

✦ **HYMN 833** - *O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go*

ST. MARGARET

✦ **BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE - *Chromatic Fugue*

Johann Froberger

ASSISTING IN WORSHIP - **Pastor:** Lisa Rzepka **Liturgist:** Karen Smith; **Communion:** Bob Foye, Elizabeth Hancock, David Hancock, Dave Lanenga; **Organist & Choir Director:** Bob Muckenfuss; **Ushers:** Clair & Barbara Morris.

A Time to Turn

The Lenten journey from the ashes of death to resurrected life begins on the first day of Lent, Ash Wednesday, which signifies a time to turn around, to change directions, to repent. This first day of Lent reminds us that unless we are willing to die to our old selves, we cannot be raised to new life with Christ. The first step of this journey calls us to acknowledge and confront our mortality, individually and corporately. In many traditions, this is symbolized through the imposition of ashes — placing a cross on one's forehead. During the imposition of ashes the words: "You are dust, and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19) are repeated again and again. We are to remember that we are but temporary creatures, always on the edge of death. On Ash Wednesday, we begin our Lenten trek through the desert toward Easter.

Ashes on the forehead is a sign of our humanity and a reminder of our mortality. Lent is not a matter of being good, and wearing ashes is not to show off one's faith. The ashes are a reminder to us and our communities of our finite creatureliness. The ashes we wear on our Lenten journey symbolize the dust and broken debris of our lives as well as the reality that eventually each of us will die.

Trusting in the "accomplished fact" of Christ's resurrection, however, we listen for the Word of God in the time-honored stories of the church's Lenten journey. We follow Jesus into the wilderness, resist temptation, fast, and proceed "on the way" to Jerusalem and the cross. Our Lenten journey is one of *metanoia* ("turning around"), of changing directions from self-serving toward the self-giving way of the cross.

An excerpt from the *Companion to the Book of Common Worship*
(Geneva Press, 2003, 109-110)

First Presbyterian Church of Annapolis

Wednesday, March 6, 2019 - 7:00 pm

PREPARATION FOR THE WORD

✦ Please rise in body or in spirit.

PRELUDE - *Air*

J. S. Bach

SILENT REFLECTION - *Threshold into Lent*

Our journey through Lent begins with an invitation to the gift of emptiness. Many of us sometime feel empty inside and it's not a welcomed emotion. However, what if we released ourselves into the idea that if we want to be filled – to find God – getting empty is the best way? What if the discipline of emptiness leads us to God? In our journey this Lent toward the Cross, we know even Jesus felt empty despair. It was at that moment that God's possibility of life beyond that pain was revealed.

✦ **CALL TO WORSHIP**

We worship tonight with ashes,

Ashes, because our broken hearts seek wholeness, ashes, because our fragility frightens us, ashes, because we mark what needs to be made new.

We worship tonight with ashes, knowing God holds us here,
continuing on this journey from dust to dust.

✦ **HYMN 435** - *There's a Wideness in God's Mercy*

IN BABILONE

✦ **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Sometimes we have trouble telling the truth, O God, and sometimes we have trouble being your people. We may not trample the poor, but oftentimes we walk right past them. We don't receive bribes, but so often we are more privileged than many around us. We trust more in ourselves than in You, and spend too much time patting ourselves on the back, rather than holding out a hand to others. So as we begin this Lenten journey, turn us around, point us toward You, and nourish us so that we can begin again. (Silence.)

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S GRACE

✦ **HYMN 433** - *Sign Us with Ashes* (Choir sings verses; congregation sings refrain) PHOENIX

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Those who desire may come forward to receive ashes as a sign of penitence not only for our individual sin, but also in recognition of our complicity in the sin of the world.

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST SCRIPTURE - Psalm 49 (responsive) from the *Iona Abbey Worship Book*

Hear this, all you nations.

Listen all you people on earth both high and low, rich and poor.

My words contain wisdom, a message with meaning to you.

Listen carefully to this proverb; set it to music if that helps.

Why should I fear in times of trouble when treacherous people surround me, made confident by their money, boasting in their wealth?

They too are mortal and must die; they cannot buy off their Maker.

Such a ransom would be too high, beyond their power to pay.

We cannot guarantee our lives; we cannot escape the grave. Both wise and foolish will die, leaving their wealth to others.

Some claim land as their own, but a plot of ground will possess them, the grave their eternal home.

Humans do not live forever, nor do the beasts of the field.

So, do not envy the wealthy; wealth is worth nothing in the grave.

ANTHEM - *In This Moment of Remembrance*

Dale Wood

SECOND SCRIPTURE - Matthew 16:24-28

LENTEN MEDITATION AND INVITATION

HYMN 227 - *Jesus, Remember Me* (repeat 3 times)

REMEMBER ME

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Invitation to the Table

✠ **Hymn 501** - *Feed Us, Lord*

FEED US

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise, eternal God, creator and ruler of the universe.

You hold all our days in your hand, the same hand that spangled stars in the sky and shaped dust into human form.

You breathed your life into us earthlings, and set us in your world to love and serve you.

But we reject your love.

Yet you continue to woo us, calling us through prophets to return to a covenant of love with you. Therefore, with all of creation, the heavenly angels, and all saints, we lift our voices in praise:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest... (Hymn 552)

The Lord's Prayer (Using "debts" and "debtors," *Glory to God*, page 35.)

Words of Institution

Sharing the Bread and Cup

(All Christians, regardless of denomination or affiliation, are invited to receive the sacrament by intinction. Please come forward by the center aisle to receive the bread and to dip it in the chalice of non-alcoholic juice, then return to your seat using the side aisles. The worship leaders will serve persons in their seats who have difficulty walking. Gluten-free bread and separate chalice are located at front.)

Prayer

Smudged this night with the ashes of penitence,

we will go out to share God's forgiveness

with those we have hurt, with those who are forgotten.

Fed this night by the Feast of grace,

we will work to bring healing to the broken,

to offer grace to those trampled by the powerful.

Called this night to journey through suffering into new life,

we will go out to stand with those experiencing injustice,

to share the Spirit's peace and reconciliation with the world.