



Ash Wednesday

Paw Creek Presbyterian Church
February 17, 2021 at 6:30 pm • Zoom meeting ID 811 2469 1045

You may wish to have some dirt from the garden or a potted plant to use during this service.

Greeting (from Psalm 46 - responsive)

God is our refuge and strength, a present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea; though the waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

God's love endures forever.

* **Hymn 829**

My Faith Looks Up to Thee

Prayer (unison)

Gracious God, out of your love and mercy you breathed into dust the breath of life, creating us to serve you and our neighbors. Call forth our prayers and acts of tenderness, and strengthen us to face our mortality, that we may reach with confidence for your mercy. In Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Scripture

Psalm 103

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless God's holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all the benefits of the LORD, who forgives all your sins and heals all your infirmities; who redeems your life from the grave and crowns you with mercy and loving-kindness; who satisfies you with good things, and your youth is renewed like an eagle's. The LORD executes righteousness and judgment for all who are oppressed. To Moses were made known God's ways and to the children of Israel the works of the LORD. The LORD is full of compassion and mercy, slow to anger and of great kindness. The LORD will not always accuse us nor remain angry forever. The LORD has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our wickedness. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so is the LORD's mercy great upon the God-fearing. As far as the east is from the west, so far has the LORD removed our sins from us.

As a father cares for his children, so does the LORD care for the God-fearing. For the LORD knows whereof we are made and remembers that we are but dust. Our days are like the grass; we flourish like a flower of the field; when the wind goes over it, it is gone, and its place shall know it no more. But the merciful goodness of the LORD endures forever on the God-fearing, and the righteousness of the LORD on children's children; on those who keep the holy covenant and remember the commandments and do them. The LORD has set up a throne in heaven, and the sovereignty of the LORD has dominion over all. Bless the LORD, you holy angels, you mighty ones who do God's bidding, and hearken to the voice of God's word. Bless the LORD, all you holy hosts, you holy ministers who do God's will. Bless the LORD, all you works of God, in all places of God's dominion; bless the LORD, O my soul.

Joel 2: 1-2, 12-17

Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming, it is near – a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness spread upon the mountains a great and powerful army comes; their like has never been from of old, nor will be again after them in ages to come. Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing. Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the Lord, your God?

Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her canopy. Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep. Let them say, "Spare your people, O Lord, and do not make your heritage a mockery, a byword among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'"

Invitation to the Observance of a Holy Lent

Friends in Christ, every year at the time of the Christian Passover we celebrate our redemption through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Lent is a time to prepare for this celebration and to renew our life in the paschal mystery.

We begin our journey to Easter with the sign of ashes, acknowledging our need for repentance, and for the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ. This ancient sign speaks of the frailty and uncertainty of human life, and marks the penitence of the community of Christ's disciples.

We are invited, therefore, in the name of Christ, to observe a holy Lent by self-examination and penitence, by prayer and fasting, by works of love, and by reading and meditating on the Word of God.

Let us bow before God, our Creator and Redeemer, and confess our sin, with the words of the Psalmist:

Psalm 51 (responsive)

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight,

You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.

O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Imposition of Dust and Ashes

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

Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

Prayer (unison)

God of compassion, through your Son Jesus Christ you reconciled your people to yourself. Following his example of prayer and fasting, may we obey you with willing hearts and serve one another in holy love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*** Hymn 835**

Just a Closer Walk With Thee

Blessing and Charge (responsive)

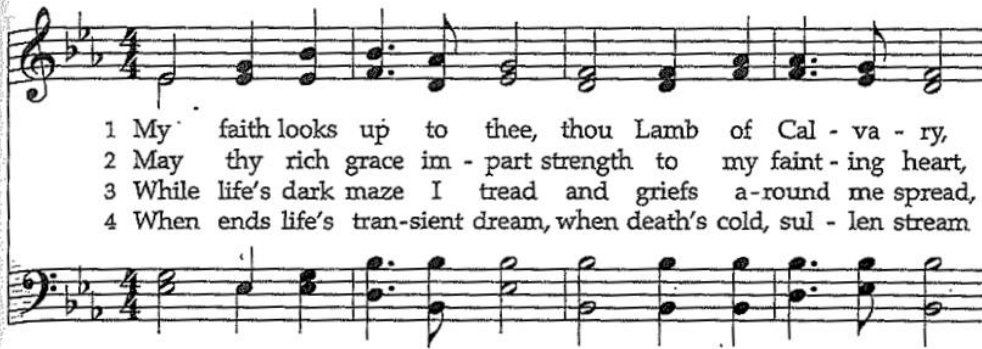
May the God of peace make you holy in every way and keep your whole being – spirit, soul, and body – free from every fault at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

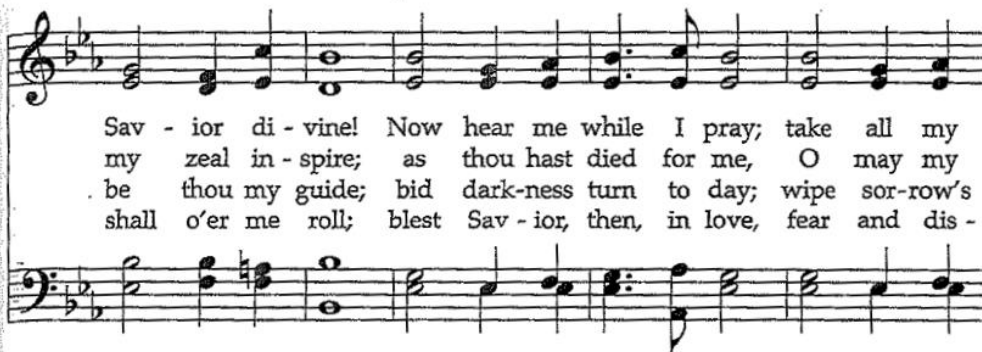
Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

My Faith Looks Up to Thee 829



1 My faith looks up to thee, thou Lamb of Cal - va - ry,
2 May thy rich grace im - part strength to my faint - ing heart,
3 While life's dark maze I tread and griefs a - round me spread,
4 When ends life's tran - sient dream, when death's cold, sul - len stream



Sav - ior di - vine! Now hear me while I pray; take all my
my zeal in - spire; as thou hast died for me, O may my
be thou my guide; bid dark - ness turn to day; wipe sor - row's
shall o'er me roll; blest Sav - ior, then, in love, fear and dis -



guilt a - way; O let me from this day be whol - ly thine!
love to thee pure, warm, and change-less be, a liv - ing fire!
tears a - way; nor let me ev - er stray from thee a - side.
trust re-move; O bear me safe a - bove, a ran - somed soul!

Just a Closer Walk with Thee 835

Refrain Just a clos - er walk with thee, grant it,
 1 I am weak, but thou art strong; Je - sus,
 2 Through this world of toil and snares, if I
 3 When my fee - ble life is o'er, time for

Je - sus, is my plea, dai - ly walk - ing close to
 keep me from all wrong; I'll be sat - is - fied as
 fal - ter, Lord, who cares? Who with me my bur - den
 me will be no more; guide me gent - ly, safe - ly

thee: let it be, dear Lord, let it be.
 long as I walk, let me walk close to thee. *Ref.*
 shares? None but thee, dear Lord, none but thee. *Ref.*
 o'er to thy shore, dear Lord, to thy shore. *Ref.*