



ash wednesday

FEBRUARY 22

7:00 PM



seeking

Is this the fast that I choose?

Prelude

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus Murray/Brahms

Prayer for Preparation

God,
We want to hear your voice.
Shout loudly;
don't hold back.
Move in our spirits
the way you moved over the waters of creation.
We are beginning a new season today, God,
and we don't want to begin anything without you.
So speak to us today—
through silence,
through scripture,
through song.
Speak to us
as you spoke to the Israelites so many moons ago.
Speak to us like a gentle breeze
or a loud trumpet.
We don't care how,
we just long to hear your voice.
So don't hold back.
We are here.
We are listening.
Amen.

Call to Worship

Leader: We gather together at the edge of a new season.

People: **We stand together on the cusp of something new.**

Leader: Will we wade into self-reflection?

People: **Will we invite honesty to dance?**

Leader: Will we listen for God's invitation?

People: **Will we seek deeper faith?**

Leader: What kind of fast do we choose? What kind of faith will we build?

People: **We gather together at the edge of a new season.**

Scripture

Isaiah 58:1-5

Listen, God is speaking.

Shout out, do not hold back!

Lift up your voice like a trumpet!

Announce to my people their rebellion,
to the house of Jacob their sins.

Yet day after day they seek me
and delight to know my ways,

as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness
and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;

they ask of me righteous judgements,
they delight to draw near to God.

'Why do we fast, but you do not see?

Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?'

Look, you serve your own interest on your fast-day,
and oppress all your workers.

Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight
and to strike with a wicked fist.

Such fasting as you do today
will not make your voice heard on high.

Is such the fast that I choose,
a day to humble oneself?

Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush,
and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?

Will you call this a fast,
a day acceptable to the Lord?

Music

U - bi ca - ri - tas et a - mor,

The first system of the musical score is written in 2/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The melody is primarily in the treble clef, with lyrics placed below the notes. The lyrics are 'U - bi ca - ri - tas et a - mor,'. The music features a mix of chords and single notes, with some notes beamed together. There are fermatas over the final notes of the first phrase.

u - bi ca - ri - tas De - us i - bi est.

The second system of the musical score continues the melody from the first system. It also consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) in the same key and time signature. The lyrics are 'u - bi ca - ri - tas De - us i - bi est.'. The melody concludes with a triplet of eighth notes in the treble clef, marked with a '3' above it. The piece ends with a double bar line.

TEXT: Taizé Community, 1979; MUSIC: Jacques Berthier, 1979
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Scripture

Isaiah 58:6-12

Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?

Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?
Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly;
your vindicator shall go before you,
the glory of the Lord shall be your rearguard.

Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;
you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,
if you offer your food to the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness
and your gloom be like the noonday.
The Lord will guide you continually,
and satisfy your needs in parched places,
and make your bones strong;
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters never fail.
Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to live in.

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession (unison)

Merciful God,

How many times in a day could we choose love? How many times could we choose justice?

How many times could we speak kindly to ourselves? How many times could we offer grace?

How many times, God? And how often do we miss it? Forgive us for choosing the path you did not travel.

Forgive us for hitching our horse to the world's measure of goodness, instead of yours. Return our hearts to you, and guide us continually, even in the parched places. With gratitude we pray, Amen.

Reflection

From Isaiah 58:2 we hear:

“Yet day after day they seek me
and delight to know my ways,”

What would it be like for this to be our Lenten quest?

What gets in the way of our living this out, keeping us from seeking God daily?

Reflect on what this might be and when you are ready please write whatever is separating you from God, what if you gave this us, fasted from this, would bring you closer to God?

Write it on the paper you received and bring it forward and place it in the bowl as you come forward to receive your ashes.

Music

Sign Us with Ashes

The musical score is written in treble clef, 4/4 time, with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). It consists of three staves of music. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Sign us with ash - es, mer - ci - ful God,
chil - dren of dust, as to dust we re - turn. Sign us with ash - es,
mer - ci - ful God. Mark us and make us your own. _____

TEXT: Mary Louise Bringle, 2003; MUSIC: William P. Rowan, 2003
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Distribution of Ashes

Music

Sign Us with Ashes

Words of Forgiveness

***Affirmation of Faith** (unison)

Inspired by the words of Isaiah 58

We believe in a God who chooses freedom,
who unties every rope and carries our burdens.

We believe in a God who ushers in the poor and the hungry,
who has a seat saved for all of us.

We believe in a God whose love is like the sun,
who says, "I'm here, I'm here!" every time we cry.

We believe in a God who walks before us in the parched places,
who rescues our bones,
who tends to us like a gardener.

And because we believe,
we strive to choose love.

Because we believe,
we strive to pursue justice.

Because we believe... Amen.

Blessing

Postlude

Abide With Me

John Bertalot

weekly lenten services

wednesdays in lent 7:00 AM IN THE SANCTUARY

A 30-minute worship service with testimonies followed by a continental breakfast in the Great Room

holy week

palm sunday APRIL 2

The Palm Sunday services (9:00 and 10:30 AM) will involve the combined forces of the Worship Ensemble and Sanctuary Choir in a musical start to Holy Week that will be both celebratory and evocative.

maundy thursday APRIL 6

Join us for Dinner Church in the Great Room at 6:00 PM. We gather around the table for supper, worship, and communion as we reflect on the Last Supper of Jesus and his disciples.

Registration: firstchurchlf.org/maundy-thursday

good friday APRIL 7

Good Friday Worship, 12:00 PM
Tenebrae, 7:30 PM

easter sunday APRIL 9

Sunrise Outdoor Worship, 7:00 AM in the Memorial Garden
Easter Services, 9:00 and 11:00 AM in the Sanctuary
Easter Egg Hunt, 10:15 AM on the Parish House Lawn

