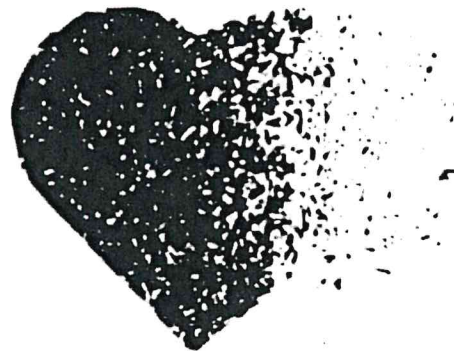


***Ash Wednesday***  
***February 14, 2024***  
***6:30 p.m.***



**OUR LORD'S**  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
*There's a Place for You Here*

## **GATHERING TOGETHER**

### **For Tonight...**

*Ash Wednesday is about refocusing and realigning ourselves in relationship to God and one another. We must encounter our sinfulness and frailty not with shame and blame but with honesty and truth, trusting that God hears our prayers.*

Prelude "Come, Let Us Worship and Bow Down"  
"Forgive Us, Lord"

arr. Ken Barker  
from FWS 2134

### Welcome

One voice: Good evening, Church! I see you!

**ALL voices: I am here!**

### Graceful Engagement

#### \*Call to Worship

One: We enter this holy season with the hearts God desires and with the sacrifices that please God.

**ALL: More than our letting go of bad habits, we come to pray, to remember, to offer and to receive grace, forgiveness and mercy for the road ahead.**

One: In this season of denial and repentance, let us take on what brings God joy:

**ALL: Guide us to share with the hungry, offer shelter and clothing to the homeless and poor, and show compassion to ALL we meet as they carry life's unshared burdens.**

*cont.*

One: In doing so, may light arise in the darkness.

**ALL: Let us be light bearers, for one another and the world, this Lent!**

\*Opening Hymn "Take My Life, and Let It Be"

UMH 399

\*Unison Prayer

**Creating God, still Center of the world You have made, we come to You in this season of turning and returning. We do not know how to seek You with our whole hearts, but we know You are our source and our destiny. In the midst of life, we return to You, we turn toward You. We thank You that You receive even the broken heart, the troubled conscience, the conflicted spirit. Seeking You in secret, may we honor You in public, through Jesus Christ, our path homeward to You. Amen.**

## LEARNING TOGETHER

Scripture Psalm 51:1-12, CEB, Matthew 6:5-6, 16-18, The Message

Response

One: The Word of God for ALL of us - God's people.

**ALL: Thanks be to God!**

Sermon "Something God Alone Can See"

## RESPONDING TOGETHER

Response Hymn "Hymn of Promise" vs. 1, 2

UMH 707

Invitation to Observe a Holy Lent

Responsive Prayer of Confession

One: Merciful God, we confess that too often we make choices about what we should and should not do based on what others will think of us. We seek the validation of family, friends, and even strangers instead of resting in our sacred worth and identity in You. And so, we travel the path of least resistance when we know that path does not align with Yours.

**ALL: Forgive us, God, when we perform for one another instead of living with integrity in You.**

One: Merciful God, we confess that we place too much value on money,

prestige, and influence. We live in a society that tells us we need more and more and more in order to live secure and satisfied lives, and we choose to live according to this lie to the detriment of ourselves and our neighbors.

**ALL: Forgive us, God, when we treasure wealth, status, possessions, and power over and above contrition, humility, generosity, and mutuality.**

One: Merciful God, we confess that we do not love You rightly. While we may love You with part of our lives, we do not love You as God with our whole lives. We resist Your call to surrender our lives into Your hands and to trust that You will care for us as individuals and as a community better than we could ever do on our own.

**ALL: Forgive us, God, when we point our hearts toward selfish gain instead of the lasting worth of life with You.**

*A moment to pray our silent confession.*

### Words of Assurance

Pastor: Receive this good news: We love because God first loved us.

In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.

**ALL: In the name of Jesus Christ, ALL sins are forgiven.**

Pastor: Repent and believe, for God's grace empowers us live in the humility of the beautiful and freeing truth that God is God, and we are not.

**ALL: Thanks be to God.**

### The Great Thanksgiving Abbreviated

#### The Blessing of Ashes

##### \*Moving Toward the Grace of God

One: Please come forward to generously offer your gift, to humbly receive the ashes and to commune the elements of unconditional love and grace!

One: The peace of Christ be with you! **ALL: And, also with you!**

##### \*Blessing Prayer of Thanks to God

**We've a desire to enter the journey now, Lord, fueled for it with Your love and grace. Bless all that we bring here, all that we leave here and all that we take with us into this season. Thank You for the abiding presence of Your Holy Spirit and Your unyielding faithfulness even**

*cont.*

when we struggle to take a step in faith. Thank You for Your revelation in Jesus and for all that is “Unrevealed Until Its Season”. We trust You, Lord, as we learn and grow this Lent. Let it be so.

\*Final Blessing

\*Closing Hymn “He Leadeth Me: O Blessed Thought” vs. 1, 3  
UMH 128

\*Postlude “Out of the Depths” from FWS 2136

Lectionary readings: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17, Psalm 51:1-17, 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10,  
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

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**Highlighting, with gratitude, our servant leaders for this service...**

Tech: **Joe Whyms**, Dave Smith, **Izzy Veit**, Wendi Haubert  
Worship leaders: **Amy Veit**, Sophia Veit, Debbie Huyck,  
Sue Albers, Pat Mehring, Chuck Garrigues, Tony  
Suminski, Ken Miller, Mary Schulz, Wendi Haubert,  
Sue Schulkers

Light bearer: Kathy Depies  
Musicians: Sue Broker, **Sue Schulkers**, Dave Smith (midi)  
Coffee host: Don Mains

CBA: Wendi Haubert/finance@ourlordsumc.org  
Office Administrator: Tabitha Manning/office@ourlordsumc.org  
Pastor: Kelly Fowler/pastorkelly@ourlordsumc.org

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\*Visit us on our website at [www.ourlordsumc.org](http://www.ourlordsumc.org)

Worship resource: **Ministry Matters**, <https://www.ministrymatters.com/>, Discipleship Ministries, <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/>, Unison Prayer: *reprinted with permission of the publisher from Touch Holiness, ed. Ruth C. Duck and Maren C. Tirabassi. Copyright © 1990 by The Pilgrim.*

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