ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

VIRTUAL

FEBRUARY 17, 2021

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. (John 3:16–17)

O God the Father, creator of heaven and earth,  
**Have mercy on us.**  
O God the Son, redeemer of the world  
**Have mercy on us.**  
O God the Holy Spirit, advocate and guide,  
**Have mercy on us.**  
Holy, blessed and glorious Trinity, three persons and one God,

**Have mercy on us.**

**SONG O Love That Will Not Let Me Go**

**O Love that wilt not let me go, I rest my weary soul in thee;**

**I give thee back the life I owe, that in thine ocean depths its flow may richer, fuller be.**

**O Light that follows all my way, I yield my flickering torch to thee;**

**My heart restores its borrowed ray, that in thy sunshine’s blaze its day may brighter, fairer be.**

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION (in unison)**

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth. You are compassionate beyond comparison, loving beyond imagination, and faithful beyond our betrayal. Just as the psalmist declares, “our sin is ever before us,” we, too, admit our transgressions: We have become stained with wrongdoing, sacrificing the goodness of your love for the demise of this world. We have abandoned your law, caring less for your creation and more for our own ambition.

Wash us clean, God of mercies, and deliver us from bloodshed. Help us to hear your voice calling us back, remind us of your love bringing us home, and renew our spirits that we might believe the covenant again. For the sake of Jesus Christ, we pray in our hearts, Amen.

**BIBLE READING Matthew 4:1-11**

**MESSAGE** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P-6a25Yo2wE>

**LITANY FOR ASH WEDNESDAY**

LEADER: God is at work in you, enabling you both to determination and to action for God’s good pleasure.

PEOPLE: **The call of Christ is to willing, dedicated discipleship.**

LEADER: Discipleship means living a new lifestyle – the lifestyle Jesus lived out on earth.

PEOPLE: **Discipleship is both a gift and a commitment, an offering and a responsibility.**

LEADER: Discipleship is marked by change, growth, and deepened commitment to Jesus.

PEOPLE: **It is a lived-out faith; a renewed sense of God’s call to us.**

LEADER: By God’s grace, we have eternal salvation, are enabled to grow in our faith, and are able to commit our lives to pleasing God.

PEOPLE: **We trust in the gracious mercy of God, turning away from sin and turning to Jesus Christ.**

LEADER: Do we believe in God the Father?

PEOPLE: **We believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

LEADER: Do we believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

PEOPLE: **We believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord.**

LEADER: Do we believe in God the Holy Spirit?

PEOPLE: **We believe in the Holy Spirit who guides us each and every day.**

LEADER: O Lord, keep us close to you during this season of Lent. Increase in us your gifts of grace, wisdom, and understanding that we might grow closer to you. May we give up the sense of despair and discouragement during this season and instead look to you for the joy of your presence. May we live in love in the same manner that Christ loves us and gave himself for us. May we rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and give thanks in all circumstances for this is the sacrifice that is pleasing to God.

PEOPLE: **Amen.**

**BENEDICTION** - The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your heart and your mind in Christ Jesus. May this season of Lent be a time of great spiritual growth and renewal of faith in you, Lord! Amen.

NOTES:

* Call to Worship was written by John Paarlberg
* The Prayer of Confession was written by Katherine Lee Baker, M.Div.
* The Litany for Ash Wednesday is based on the Baptismal Reaffirmation – Growth in Faith service from *Book of Common Worship*