

Ash Wednesday – Wednesday March 2nd, 2022

Call To Worship:

Eric: A new dawn greets us with possibility.

People: **We shrug off sleep yawning and dragging our feet resistant to change all over again.**

Eric: A new day peeks over the horizon inviting us to risk hope.

People: **We have already wandered so long and so far and cannot imagine what might happen next so we come with trust in our God who leads us ever forward.**

Prayer for Tired Feet: *Bill and Shawna Foster*

Inspired by Psalm 51:1–17

Bill: O God, our arches ache and our soles swell from pushing to get here to this moment.

Shawna: **We are tired.**

Bill: We are so very tired from carrying so much and from being so weighed down.

Shawna: **We feel the stiff calluses between our toes.**

Bill: We feel every bump and bruise and have even wondered if these bodies could take one more step.

Shawna: **We feel not ready and too tired but we need a new spirit.**

Bill: We need a willing spirit, maybe even a right spirit for all that we don't yet understand in our secret hearts.

Shawna: **We have come all this way to this most holy ground to listen to you, O God, whispering to the truth in our most inward beings.**

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5: 20 – 6: 10

Janet: We speak for Christ and sincerely ask you to make peace with God.

Bette: ***Christ never sinned!***

Tracey: **But God treated him as a sinner, so that Christ could make us acceptable to God.**

Janet: We work together with God, and we beg you to make good use of God's kindness to you.

Bette: ***In the Scriptures God says, "When the time came, I listened to you, and when you needed help, I came to save you."***

Tracey: **That time has come.**

Janet: This is the day for you to be saved.

Bette: ***We don't want anyone to find fault with our work, and so we try hard not to cause problems.***

Tracey: **But in everything and in every way we show that we truly are God's servants.**

Janet: We have always been patient, though we have had a lot of trouble, suffering, and hard times.

Bette: ***We have been beaten, put in jail, and hurt in riots.***

Tracey: **We have worked hard and have gone without sleep or food.**

Janet: But we have kept ourselves pure and have been understanding, patient, and kind.

Bette: ***The Holy Spirit has been with us, and our love has been real.***

Tracey: **We have spoken the truth, and God's power has worked in us.**

Janet: In all our struggles we have said and done only what is right.

Bette: ***Whether we were honored or dishonored or praised or cursed, we always told the truth about ourselves.***

Tracey: **But some people said we did not.**

Janet: We are unknown to others, but well known to you.

Bette: *We seem to be dying, and yet we are still alive.*

Tracey: We have been punished, but never killed, and we are always happy, even in times of suffering. Although we are poor, we have made many people rich.

Janet: And though we own nothing, everything is ours.

Prayer for Lent's Beginning:

Andrew: Lent begins here, O God, with one foot planted here in the present and the other inching into the promise of tomorrow.

Bob: Lent begins here, O God, in this place where we remember every part of the world and every person on this earth who has blessed us with vision and hope.

Alice: *It begins in our wondering and quiet contemplation for the world we imagine to be dawning.*

Andrew: It begins with our questions of what we are called to do to usher in this new creation.

Bob: Lent begins here, O God, in the quiet where every question opens to wonder and awe.

Alice: *It begins with our hearts open to what could be in shared expectation and that expectation will move us together into new life.*

Andrew: O God, help us to find the holiness not just in this place or in this season but in the whole marvel of life in this world.

Bob: We pray in your hope.

All: Amen.

Imposition of ashes

Andrew and Eric: *(With your finger, mark each forehead with a sign of the cross and repeat these words), "You are dust and to dust you shall return."*

Bless

Andrew: Guide our feet, O God, from this holy place among these good people into the wilds of this season.

Eric: May we find your wisdom in our secret hearts.

Andrew: May we be restored and hope-filled with the promise of new life.

Eric: May we find your spirit urging us forward calling us by name leading us into the new world we dare to dream is possible.

All: Let it be so.