



First Presbyterian Church of Mineral Ridge

**Ash Wednesday
February 22, 2023**

Welcome to our church! It is a joy to worship with you
this evening.

Andrew Karkosiak – Guitar Erick Ramos – Violin

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

WELCOME

We'll be worshipping tonight in the style of Taizé. The Taizé Community is an ecumenical Christian monastery in France. One of its trademarks is the singing of distinctive and prayers during candlelit services. Taizé music highlights simple phrases, usually lines from the Psalms or other pieces of scripture, sung repeatedly. The repetition is designed to help meditation and prayer. I invite you now to settle into presence with God this evening. Get comfortable, feel free to close your eyes, there is nothing you'll need to read. Whenever we sing, I will begin, and you can join in whenever you'd like

We Gather as God's People

OPENING PRAYER – *Let us pray.*

O God, maker of everything and judge of all that you have made, From the dust of the earth you have formed us and from the dust of death you would raise us up. By the redemptive power of the cross, create in us clean hearts and put within us a new spirit, that we may repent of our sins and lead lives worthy of your calling; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

SONG

In the Lord (pg. 47)

In the Lord I'll be ever thankful

In the Lord I will rejoice

Look to God, do not be afraid

Lift up your voices, the Lord is near

Lift up your voices, the Lord is near

In the Lord I'll be ever thankful

In the Lord I will rejoice

Look to God, do not be afraid

Lift up your voices, the Lord is near

Lift up your voices, the Lord is near

SCRIPTURE

Joel 2:1, 15, 16, 12-14

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

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, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing. 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?

SONG

Bless the Lord (pg. 9)

*Bless the Lord, my soul,
And bless God's holy name.
Bless the Lord, my soul,
Who leads me into life.*

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 11: 28-30 (NIV)

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

Moment of Holy Silence

Now hear those same words again in a different way. Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy

or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION – *let us join together in a prayer of confession.*

Merciful God,... Open our eyes to see injustice in our world. Give us courage to resist the powers that oppress the poor. Open our ears to hear the cry of the needy. Teach us generosity for sharing the abundance of your creation. Open our minds to imagine an end to human strife. Grant us wisdom to pursue the ways of peace. Open our hearts to love our neighbors and our enemies near and far. Give us desire to embody the compassion of Christ. In the name of Christ we pray, amen.

BLESSING

Jan Richardson

All those days you felt like dust, like dirt, as if all you had to do was turn your face toward the wind and be scattered to the four corners or swept away by the smallest breath as insubstantial— did you not know what the Holy One can do with dust?

This is the day we freely say we are scorched. This is the hour we are marked by what has made it through the burning. This is the moment we ask for the blessing that lives within the ancient ashes, that makes its home inside the soil of this sacred earth.

So let us be marked not for sorrow. And let us be marked not for shame. Let us be marked not for false humility or for thinking we are less than we are but for claiming what God can do within the dust, within the dirt, within the stuff of which the world is made and

the stars that blaze in our bones and the galaxies that spiral inside the smudge we bear.

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

At this time, you are invited to come forward and receive ashes on your forehead or your hand. During this time, we will sing “Sanctuary.”

PRAYER AND DECLARATION OF FOREGIVENESS

Our God is ever-merciful. In infinite grace, God made us and called us good. We are good. In infinite compassion, God gave us the Christ, who said, “You are good.” We are good. We are already forgiven, even before we asked. Receive and accept the forgiveness of God through the grace of Jesus the Christ.

SONG

Wait for the Lord (pg. 12)

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart.

CLOSING AND BENEDICTION

Go now, to pick up your cross and follow Christ on the Lenten journey. In the name of the One who made us, the One who saves us, and the One who goes with us now, go in peace.



THIS WEEK AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Sunday, February 26 9:15am Church School
 9:30am Tiny Tots
 10:30am Worship/Fellowship

Monday, February 27 6:30pm Deacon's Meeting
 7:00pm Al-Anon & Al-Ateen

Tuesday, February 28 6:30pm Session Meeting

Sunday, March 05 9:15am Church School
 9:30am Tiny Tots
 10:30am Worship/ Fellowship

Staff

Pastor

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Hours

Pastor's Office Hours

Monday-Thursday
9am-3pm

General Office Hours

Tuesday/Thursday
9am-1pm

Church Info

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