



# THE OLD STONE CHURCH

FEBRUARY 14, 2024  
ASH WEDNESDAY

12:15 PM Sanctuary Worship

\* OPENING SENTENCE (*As you are able please stand*)

Pastor Stephen C. Blonder Adams

God sent Christ into the world  
not to condemn the world,  
but that the world might be saved through him.  
**God's love endures forever.**

God is our refuge and strength,  
a present help in trouble.  
Therefore we will not fear  
though the earth should change,  
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;  
though the waters roar and foam,  
though the mountains tremble with its tumult.  
**God's love endures forever.**

\* Those who are able are requested to stand

Please silence all electronic devices.

## \* PRAYER FOR ASH WEDNESDAY

Almighty God,  
you despise nothing you have made  
and you forgive the sins of all who trust in you.  
Create in us new and contrite hearts,  
that truly repenting of our sins,  
and acknowledging our brokenness,  
we may receive from you, the God of all mercy,  
full pardon and forgiveness;  
through your Son, Jesus Christ our redeemer,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and forever.

Amen.

## WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Merciful God,  
your word is our way of truth and life.  
Create in us hearts that are clean  
and put your Holy Spirit within us,  
so that we may receive your grace  
and declare your praise forever;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### THE READINGS

Hebrew Scripture                      Joel 2:1–2, 12–17 (NRSV Updated Version)

Blow the trumpet in Zion;  
    sound the alarm on my holy mountain!  
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,  
    for the day of the LORD is coming, it is near—  
a day of darkness and gloom,  
    a day of clouds and thick darkness!  
Like blackness spread upon the mountains,  
    a great and powerful army comes;  
their like has never been from of old,  
    nor will be again after them  
in ages to come.

Yet even now, says the LORD,  
return to me with all your heart,  
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;  
rend your hearts and not your clothing.  
Return to the LORD your God,  
for he is gracious and merciful,  
slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love,  
and relenting from punishment.  
Who knows whether he will not turn and relent  
and leave a blessing behind him,  
a grain offering and a drink offering  
for the LORD your God?

Blow the trumpet in Zion;  
consecrate a fast;  
call a solemn assembly;  
gather the people.  
Consecrate the congregation;  
assemble the aged;  
gather the children,  
even infants at the breast.  
Let the bridegroom leave his room  
and the bride her canopy.

Between the vestibule and the altar,  
let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep.  
Let them say, "Spare your people, O LORD,  
and do not make your heritage a mockery,  
a byword among the nations.  
Why should it be said among the peoples,  
'Where is their God?' "

The Word of the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

SOLO

*Pie Jesu*

*Gabriel Fauré*

Pie Jesu Domine, dona eis requiem	Merciful Jesus, Lord, give them rest
Dona eis Domine, sempiternam requiem.	Give them rest, eternal rest.

*Val Sibila, soprano*

“Beware of practicing your righteousness before others in order to be seen by them, for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

“So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

“And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

“And whenever you fast, do not look somber, like the hypocrites, for they mark their faces to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

PASTOR'S REFLECTION

Pastor Stephen C. Blonder Adams

## INVITATION TO OBSERVE A HOLY LENT

Beloved people of God:  
every year at the time of the Christian Passover  
we celebrate our redemption  
through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
Lent is a time to prepare for this celebration  
and to renew our life in the paschal mystery.  
We begin this holy season  
by acknowledging our need for repentance,  
and for the mercy and forgiveness  
proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ

We begin our journey to Easter with the sign of ashes.  
This ancient sign speaks of the frailty and uncertainty  
of human life,  
and marks the penitence of this community.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of Christ,  
to observe a holy Lent  
by self-examination and penitence,  
by prayer and fasting,  
by works of love,  
and by meditating on God's word.  
Now let us bow before God, our creator and redeemer,  
and confess our *sin*.

*(A time of silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.)*





PSALM 51 (congregation joins in the response)

Be mer - ci - ful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Dm Dm7 Gm7 Am7 Dm

Psalms Tone #27

Ps. 51:3-4, 5-6a, 12-13, 14 and 17 / 22 (219)

1. Have mercy on me, O God, according to your mer-ci - ful love; according to your great compassion, blot out my trans - gressions.

2. My transgressions, truly I know them; my sin is always be - fore me.

3. Create a pure heart for me, O God; renew a steadfast spirit with - in me.

4. Restore in me the joy of your sal - vation; sustain in me a willing spirit.

Dm Dm/C Bm7(b5) GADD9

1. Wash me completely from my in - iquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

2. Against you, you alone, have I sinned; what is evil in your sight I have done.

3. Do not cast me away from your presence; take not your holy spirit from me.

4. O Lord, open my lips and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Dm Am/C Bbmaj7 GADD9

## LITANY OF PENENCE

Holy and merciful God,  
we confess to you and to one another,  
and to the whole communion of saints  
in heaven and on earth,  
that we have sinned by our own fault  
in thought, word, and deed,  
by what we have done,  
and by what we have left undone.

We have not loved you with our whole heart,  
and mind, and strength.  
We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.  
We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven.  
**Have mercy on us, O God.**

We have not listened to your call to serve as Christ served us.  
We have not been true to the mind of Christ.  
We have grieved your Holy Spirit.  
**Have mercy on us, O God.**

We confess to you, O God, all our past unfaithfulness.  
For the pride, hypocrisy, and impatience in our lives,  
**have mercy on us, O God.**

For our self-indulgent appetites and ways  
and our exploitation of other people,  
**have mercy on us, O God.**

For our anger at our own frustration  
and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,  
**have mercy on us, O God.**

For our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts,  
and our dishonesty in daily life and work,  
**have mercy on us, O God.**

For our negligence in prayer and worship,  
and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,  
**have mercy on us, O God.**

Accept our repentance, O God,  
for the wrongs we have done.  
For our neglect of human need and suffering  
and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,  
**have mercy on us, O God.**

For all false judgments,  
for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors,  
and for our prejudice and contempt  
toward those who differ from us,  
**have mercy on us, O God.**

For our waste and pollution of your creation  
and our lack of concern for those who come after us,  
**have mercy on us, O God.**

Restore us, O God of our salvation,  
and show us your steadfast love.  
**Turn to us in your mercy and redeem us.**

## IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Almighty God,  
you have created us out of the dust of the earth.  
May these ashes be for us  
a sign of our mortality and penitence,  
for it is only by your gracious gift  
are we given everlasting life;  
through Jesus Christ our Savior.  
**Amen.**

*(During the imposition each forehead is marked, using the following words.)*

Remember that you are dust,  
and to dust you shall return.  
**Amen.**

*(After all who desire ashes have received them.)*

Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,  
**that we may show forth your glory in the world.**

By the cross and passion of our Savior,  
**bring us with all your saints  
to the joy of Christ's resurrection.**

## BLESSING AND CHARGE

May the God of peace  
make you holy in every way  
and keep your whole being—  
spirit, soul, and body—  
free from every fault  
at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
**Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**