

DOWNTOWN UNITED

A Service of Wilmot and St. Paul's United Churches

Ash Wednesday Service

March 2, 2022 at 7 pm

Invitation to Worship:

Into the darkness of the night

We bring the light of our good intentions

May God bless us and our time together,

that when we leave here this evening, we may be a blessing.

Gathering Hymn: *Sunday's Palms Are Wednesday's Ashes*

VU107

*Sunday's palms are Wednesday's ashes
as another Lent begins;
thus we kneel before our Maker
in contrition for our sins.*

*We have marred baptismal pledges,
in rebellion gone astray;
now, returning, seek forgiveness;
grant us pardon, God, this day!*

*We have failed to love our neighbours,
their offences to forgive,
have not listened to their troubles,
nor have cared just how they live;
we are jealous, proud, impatient,
loving overmuch our things;
may the yielding of our failings
be our Lenten offering.*

*We are hasty to judge others,
blind to proof of human need;
and our lack of understanding
demonstrates our inner greed;
we have wasted earth's resources;
want and suffering we've ignored;
come and cleanse us, then restore us;
make new hearts within us, Lord!*

Opening Prayer: (Responsive)

The journey begins again, O God,

We will walk it with you.

The journey begins again, O God,

We will walk it with integrity.

The journey begins again, O God,
We will walk it in confidence,
For you are with us, and though the road will lead to the cross,
We will not be afraid,
For it is the way you have already walked.

Sharing the Prayer that Jesus Taught: VU 916 A Translation

Prayer of Confession:

Sung Response: *Take, O Take Me as I Am*

MV 85

*Take, O take me as I am; summon out what I shall be;
Set yourself upon my heart and live in me. 2x*

Words of Assurance:

God who loves us births us into new living.

We are free, and clean, and whole.

God who loves us heals broken hearts

And gives us new spirits for living.

God who loves us will stay with us always.

We are God's forever

Thanks be to God! Amen.

Listening for the Word in our Sacred Texts:

Let us prepare ourselves to be touched by the witness of scripture.

Our hearts and minds are open.

Reading: John 10:11-18

Sung Response: *Take, O Take Me As I Am*

MV 85

*Take, O take me as I am; summon out what I shall be;
Set yourself upon my heart and live in me. 2x*

Reflection: Rev. Michelle Armstrong

Imposition of Ashes:

Prayer of Community: (Together)

The past is gone, dry, brittle, memory. We cannot live there. But God, in kind, offers us new possibility, new hope. By facing the past, we are set free for the future God has planned for us. These ashes herald our new life as we begin our Lenten journey. May our treasure always be in God. Amen.

*God is my shepherd, I'll not want,
I feed in pastures green.
God grants me rest and bids me drink
from waters calm and clean.
Through daily tasks, I'm blessed and led
by one I have not seen.*

*Restored to life each morning new,
I rise up from the dust
to follow God whose presence gives
me confidence and trust.
I praise the name of God today;
in God I put my trust.*

*When I must pass through shadowed vale,
where loss and death await,
I will not fear for God is there,
my shepherd strong and great,
whose rod and staff will comfort me
and all my fears abate.*

*No enemy can overcome,
no power on earth defeat
the ones anointed by God's grace
and fed with manna sweet.
My cup is filled and overflows
as I my Saviour greet.*

*Goodness and mercy all my days
will surely follow me;
and where God reigns in heaven and earth,
my dwelling place will be.
My shepherd blesses, cares and leads
through all eternity.*

Blessing of Departure:

Resources used today are adapted from the Gathering, 2012 pp47-48 and Bibleworm Collective

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Minster: Rev. Michelle Armstrong; Minster: Rev. Mary Tingley

Organist: Margaret MacDonald

Land Acknowledgement: *We remember that St. Paul's sanctuary and our worship here is on the unceded territory of the Wolastoqey peoples. Long before this building was here, the land was considered sacred and tended to with respect and care. May our faith drive us to seek to be in right relationship with the first peoples of this land*