St. Paul's United Church February 18th, 2015 Ash Wednesday * = please stand as you are able

We enter in silence

*Greeting

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all, *and also with you*.

IntroitTake O Take Me as I am (X3)MV 85Take, O take me as I am; summon out what I will be;Set your seal upon my heart and live in me.

Gathering

Preparing for the Journey

Call to God: Psalm 138 (VU 861 – no refrain)

Invitation to Confession

Confession

For the times when we are too rushed to care, when we are too tired to bother, when we don't really listen, when we act from motives other than love,

God, forgive us.

Silence

For our incapacity to feel the sufferings of others, and our tendency to live comfortably with injustice, *God, forgive us. Silence*

For our failings in community, our lack of understanding, *God, forgive us. Silence*

For our lack of forgiveness, openness, sensitivity, *God, forgive us.*

Silence

For the self-righteousness that denies guilt, and the self-interest that strangles compassion, *God, forgive us. Silence*

Shedding the Past: 2 Corinthians 5:15-6:2

***Hymn** Spirit Open My Heart MV 79

Beginning the Journey

Remembering our Baptism Let us not retreat, but listen to the psalmist. *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.*

All are invited to come to the baptismal font to have water poured over their hands, as a reminder of their baptism and the call to leave behind the past and start on a new journey.

Out of the waters of baptism we rise to new life, renewed, and one with Christ.

Quenching of the Ashes with Baptismal Water

These ashes remind us of our frailty and our mortality. This water proclaims the grace of God. The mark we bear calls us to walk the way of the cross.

God our creator, you have formed us out of the dust of the earth. May these ashes be to us a sign of our mortality and penitence, so that we may remember that only by your gracious gift are we given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our saviour. AMEN

Joining One Another: John 15:12-17

On the Path Together

Prayers of the People

The Mark of Ashes From where do I look for help? My help comes from God. God marks us as God's own, And so we mark ourselves, children of God.

All are invited to come forward to receive the ashes, marking them as followers of Christ.

Remember that you are part of God's holy earth: one with God in brokenness and blessing. **AMEN**

***Hymn** O God How we have wandered VU 112

Sending Forth

Anyone in Christ becomes a new person altogether, the past is finished and gone, everything becomes fresh and new. Glory to God, whose power working in us can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine! Glory to God from generation to generation in the world, in the church, and in our lives!

*Blessing

*Choral Closing God be With you till we Meet Again VU 422 God be with you till we meet again Loving councils guide uphold you With a shepherds care enfold you God be with you till we meet again. Till we meet, till meet, till we meet at Jesus feet. Till we meet, till meet, God be with you till we meet again.