

Wesley United Methodist Church – Bloomington, Illinois

Ash Wednesday – February 17, 2021

Greeting

Call to Worship

(Prayer by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org)

This day

is the start of something new.

This day

marks the beginning of a season.

This day

reminds us who we are.

This day

reminds us who we long to be.

So on this day,

let us worship God.

Opening Hymn UMH #355 *Depth of Mercy* vs. 1, 2, & 5

Children's Time (Kathi)

A Prayer from Psalm 51:1-17 (NRSV) (#785 UMH)

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RESPONSE 1

PSALTER 785

Psalm 51:1-17

RESPONSE 1 (Ash Wednesday) Ps. 51:11
Carlton R. Young

Cast me not a - way from your pres - ence,
and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me.

Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;
**according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.**

Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin!

**For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.**

Against you, you only, have I sinned,
and done that which is evil in your sight,
so that you are justified in your sentence
and blameless in your judgment.

**Behold, I was born into iniquity,
and I have been sinful since my mother conceived me.**

RESPONSE 1

Behold, you desire truth in the inward being;
therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

**Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow;**

Make me hear with joy and gladness;
let the bones which you have broken rejoice.

**Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.**

RESPONSE 1

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and put a new and right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from your presence,

and take not your holy Spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and sustain in me a willing spirit.

**Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will return to you.**

Deliver me from death, O God, God of my salvation,
and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.

**O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth shall show forth your praise.**

For you have no delight in sacrifice;
were I to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.

**The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.**

RESPONSE 1

Praise Song

Create in Me a Clean Heart (Keith Green)

Matt Sherrill, guitar

Scripture Matthew 4:1-11 (NRSV)

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread". But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.'" Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'" Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

Sermon

Why the Wilderness?

Reverend Justin Iverson

Imposition of Ashes

Special Music

O Love That Will Not Let Me Go (arr. Moore)

Rex Moore, harp

Lenten Offering

Closing Hymn UMH #338 *Where He Leads Me* vs. 1, 3, & 4

Announcements and Benediction

Worship Participants

Reverend Sara L. Isbell, Senior Pastor

Reverend Justin Iverson, Associate Pastor

Craig Deets, Organist

Matt Sherrill, Guitarist

Kathi Pritts, Children's Time

Brenna Martin and Ron Kieseewetter, Hymn Singers

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LENT 2021: WANDERING IN THE WILDERNESS AND WHAT WE LEARNED THERE

Join Wesley Church as we remember a journey, long ago, traveled by Moses and the Israelites as they made their way through a never-ending wilderness and toward the Promised Land. The journey is adaptable to whatever COVID sends us and can be engaged entirely from home. You may be surprised to learn that the Lessons of the Wilderness are still true today! We will use a devotional booklet, items from a Lent kit, and worship experiences to guide us on the journey. For additional information visit our website, www.wesley-umc.com, and our weekly e-newsletter, *Alive* publication.

A LENT KIT prepared especially for you, to provide hands-on connections to our weekly worship and daily devotions is available for pick up or delivery. Please call the church office at 309-827-8046 to make arrangements to receive one.

WORSHIP: Posted online to Wesley's website, (www.wesley-umc.com) [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) pages.

- **Ash Wednesday, Feb. 17.** (worship posted by 6:00pm) The service will feature harpist Rex Moore and a time for the imposition of ashes on your own forehead. If you'd like ashes for the service, stop by Wesley West to pick up a Lent Kit during one of the times listed above.
- **Sundays in Lent** (worship posted by 9:00am) Following the journey of Moses and the Israelites through the desert.
- **Palm Sunday, March 28** – 11:00am worship outside with our neighbors, followed by a Palm Parade around our neighborhood. (Service will be posted online at 6:00 pm)
- **Maundy Thursday, April 1** (worship posted by 6:00pm) Including Holy Communion
- **Good Friday, April 2** (worship posted by 12 noon) Ecumenical Bloomington service
- **Easter Sunday, April 4** – 11:00 worship with our neighbors, celebrating Christ's Resurrection! (Service will be posted online at 6:00pm)

WILDERNESS THEMED LENTEN SACRED SPACE CENTERPIECE

Join us in creating a Wilderness themed Lenten Sacred Space, a place where you can sit each day to pray and spend time in personal devotion. You are invited to create a centerpiece for your own Lenten Sacred Space. Follow this [link](#) for ideas on creating a Wilderness themed centerpiece.

2021 LENTEN OFFERING

Make an impact in the lives of people around the world by giving to the 2021 Missions Lenten Offering. This offering will support the work of the following projects and missions:

- *Africa University Scholarships*
- *Central Conference Pastor Pension Fund, El Porvenir – Clean Water for Nicaragua*
- *Mid-West Mission Distribution*
- *Our Conference Our Kids (OCOK) Endowment*
- *United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR)*
- *UM Ganta Hospital – Liberia*
- *UM Kissy Clinic - Sierra Leone.*

Check our [website](#), for additional details on each recipient and to [give online](#). You may also mail donations to Wesley UMC, 502 E Front, Bloomington, IL 61701 – be sure to mark your check "Lenten Offering". Give as you can. Every donation is appreciated.

STUDY OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULTS

NEW STUDY! *The Miracles of Jesus*

Join Barb Phend for a study of *The Miracles of Jesus* by Jessica LaGrone. The class will meet via Zoom on Thursdays at 1:00 pm. The study looks at the definition and history of biblical miracles such as healing the sick, casting out demons, raising the dead, and how the miracles speak to us today in our times of difficulty and desperation. Contact kprittts@wesley-umc.com for the zoom link.

NEW STUDY! *Moses*

A Lenten study, *Moses* by Adam Hamilton begins February 23. Turn your reluctance into boldness by walking in the footsteps of Moses.

It doesn't get much more dramatic: rescued baby, life in the courts of Pharaoh, parting the Red Sea, leading his people out of Egypt...Moses' life was one challenge after the next. Although he resisted God's calling, by the end of his life he successfully fulfilled the role he was given. As Hamilton shares historical information, archaeological data, and biblical text, you'll gain a better understanding of Moses' significance in your life today, and you'll discover how you, too, can turn your own reluctance into boldness.

This 6-week study meets on Tuesday nights, 6-7 pm beginning March 23.

Contact Kathi Prittts kprittts@wesley-umc.com to get a book and the link to join.

Wednesday Men's Group

Wednesdays at noon the men's group will study ***Words of Life: Jesus and the Promises of the Ten Commandments Today***. In this book of scripture and inspiration, bestselling author Adam Hamilton brings modern eyes to the most famous set of rules in history, recovering the Ten Commandments as more than just a set of onerous prohibitions. He considers the commandments in their historical context, unpacking the meaning of each commandment in Hebrew, how Jesus reinterpreted them, and how Jews and Christians have understood them over the millennia. He also explores how the latest research in science and psychology illuminates these commandments, rightly understood as a way of ordering one's life beautifully in the present day. In a culture marked by workaholism, materialism, and social media-driven envy, God has given us a time-tested path that leads to gratitude, confidence, and peace. Contact Greg Yount to get the zoom link. gyount@cbcregroup.com