

February 14, 2023

7:00 p.m.

Ash Wednesday

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WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS Carolyn Gilligan

PRELUDE "Hosea" Gregory Norbet

### GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

#### CALL TO WORSHIP

It is love which calls us here.

**That love which may see its own shadow yet continues to bring light to all.**

It is love which gathers us to this place.

**That love which whispers in our hearts, the love which sings in our silent souls.**

It is love which surrounds us in these moments.

**That love which is fresh with each breath, the love which endures forever.**

PRAYER OF INVOCATION Rev. Alice Batcher

OPENING HYMN #343 "Called as Partners in Christ's Service"

#### CALL TO CONFESSION

#### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**If it was only for a moment, God of our lives, it might not be too bad. But we abandon You far too often, far too easily. We are impatient people, not suffering those we consider to be foolish. We are jealous of what others have. We persist in demanding things be done according to our whims. We like to boast about all we have done. And the lists of the wrongdoings of others? Oh, we run out of space, trying to keep track of them. Here at the crossroads of love and ashes, we pray for Your forgiveness, God whose heart we break. Hear our faltering words, and whisper to us of Your mercy. Take all our foolish choices and toss them in Your bin of forgetfulness. Mark us with the ashes of the One who shows us how to be Your people, Jesus, our Sibling, our Lord, our Friend.....(silence for personal confession)**

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS Rev. Alice Batcher

God will not leave us alone but walks at our side. God's grace marks us as Beloved children. God's love lasts far longer than that very

short memory God has of our foolish lives. This is indeed good news. **It is God's compassion which welcomes us. It is God's peace which surrounds us. It is the constant love of God which embraces us with mercy.**

**Amen. Thanks be to God.**

#### AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Apostles' Creed)

Let us confess the faith of the Church as one, using the words of the Apostles' Creed. Church, what do you believe?

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, the Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord; who was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy catholic\* church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**

(\*universal)

### HEARING THE WORD

SCRIPTURE 1 Corinthians 13 (N.T. pg. 175)

Matthew 6:1-6; 16-21 (N.T. pgs. 5;6)

ANTHEM "O God, You Search Me" Bernadette Farrell

### PROCLAIMING THE WORD

SERMON: "Public Love and Private Faith" Rev. Alice Batcher

\*RESPONSE HYMN #433 "There's a Spirit in the Air"

IMPOSITION OF ASHES: *Please come forward down the center aisle to receive the ashes. The mark of the cross will be placed on your forehead unless you specify a preference for your hand.*

IMPOSITION OF ASHES: "With These Ashes"  
Gerard & Mary Chiusano

RESPONSIVE PRAYER

Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,

**That we may show forth your glory in the world.**

By the cross and passion of our Savior,

**bring us with all your saints to the joy of Christ's resurrection.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND 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.**

**CARRYING THE WORD TO THE WORLD**

INVITATION TO TITHES AND OFFERINGS & PRAYER OF DEDICATION

\*CLOSING HYMN #335 "Though I May Speak"

\*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE "Instrumental"

PLEASE REMAIN SEATED

\*Please stand if able



**Ash Wednesday**

Strewing ashes upon the head was in Old Testament times a sign of grief and mourning, a symbolic representation of the biblical words in Genesis: "Remember that you are but dust and to dust you shall return." The season of Lent, however, no matter how sad or somber, is always dominated at every moment by the joyful expectation of Christ's Easter victory.

First Presbyterian Church of Avenel

621 East Woodbridge Avenue

Avenel, NJ 07001

Rev. Alice Batcher

February 14, 2024



**Worship**

"Public Love and Private Faith"



## Film Discussion



Wednesday, February 21<sup>st</sup> through  
Wednesday, March 20<sup>th</sup>  
Jacob Morgan Hall  
Soup is served @ 5:30  
Film & discussion begins @ 6:15



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