depth of their contrition.
- When the ash is washed away, one is reminded of their baptism and the cleansing of their life from sin by the work of Christ on the cross. (see Isaiah 1:18)



*First Baptist Church
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A SERVICE of ASHES and SACRIFICE

February 22, 2023

Prelude "God So Loved The World" Mary Sue Godwin

A Call to Slow Our Pace Sara Williams

Scripture Reading Joel 2:12-16 Kathryn Wise

~~~~~ *Litany of Penitence* ~~~~~

Leader: Have mercy on me O God in your great kindness. In the fullness of your mercy blot out my offences. Wash away all my guilt and cleanse me from my sin.

**People: Create in me a clean heart, O God.**

Leader: For I acknowledge my faults and my sin is always before me. Against you only have I sinned and done evil in your sight.

**People: Create in me a clean heart, O God.**

Leader: Create in me a clean heart O God and renew a right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence do not take your holy spirit from me.

**People: Create in me a clean heart, O God.**

Leader: Give me the joy of your help again and strengthen me with a willing spirit. O Lord open my lips and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

**People: Create in me a clean heart, O God.**

Prayer of Penitence

\* Hymn #186 "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" Congregation

Scripture Reading Isaiah 58:5-12 Mrs. Williams

~~~~~ *Litany of Confession* ~~~~~

Leader: What is confession?

People: An unburdening, a letting go

Leader: Truth telling

People: To whom do we confess?

Leader: We confess to the One we call God, our Creator, our Redeemer,

People: We confess to the One who loves us.

Leader: What do we confess this day?

People: We confess the wrong we have done and the hurt we have caused.

Leader: We confess the good we have not done, and the sin we have not claimed.

People: We confess that we live more like ourselves and less like Christ.

Leader: Let us now make our silent confession. Let us come before God with the whole of our lives, the good, the bad, and the holy. Let us Pray together.

Prayer of Confession

Special Music "I Take the Cross of Jesus Christ" Sanctuary Choir

Scripture Reading Psalm 51:1-17 Dr. Andy Wakefield

Moment of Reflection

A Time of Commitment and Imposition of Ashes

~~~~~ *Litany of Commitment* ~~~~~

Leader: We have chosen to fast, not only with ashes but with actions. Not with sackcloth but in sharing, not in thoughts but in deeds.

**People: Let the ashes speak of our commitment.**

Leader: We will give up our abundance, to share food with the hungry. We will give up our comfort, to provide homes for the destitute. We will give up our fashions, to see the naked clothed. We will share where others hoard. We will heal where others harm.

**People: Let the ashes speak of our commitment.**

Leader: Then God's light will break out on us. God's healing will quickly appear. God will guide us always, we will be like well-watered gardens, repairers of broken walls, builders of sustainable cities.

**All: Let the ashes speak of our commitment to God's ways and God's purposes.**

\* Commitment Hymn #171 Congregation

"What Wondrous Love Is This"

Prayer of Commitment Dr. Wakefield

Postlude Mrs. Godwin