

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

THE INVITATION

THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

The Lord is with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to God.

Let us give thanks to the Holy One.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right and a good and joyful thing always and everywhere to give thanks to you, O God. You created us to live in communion with you, yet we turned away. You spoke through your prophet Joel: Return to me with all your heart, for I am gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

We come on this Ash Wednesday, knowing our failings but trusting in your steadfast mercies.

Thanks be to you, Holy God, for steadfast mercy. You are holy and blessed is your child Jesus Christ. Your Spirit flowed through his life as he became the bridge for our reconciliation. In this season we remember his life and work.

We remember your gift of Baptism. We reflect on the mystery of the cross. We dare to ponder resurrection.

On his final evening with his disciples, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me." After supper Jesus did the same with the cup, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood." In remembrance of these your mighty acts on our behalf, we bring our whole selves to you, as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and cup. May this meal be for us signs of your gracious mercy: forgiveness of our sins and promise of salvation.

To you be all praise and glory, Holy God, now and forever. Amen.

THE BLESSING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

THE COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD

(Please come forward using the center aisle, take a piece of bread, dip it into the cup and receive the gifts of God; return to your pew using the center aisle.)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE ~ Let Us Be Bread

Join us again next Wednesday as we reflect upon "God's Gift of Bread for Our Journey" ~ Gather for soup at 6:15pm and for worship at 7:15pm. Bring your own dishes.

Ash Wednesday March 9, 2011

*Fairgreen Presbyterian Church
3220 Laskey Road
Toledo, Ohio 43613*



Order of Worship

GATHERING MUSIC

CALL TO WORSHIP (Psalm 51: 1-17)

Loving and Merciful God: In penitence we come to you. We recognize our own sin, our own weaknesses.

We are weighed down by our sense of sinfulness.

God of unfailing love: We have failed God and ourselves. We have failed God and in our relationship with others.

Even as we confess our sin, forgive and renew us O God.

Restoring God: Accept our sense of remorse, and remove the stain of our sin, so that we can again experience your joy.

We gather as renewed, restored and forgiven people of God. We give heartfelt thanks for God's great and compassionate love. Amen.

HYMN ~ #2272

"We Are Standing on Holy Ground"

TIME WITH THE YOUNGER CHURCH

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

THE WORD OF GOD—Isaiah 58: 3-9

PREPARATION FOR CONFESSION

The Word of God clearly says that genuine repentance commits us to costly decisions about our life style.

READING: Isaiah 58:3-9

God says: My People complain to me:

We have fasted to please you, Lord, but you have not noticed. We have bowed low to the ground in prayer, but you have not troubled to even look.

Tell my people this:

You fast to impress yourselves, not me, you fast yet still oppress your employees. You fast religiously yet remain bullies at heart, you are verbally violent or even us your fists. This fasting of yours is just an act, it will never impress me.

Do you really think I care if you make a big show of humility? If you bow low to the ground and spread sackcloth and ashes? Do you dare call that a real fast and think I will find it acceptable?

Now listen to me:

This is the kind of fasting I choose: cut the bonds of oppression, undo the yoke of injustice, set the oppressed free, and break every yoke into pieces. Share your bread with the hungry and open your doors to the homeless. Give your coat to those who shiver, and don't spurn your poorer relatives.

Do this and light shall begin to dawn, and very quickly healing shall be yours, my righteousness shall go ahead of you, and my glory shall follow your every step. Then you will call out for help, and I will answer, I will say to you, "Here I am, my child."

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

My sisters and brothers, the words of the prophet Isaiah weigh us, and find us wanting! Let us "return to the Lord, our God, who is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in unswerving love." Let us pray together:

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; Blot our my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

It is written: "God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that through him the world might be saved." "Where sin abounds, grace much more abounds." In the name of our Savior, Christ Jesus, I declare to your

liberation: "Your sins are forgiven. Go in peace."

THE WORD OF GOD—Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-21 "The Journey Begins with Gathering"

PRAYER: A LITANY

* THE SUNG RESPONDS IS BY Jacques Berthier, Taize—#599

Remember, loving God, what you have wrought in us, and not what we deserve.

Jesus remember me, when you come into your kingdom.

Jesus remember me, when you come into your kingdom.

As your Son have asked us to take up our own cross and follow, let us neither be timid nor rash disciples. ***Refrain***

As you have asked us to truly love each other, deliver us from shallow sentiment and pretentious piety. ***Refrain***

As you have called us to be ambassadors of reconciliation, please make us worthy of that calling; ***Refrain***

That the poor and the meek may inherit both earth and heaven, and the merciful obtain much mercy. ***Refrain***

That the peacemakers may live as children of God, and those who are persecuted may rejoice and be glad; ***Refrain***

That those who hunger and thirst may be satisfied and the pure may come to see God. ***Refrain***

Remember, loving God, what you have wrought in us, and not what we deserve. Through Christ Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING OF THE ASHES

God is with you.

And also with you.

Your wonder is written deep in us, O God. We are, by your grace; we are!

Blessed are you, O God, Creator of the universe.

Your breath fills us, O God and returns to you.

Blessed are you, O God, Creator of the universe.

Grant that these ashes may remind us of the dust from which we come and to which we return and of the great and glorious gift in between.

Blessed are you, O God, Creator of the universe.

Grant that these ashes may remind us that we are your people and call us again to live in you.

Blessed are you, O God, Creator of the universe! Amen.

THE IMPOSITION OF THE ASHES

Let all who humbly acknowledge their fragmented and brief mortal lives, and place utter dependence on the grace of God in Christ Jesus, come and receive the sign of ashes.

HYMN ~ #2080

"All I Need Is You"