

Welcome to

First Mennonite Church

Denver, CO



Ash Wednesday

March 2, 2022

*That you may know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge,
so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*

Entering Worship

The Peace of the Lord be with you!

Words of Welcome

Invitation from Scripture

Joel 2:12

“But even now,” says the Lord, “repent sincerely and return to me with fasting and weeping and mourning.”

Matthew 11:28

Come to me, all of you who are tired from carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest.

Call to Worship

Leader: Come people of God, return to the One who gives you life.

People: We come, longing for a closer walk with our Creator.

Leader: This is a time to return to God with all our hearts.

People: We repent of those things which we have done that we should not have done and those things we have left undone which we should have done.

Leader: We affirm that God is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in love.

People: We come with joy, expecting to be renewed, eager to be a channel of God’s blessing. We trust that God will equip us to reach out in love to others.

♪ **Amazing Grace!** (vs. 1, 3, 4)

Voices Together 163

Vs 1 Amazing grace! how sweet the sound,
that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
was blind, but now I see.

Vs 3 Through many dangers, toils, and snares
I have already come.
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home.

Vs 4 When we've been there ten thousand years,
bright shining as the sun,
we've no less days to sing God's praise
than when we'd first begun.

Unison Prayer

Creating God,

In this season of Lent, we thank you to receive us as we are- whether it be a troubled conscience, a conflicted spirit, a wounded or broken heart, you accept us and you love us unconditionally.

You embrace and accept us, loving us unconditionally.

Today we turn toward you. Wash away our guilt and cleanse us from sin.

Open our hearts to you, walk with us this Lenten season.

Amen

Introduction to the Readings

We Remember

Exodus 13:3, 9

Moses said to the people, "Remember this day—the day on which you left Egypt, the place where you were slaves. This is the day the Lord brought you out by his great power. No leavened bread is to be eaten... This observance will be a reminder, like something tied on your hand or on your forehead; it will remind you to continue to recite and study the Law of the Lord, because the Lord brought you out of Egypt by his great power."

Deuteronomy 8:2-6

Remember how the Lord your God led you on this long journey through the desert these past forty years, sending hardships to test you, so that he might know what you intended to do and whether you would obey his commands. He made you go hungry, and then he gave you manna to eat, food that you and your ancestors had never eaten before. He did this to teach you that you must not depend on bread alone to sustain you, but on everything that the Lord says. During these forty years your clothes have not worn out, nor have your feet swollen up. Remember that the Lord your God corrects and punishes you just as parents discipline their children. So then, do as the Lord has commanded you: live according to his laws and obey him.

Psalms 25:6-7

Remember, O Lord, your kindness and constant love
Which you have shown from long ago.

Forgive the sins and errors of my youth.
In your constant love and goodness,
remember me, Lord!

We Repent

Joel 2:12-13

“But even now,” says the Lord,
“repent sincerely and return to me
with fasting and weeping and mourning.
Let your broken heart show your sorrow;
tearing your clothes is not enough.”

Come back to the Lord your God.
He is kind and full of mercy;
he is patient and keeps his promise;
he is always ready to forgive and not punish.

Psalms 51:1-7

Be merciful to me, O God,
because of your constant love.
Because of your great mercy
wipe away my sins!
Wash away all my evil
and make me clean from my sin!
I recognize my faults;
I am always conscious of my sins.
I have sinned against you- only against you-
and done what you consider evil.
So you are right in judging me;
you are justified in condemning me.
I have been evil from the day I was born;
From the time I was conceived, I have been sinful.

Sincerity and truth are what you require;
fill my mind with your wisdom.
Remove my sin, and I will be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Psalms 51:10-15

Create a pure heart in me, O God,
and put a new and loyal spirit in me.
Do not banish me from your presence;
do not take your holy spirit away from me.
Give me again the joy that comes from your salvation,
and make me willing to obey you.
Then I will teach sinners your commands,
and they will turn back to you.

Spare my life, O God, and save me,
and I will gladly proclaim your righteousness.
Help me to speak, Lord,
and I will praise you.

We Can Be Renewed

Isaiah 43:18-21

But the Lord says,
“Do not cling to events of the past
or dwell on what happened long ago.
Watch for the new thing I am going to do.
It is happening already- you can see it now!
I will make a road through the wilderness
and give you streams of water there.
Even the wild animals will honor me;
jackals and ostriches will praise me
when I make rivers flow in the desert
to give water to my chosen people.
They are the people I made for myself,
and they will sing my praises!”

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

Anyone who is joined to Christ is a new being; the old is gone, the new has come. All this is done by God, who through Christ changed us from enemies into his friends and gave us the task of making others his friends also. Our message is that God was making all human beings his friends through Christ. God did not keep an account of their sins, and he has given us the message which tells how he makes them his friends.

Here we are, then, speaking for Christ, as though God himself were making his appeal through us. We plead on Christ's behalf: let God change you from enemies into his friends! Christ was without sin, but for our sake God made him share our sin in order that in union with him we might share the righteousness of God.

Revelation 21:5-7

Then the one who sits on the throne said, “And now I make all things new!” He also said to me, “Write this, because these words are true and can be trusted.” And he said, “It is done! I am the first and the last, the

beginning and the end. To anyone who is thirsty I will give the right to drink from the spring of the water of life without paying for it. Those who win the victory will receive this from me: I will be their God, and they will be my children.

♪ Kum Ba Yah

Vs 1 Kum ba yah, my Lord, Kum ba yah!
Kum ba yah, my Lord, Kum ba yah!
Kum ba yah, my Lord, Kum ba yah!
O Lord, Kum ba yah.

Vs 2 Someone's crying, Lord, Kum ba yah!
Someone's crying, Lord, Kum ba yah!
Someone's crying, Lord, Kum ba yah!
O Lord, Kum ba yah.

Vs 3 Someone's praying, Lord, Kum ba yah!
Someone's praying, Lord, Kum ba yah!
Someone's praying, Lord, Kum ba yah!
O Lord, Kum ba yah.

Ashes of Forgiveness and Purification

Prayer of Confession

God of love and mercy

We come to you, seeking a change in our hearts and minds.

We confess that we carry the baggage of idols, bitterness, and self-concern, even while we attempt to follow Christ.

Cleanse us from our attachment to these old things.

Burn away their power in us and purify our hearts.

In Christ's name.

Amen.

Prayer Over Ashes

Ashes are imposed

Remember that you are dust,
be renewed through the love of Christ.

Receive a Prayer Reminder

Prayer of Commitment

♪ *I Have Decided to Follow Jesus* (vs. 1, 3)

VT 443

Vs 1 I have decided to follow Jesus.
I have decided to follow Jesus.
I have decided to follow Jesus-
no turning back, no turning back.

Vs 3 Though none go with me, I still will follow.
Though none go with me, I still will follow
Though none go with me, I still will follow
No turning back, no turning back.

The Lord’s Prayer

Benediction



After the service: Fellowship Time

Join us in the Community Center after worship for fellowship.

Music acknowledgements and copyright

Amazing Grace!

Text: stanzas 1-3 John Newton, *Olney Hymns*, 1779; stanza 4 *A Collection of Sacred Ballads*, 1790, alt.

Music: American traditional, *Columbian Harmony*, 1829; adapt. and harm. Edwin O Excell, 1900

Kum Ba Yah

Text & Music: African American spiritual

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus

Text: anon. (India); adapt. Paul B Smith

Music: Indian traditional; Adapt. Paul B Smith; harm. Norman Johnson

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Thanks to all who generously shared their attention and talents to make this service a time of encouragement and challenge in our walk of faith.

Giving

Checks: Write a check to FMC and drop in the offering box.

Online: Visit www.fmcdenver.org/giving or scan the QR code to the right. Make a one-time contribution or set up a recurring contribution with a credit/debit card or a direct withdrawal from your checking account.



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