



Return to the
LORD, your God,
for he is gracious
and merciful,
slow to anger, and
abounding in
steadfast love,
and relents from
punishing.

JOEL
NRSV
3:1-2:13

March 2, 2022

Covenant Presbyterian Church

*Welcome to a special Ash Wednesday service.
Tonight's service includes the sacrament of Holy Communion and the
Imposition of Ashes, for those who desire it.*

As you arrive in worship and find a place in a pew, please use the following prayer to center your thoughts and spirit. As the Prelude begins, quiet your voice and soul.

Gracious God, out of your love and mercy you breathed into dust the breath of life, creating us to serve you and neighbors. Create in us new and contrite hearts, that truly repenting of our sins, and acknowledge our brokenness we may obtain from you, the God of all mercy, full pardon and forgiveness; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

Assemble in God's Name

One: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

PRELUDE

Prelude on "Distress"
Prelude in the Phrygian Mode

George Shearing
Thomas Tallis

OPENING SENTENCES John 3:17; Psalm 46:1-3

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

All: **God's love endures forever.**

One: 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.

All: **God's love endures forever.**

PRAYER

*HYMN #77

Forty Days and Forty Nights
Chancel Choir

Aus der teife rufe ich

God's Word Proclaimed

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

OLD TESTAMENT READING Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

NRSV

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?’”

One: Holy wisdom, Holy word.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

NRSV

“Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

“So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. “And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

“And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

One: The gospel of the Lord.

All: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

HOMILY

INVITATION TO OBSERVE A HOLY LENT

LITANY OF PENITENCE

One: 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.

All: Have mercy on us, O God.

One: 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.

All: Have mercy on us, O God.

One: We confess to you, O God, all our past unfaithfulness.
For the pride, hypocrisy, and impatience in our lives,

All: Have mercy on us, O God.

One: For our self-indulgent appetites and ways
and our exploitation of other people,

All: Have mercy on us, O God.

One: For our anger at our own frustration
and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,

All: Have mercy on us, O God.

One: For our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts,
and our dishonesty in daily life and work,

All: Have mercy on us, O God.

One: For our negligence in prayer and worship,
and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,

All: Have mercy on us, O God.

One: 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,

All: Have mercy on us, O God.

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

All: Have mercy on us, O God.

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

All: Have mercy on us, O God.

One: Restore us, O God of our salvation,
and show us your steadfast love.

All: Turn to us in your mercy and redeem us.

ANTHEM

Ah, Jesus Lord, Thy Love to Me

David Johnson

Ah, Jesus Lord, thy love to me no thought can reach, no tongue declare;

O bind my thankful heart to thee, and reign without a rival there.

Thine wholly, thine alone I'd live, myself to thee entirely give.

O grant that nothing in my soul may dwell, but thy pure love alone;

*ah, may thy love possess me whole, my joy, my treasure, and my crown.
All coldness from my heart remove; may every act, word thought, be love.*

O Lord, how gracious is thy Way! All fear before thy presence flies;

care, anguish, sorrow, melt away, where'er thy healing hands arise.

O Jesus, nothing may I see, and nothing seek, desire, but thee.

Chancel Choir

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

God's Word Revealed

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

*HYMN #520

Here, O Our Lord, We See You Face to Face

Morecambe

Here, O our Lord, we see you face to face,

Here would we touch and handle things unseen,

Here grasp with firmer hand eternal grace,

And all our weariness upon you lean.

This is the hour of banquet and of song;

This is the heavenly table for us spread;

Here let us feast and, feasting, still prolong

The fellowship of living wine and bread.

Chancel Choir

GREAT THANKSGIVING

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

One: It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise, eternal God, creator and ruler of the universe. You are our God, and we are the creatures of your hand. You made us from the dust of the earth, breathed into us the breath of life, and set us in your world to love and serve you. When we rejected your love and ignored your wisdom, you did not reject us. You loved us still and

called us to turn again to you in obedience and in love. Therefore, we praise you, joining our voices with the heavenly choirs and with all the faithful of every time and place, who forever sing to the glory of your name.

All: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

One: You are holy, O God of majesty, and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Out of your great love for the world, you sent Jesus among us to set us free from the tyranny of evil. He lived as one of us, sharing our joys and sorrows. By his dying and rising, he releases us from bondage to sin and frees us from the dominion of death.

Remembering all your mighty and merciful acts, we take this bread and this wine from the gifts you have given us, and celebrate with joy the redemption won for us in Jesus Christ. Accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving as a living and holy offering of ourselves, that our lives may proclaim the One crucified and risen.

On the night before he met with death, Jesus came to the Table with those he loved. He took bread and praise you, God of all creation. He broke the bread among his disciples and said: Take this, all of you, and eat it. When the supper was ended, he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to you, God of all disciples and said: Take this, all of you, and drink from it. This is the cup of the new covenant sealed in my blood for the forgiveness of sin. Do this in remembrance of me.

All: According to Christ's commandment, we remember his death, we proclaim his resurrection, we await his coming in glory.

One: Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these your gifts of bread and wine, that the bread we break and the cup we bless may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ. By your Spirit unite us with the living Christ and with all who are baptized in his name, that we may be one in ministry in every place. As this bread is Christ's body for us, send us out to be the body of Christ in the world. Lead us, O God, by the power of your Spirit to live as the lord requires: to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with you, our God. Keep our eyes fixed on Jesus Christ until this mortal life is ended, and all that is earthly returns to dust. Give us strength to serve you faithfully until the promised day of resurrection when, with the redeemed of all the ages, we will feast with you at your table in glory. Through Christ, all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, with the Holy Spirit in the holy church, now and forever.

THE BREAD AND THE CUP

COMMUNION

One: The gifts of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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 #85**

What Wondrous Love is This

Southern Harmony

Go In God's Name

BENEDICTION

BLESSING AND CHARGE

POSTLUDE

Master Tallis' Testament

Herbert Howells

*Those who are able are invited to stand.

NSRV - New Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

Participating in Worship

Rev. Dr. Ronald Wood, Transitional Pastor

Christopher Johnson, Organist/Music Director

Chancel Choir

Lent Worship at Covenant Church

Thursday Lenten Service and Soup

Weekly services will be held in the sanctuary beginning at 5:45 P.M. with musical guests each week to enhance the brief worship service. A light dinner will follow in the Sawtelle Auditorium:

March 10th

Jay Steveskey, guitar

March 17th

Ron Stabinsky, Piano and Christopher Johnson, flute

March 24th

Tom Heinze, oboe

March 31st

Meghann Vaughn, mezzo-soprano

April 7th

Andrea Wittchen, harp

The Labyrinth will be available each Wednesday from 1:00-4:00 P.M.

A **Maundy Thursday** service will be held in the sanctuary at 7:00 P.M.