

**SPRING CITY
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE
March 9, 2011**

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.

God's mercy endures forever.

HYMN	"Majesty, Worship His Majesty"	No. 176
GOSPEL LESSON	Joel 2: 1-2, 12-17	Worship Leader
HYMN	"His Name Is Wonderful"	No. 174
EPISTLE LESSON	Psalms 51: 1-17	Worship Leader
HYMN	"My Jesus, I Love Thee"	No. 172
SERMON	"Letting Go"	Rev. Dale S. Wyrick

INVITATION TO THE OBSERVANCE OF LENTEN DISCIPLINE

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

The early Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church that before the Easter celebration there should be a forty-day season of spiritual preparation. During this season converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism. It was also a time when persons who had committed serious sins and had separated themselves from the community of faith were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to participation in the life of the Church. In this way the whole congregation was reminded of the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ and the need we all have to renew our faith. I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to observe a holy Lent: by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's Holy Word.

To make a right beginning of repentance, and as a mark of our mortal nature, let us now bow before our Creator and Redeemer.

SILENT MEDITATION

THANKSGIVING OVER THE ASHES

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

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

"The Lord's Prayer"

Congregation

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

PEOPLE RESPOND: **I repent, and believe the gospel.**

GLORIA PATRI

No. 71

BENEDICTION

SCRIPTURE READING

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

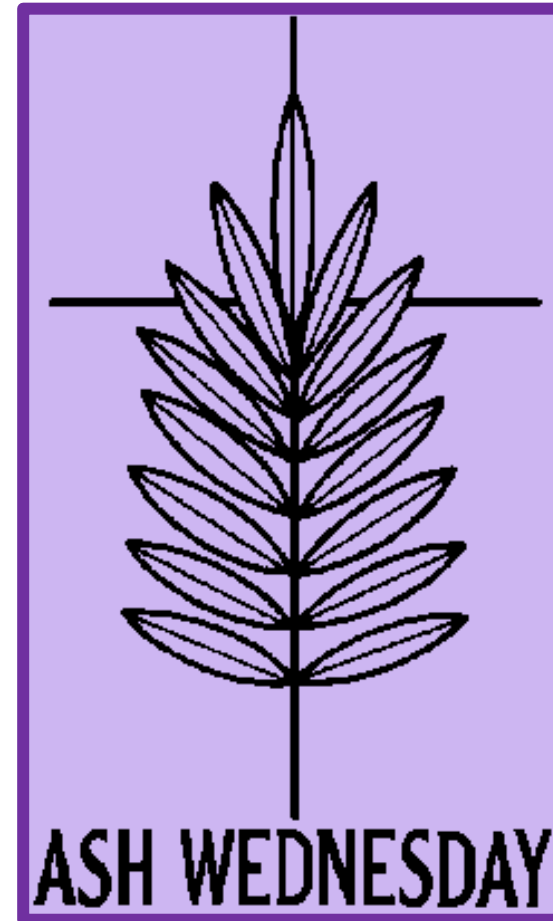
- ¹ Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming, it is near—
- ² a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness spread upon the mountains a great and powerful army comes; their like has never been from of old, nor will be again after them in ages to come.
- ¹² Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
- ¹³ 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.
- ¹⁴ 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?
- ¹⁵ Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly;
- ¹⁶ 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.
- ¹⁷ 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?'"

SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 51:1-17

- ¹ Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.
- ² Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.
- ³ For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.
- ⁴ Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.
- ⁵ Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me.
- ⁶ You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.
- ⁷ Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
- ⁸ Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.
- ⁹ Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.
- ¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.
- ¹¹ Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.
- ¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.
- ¹³ Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.
- ¹⁴ Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.
- ¹⁵ O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.
- ¹⁶ For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.
- ¹⁷ The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

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Ash Wednesday Service
March 9, 2011
7:00 p.m.

