



FIRST  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

DALTON, GEORGIA EST. 1847



Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, February 14, 2018

## The Season of Lent:

From the PC(USA)  
office of theology and  
worship.

The season of Lent is a time of prayer, fasting and self-examination in preparation for the celebration of the resurrection of the Lord at Easter. It is a period of 40 days — like the flood of Genesis, Moses' sojourn at Mount Sinai, Elijah's journey to Mount Horeb, Jonah's call to Ninevah to repent and Jesus' time of testing in the wilderness. (The Sundays in Lent are not counted in this reckoning of the time between Ash Wednesday and Easter, as every Lord's Day is a celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.)

In the early church, Lent was a time of preparation for the celebration of baptism at the Easter Vigil. In many communities of faith it remains a time to equip and nurture candidates for baptism and confirmation and to reflect deeply on the theme of baptismal discipleship.

\*Where you see this notation, please rise in body or in spirit.

# WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2018

## PRELUDE

Ubi Caritas

O. Gjeilo  
(b. 1978)

*Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.  
Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor.  
Exultemus, et in ipso iucundemur.  
Timeamus, et amemus Deum vivum.  
Et ex corde diligamus nos sincero.*

Translation:

*Where charity and love are, God is there.  
Christ's love has gathered us into one.  
Let us rejoice and be pleased in Him.  
Let us fear, and let us love the living God.  
And may we love each other with a sincere heart.*

## THE GREETING

*At the sound of the bells, please prepare your heart and mind for worship.*

## OPENING SENTENCES

The Peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you  
**And also with you.**

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Will Scott

God sent Christ into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.

**God's love endures forever**

God is our refuge and strength, a present help in trouble.

**God's love endures forever.**

Therefore we will not fear though the earth should change, though the mountains shake at the heart of the sea; though the waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

**God's love endures forever.**

Let us worship God.

## \*UNISON PRAYER OF INVOCATION

**Gracious God, you breathed your life into the dust of the earth, creating us in your image to love and serve others. Animate our worship with that same breath, that as we confront the darkness of the world we may fix our eyes on your eternal promise, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## \*HYMN 836

Abide with Me

*Eventide*

## CALL TO CONFESSION

## LITANY OF CONFESSION

Holy and merciful God, we confess to you and to one another, and to the whole communion of saints in heaven and on earth, that we have sinned by our own fault in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.

**We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and strength.  
We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven  
others as we have been forgiven.**

Have mercy on us, O God. We have not listened to your call to serve as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

**Have mercy on us, O God.**

We confess to you, O God, all our past unfaithfulness: The pride, hypocrisy, and impatience in our lives,

**we confess to you, O God.**

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways and our exploitation of other people,

**we confess to you, O God.**

Our anger at our own frustration and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,

**we confess to you, O God.**

Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonesty in daily life and work,

**we confess to you, O God.**

Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,

**we confess to you, O God.**

Accept our repentance, O God, for the wrongs we have done. For our neglect of human need and suffering and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,

**accept our repentance, O God.**

For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us,

**accept our repentance, O God.**

For our waste and pollution of your creation and our lack of concern for those who come after us,

The Litany of Confession is from the PC(USA) Book of Common Worship

**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.

## A Time to Turn

**Continued:** 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.

*-Companion to the Book of Common Worship*  
(Geneva Press, 2003,

accept our repentance, O God.

Restore us, O God, and let our anger depart from us.

Favorably hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.

Amen.

## SILENT MEDITATION

### CHORAL RESPONSE

What Wondrous Love Is This

*Wondrous Love*

### ANTHEM

God is Love

R. Proulx  
(1937-2010)

Cantor sings verses, congregation sings refrain

#### Refrain



God is—love, and where true love is found, God is—al - ways there.

*Here in Christ we gather, love of Christ our calling,  
Christ, our love, is with us, gladness be his greeting.  
Let us fear and love Him, holy God eternal.  
Loving him, let each love Christ in one another.*

#### Refrain

*When we Christian gather, members of one Body,  
let there be in us no discord but on spirit.  
Banished now be anger, strife and every quarrel.  
Christ, our God, be always present here among us.*

#### Refrain

*Grant us love’s fulfillment, joy with all the blessed,  
when we see your face, O Savior, in its glory.  
Shine on us, O purest Light of all creation,  
be out bliss while endless ages sing your praises.*

#### Refrain

## ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Friends, believe the good news of the gospel.

**In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God!**

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

# SCRIPTURE LESSON

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

NRSV

- <sup>1</sup> 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 —
- <sup>2</sup> 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.
- <sup>12</sup> Yet even now, says the LORD,  
    return to me with all your heart,  
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;  
<sup>13</sup>    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.
- <sup>14</sup> 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?
- <sup>15</sup> Blow the trumpet in Zion;  
    sanctify a fast;  
call a solemn assembly;  
<sup>16</sup>    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.
- <sup>17</sup> 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?’”

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## MEDITATION

### HYMN 436

God of Compassion, in Mercy Befriend Us

*O Quanta Qualia*

**Instructions for  
Communion and the  
Imposition of Ashes:**

We invite you to come forward as you feel called to partake in communion. We celebrate communion through the old Scottish practice of intinction. When invited, you may come forward and tear a piece from the bread, dip it into the cup, and partake. After receiving communion, you may then receive ashes from the Pastor in the front of the church and return to your seat via the aisle that led you to the front.

## COMMUNION AND IMPOSITION OF ASHES

### INVITATION TO THE TABLE

### THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Holy and Gracious God, we thank you for the abundant gifts of life and creation. In the beginning of all things your Spirit spread over the waters of creation and drew order and life from the depths. Your Spirit breathed into the dust of the earth and you gathered your creation like a potter at the wheel, forming all people in the image of your love. When we turned away from you, you reminded us that that we are dust; you sent prophets to call us to turn back and repent with ashes; you loved us despite our frailty. For gifts of life and creation we sing your praise:

*(Sung by the men of the choir)*

*Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus Dominus  
Deus Sabbaoth.  
Pleni sunt caeli et terra gloria tua.  
Hosanna in excelsis.  
Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.  
Hosanna in excelsis.*

Translation:

*Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.  
Full are the heavens and the earth  
with glory of Thine.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blesses is He who comes in the  
name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.*

In the midst of creation you yourself took on the frailty of ashes and dust in the person of your Son, Jesus. We remember how he wandered into the wilderness of sin to prepare for the coming way that leads from death to life; sin to grace; hate to love; discipleship to cross. Ashes to ashes. Dust to dust. We remember how the cross of death opened the way of life, and how Jesus leads us along that way.

We ask for the presence of your Spirit to guide us still—to raise us into the presence of God through this holy food; to be within us as we eat, that the bread we break and the cup we bless would be for us the body and blood of Christ—God's own presence in the stuff of earth. By our meal make us one in sharing with brothers and sisters of every nation; feed our souls as you feed our bodies; nourish us with your presence that we would follow Jesus as his faithful disciples, showing his way to a wandering world—a way of life and growth and change, a way through ashes and dust.

All praise to you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

### WORDS OF INSTITUTION

## AGNUS DEI

*After the words of institution the pastor will invite the elders forward to prepare the communion. The congregation will sing an Agnus Dei. After the Agnus Dei the pastor will invite you to come forward to receive Communion. Gluten free wafers are available.*

*(Sung by the men of the choir)*

*Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi:  
Dona eis requiem.*

Translation:

*Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world:  
Grant them rest.*

## COMMUNION

### MUSIC DURING COMMUNION

Jesu, Dulcis Memoria

Attr. T.L. Victoria  
(1548-1611)

*Jesu dulcis memoria, dans vera, vera cordi gaudia:  
Sed super mel et omnia, ejus dulcis praesentia.*

Translation:

*Jesu! The very thought is sweet, in that dear name all heartjoys meet;  
But sweeter than the honey far, the glimpses of His presence are.*

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

### \*HYMN 757

Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples

*Kingsfold*

## BENEDICTION

*There will be no postlude during the season of Lent.  
Please leave the church in an attitude of prayer.*

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### Communion:

We invite you to come forward for communion via the nearest accessible main aisle and return to your seat the way you came. Communion is served by intinction. Tear a piece of bread from the loaf held by one elder, dip it in the cup held by another, and then, "Taste and see that the Lord is



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