

## ASH WEDNESDAY- Feb 17, 2021

### Welcome and Announcements

- Ash Wednesday- Drive through 3-6:30- devotion booklet, food shelf donations
- Time and Talent on our website
- Wednesday Service at noon thru Lent
- Theme: again and again (Again and Again God invites us)

### Opening: Poem by Sarah Are

I like to imagine that each year,  
God invites me to a party.  
God drops me a note that says,  
“No gifts, casual dress. Come just as you are.”  
I like to imagine that I am brave enough to go.  
I like to imagine that I decide that I am worth it.  
This was no pity invite,  
There is no obligatory postage.  
God wants me there.  
So I get myself together,  
Smudged glasses, sensitive ego, wrinkled shirt, and all.  
I ring the doorbell a few minutes late on account of the fact that  
I lost my keys twice trying to get out the door,  
And I almost turn back to hide in my car,  
Afraid that I might embarrass myself over appetizers or small talk.  
But then God answers the door,  
And God says, “You’re here!”  
And I smile, because I am.  
And with every step past that threshold,  
I know that God is cheering me on.  
It’s the pride of a parent watching their child take their first step.  
If I freeze, God is not disappointed.  
If I fall, God is not mad.  
But if I trust the invitation,  
If I move closer,  
I know, God celebrates.  
Friends, you’ve got mail.  
It’s an invitation to dust off your shoes,  
To go deeper,  
To trust that you’re worth it,  
To lose your keys and your faith,  
And then to find them both, along with your worth.  
You are invited.  
We are invited.  
Again and again and again. This invitation is for you.

**Scripture:** Matthew

6 “Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. 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. “When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words.

**Song:** Lord Whose Love in Humble Service ELW #712 v.1,4

JUSTICE, PEACE

## Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service

712



1 Lord, whose love in hum-ble ser - vice bore the weight of hu-man need,  
2 Still your chil-dren wan-der home-less; still the hun - gry cry for bread;  
3 As we wor-ship, grant us vi - sion, till your love's re - veal-ing light  
4 Called by wor-ship to your ser - vice, forth in your dear name we go,



who up - on the cross, for - sak - en, worked your mer-cy's per - fect deed:  
still the cap - tives long for free - dom; still in grief we mourn our dead.  
in its height and depth and great-ness dawns up - on our quick-ened sight,  
to the child, the youth, the a - ged, love in liv - ing deeds to show;



we, your ser - vants, bring the wor-ship not of voice a - lone, but heart;  
As you, Lord, in deep com-pas - sion healed the sick and freed the soul,  
mak-ing known the needs and bur - dens your com-pas-sion bids us bear,  
hope and health, good-will and com - fort, coun - sel, aid, and peace we give,



con - se - crat - ing to your pur - pose ev - 'ry gift which you im - part.  
by your Spir - it send your pow - er to our world to make it whole.  
stir - ring us to ar - dent ser - vice, your a - bun - dant life to share.  
that your ser - vants, Lord, in free - dom may your mer - cy know and live.

## **Reflection**

### **Affirmation of Faith**

We believe in an inviting God  
Who invites the poor and the sick,  
The outcast and the lonely,  
The immigrant and the refugee,  
The awkward and the abrasive,  
The young and the innocent.

We believe God invites the best and the worst— In all of us.

We believe God invites us to: A life of faith,  
A crowded table,  
A messy church,  
A deeper truth,  
A resilient joy,  
A place to belong,  
A family among strangers,  
A world that is just,  
And a love that knows no bounds.

We believe this invitation exists for all people. We believe this invitation exists for us.

And when we miss the call or ignore the invite,

We believe that God invites us again.

Thanks be to God for that invitational Spirit. Amen.

### **Prayer:**

Creator God,

There is a rumbling in us that won't let go.

It stirs in us like the wind stirs leaves—inviting us to move, drawing us forth.

When we're quiet, we know that rumble is the Holy Spirit,

Dancing love awake in us.

So we're here.

And we're still.

And we're quiet.

And on this first day of Lent, we're asking you to draw near.

As we hear your scripture read aloud, open the door for us to move.

Invite us in. Rumble us awake.

Gratefully we pray, Amen.

### **Sending:**

God of open doors,

Open arms,

And open conversations,

We know

Deep in our souls

That you are forever inviting us in.

Again and again,  
You invite us to take another step closer,  
Another step deeper,  
Another step further,  
In this journey of faith.  
So with your invitation in our hands,  
We pray for strength and wisdom.  
Show us the next right step in this journey.  
We are here.  
You are here.  
This is holy ground.  
May this holy Lenten journey begin  
Once again.  
Gratefully we pray,  
**Amen.**