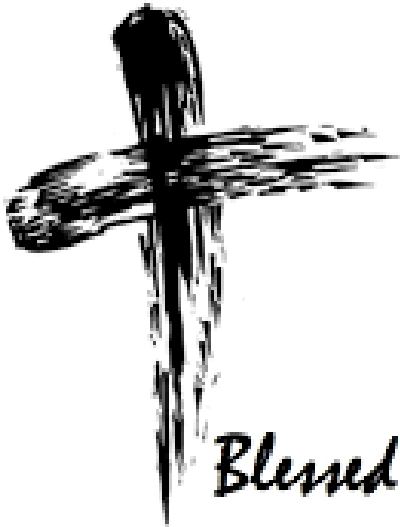


WELCOME TO
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF BISMARCK, ND



Let today be the
day you give up
who you've been
for you who can
become.

—<—————>—
Blessed **Ash Wednesday**

Ash Wednesday Service

March 5, 2025

7:30 pm

Our Mission

We are a community called to love God through worship and prayer, receiving and serving our neighbors with the compassion of Christ, open to new beginnings and the spiritual growth of children, youth and adults.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BISMARCK, ND

(*Asterisks indicate that all who are able are requested to stand,
bold texts are to be read in unison)

“It’s a season of unmasking, of veils lifted.

We are seeing our collective soul with a clarity that is disorienting.

Listen for the apathy, the cruelty, and neglect.

Then listen closely for all who dare resist.”

Cole Arthur Riley

Prelude “I Am a Poor, Wayfaring Stranger” arr. Anna Laura Page

Welcome and Announcements

***Call to Worship** (responsively)

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 very 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.

God abides with us and teaches us to die to self and to live repentant lives.

God’s love endures forever.

We return, we remember, and we will listen well.

All: Let us worship God

Opening Prayer

Jim Skaret

Gathering in God’s Name

***Opening Hymn** “Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days” PH#81

Prayer of Confession

Before Christ, let us confess our sin, how it is with our life,

and our lives together: Holy God, Holy Mighty,

Holy Immortal, you are one who guards and guides our way.



Have mercy upon us.

To follow you is to trust you in paradox;

that from a broken, aching heart,

rises a healing and hopeful heart.

that out of weakness and vulnerability,

grows the quickening of Christ's Love.

that in darkness and despair,

the radiance of Christ's Light shines.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal,

we fail to follow you; we turn away.

Forgive us, we pray.

As certain as the morning sun that rises, you are here, Lord.

Forgive us, we pray.

Accomplish in us, Holy One, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal,

the work of your saving grace.

By the passion of our Savior, Jesus Christ, bring us with all

your saints to the joy of Christ's resurrection. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Proclamation of the Word of God

Prayer of Illumination

First Scripture Reading

Philippians 2:1-11

Anthem "He Never Said a Mumbalin' Word" arr. Hal Hopson


tenor soloist: Jim Rambo

Second Scripture Reading

2 Corinthians 3:7-18

Sermon

INVITATION TO THE OBSERVATION OF THE LENTEN DISCIPLINE

Beloved people of God, every year at the time of the Christian Passover we celebrate our redemption through the life, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Ground of Being. Lent is a season to prepare for this celebration and to renew our life together in the mystery of a crucified and risen, living Lord. We begin this season by acknowledging our need for repentance and for the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ. We will continue our journey to Easter with the sign of ashes. Tonight, you will be marked with ash and in the 

sign of a cross. You will hear the words from Scripture, “From dust you came. To dust you shall return. Be at peace.” This ancient sign and ritual speaks of the frailty and uncertainty of human life, the truth of our impermanence and the need for Christ’s love and light. The sign with which we are marked reveals our desire to live repentant lives, individually and as the gathered beloved community, and our hope in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In the name of Christ, we are invited to observe a holy Lent by self-examination and self-emptying love with practices of prayer and fasting; with works of loving kindness and mercy; and by meditating on God’s good Word, ancient and new.

PRAYER OVER ASHES

From dust we came, to dust we shall return; and even yet, we sing “Alleluia” at the grave because death is not the end, only a sign of an impending resurrection. May these ashes tonight be for us a sign of our mortality, a desire for repentance, and a reminder that only by your gracious gift are we given everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

At this time, we invite you forward to be marked with the sign of ashes. Into your loving and merciful ways, Source of Being, we commend our lives.

LITANY OF PENITENCE

This day. This Evening.

There was evening, then morning, the first day.

And it was good. Very good.

This day. This Evening. Ashes to Ashes. Dust to Dust.

We are grounded in the Source of All Being.

This day. This Evening.

For needing evidence for every holy matter, and wanting none for our indifference to all injustice,

Forgive and accept our repentance.

For failure to speak and praise your name alone and that we do not make a defense for the hope that is within us, —————>

Forgive and accept our repentance.

Restore us, O God.

Favorably hear us, for your mercy and forgiveness are great.

Amen.

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Responding to God's Word

*Closing Hymn "Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed"

PH#78

Sending Forth in God's Name

Blessing and charge

As we leave this place marked with a sign of the cross, might we remember that our call as disciples in this season is to live a repentant life and to seek the good for the whole of creation. Life is short and we do not have long to make the way with those whom we love. Be swift to love. Make haste to be kind. And may the love of One God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be with us, now and forever. Amen and Amen.

Postlude

"The Old Rugged Cross"

arr. Lorie Line

Worship Participants:

Jim Skaret, Guest Speaker

Debi Rogers, Chancel Choir dir.

Gail Snustad, Keyboards

Josh Stokka, Audio/Visual Specialist

Mark Jensen, Youth Ministry dir.

Dave & Alice Nix ~ Ushers



First Scripture Reading

Philippians 2:1-11


Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion,² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,⁴ not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

⁵ In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;
⁷ rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.
⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death - even death on a cross!
⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,
¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
¹¹ and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Second Scripture Reading

2 Corinthians 3:7-18

Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, transitory though it was,⁸ will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious?⁹ If the ministry that brought condemnation was glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness!¹⁰ For what was glorious has no glory now



in comparison with the surpassing glory. ¹¹ And if what was transitory came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts!

¹² Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold.

¹³ We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to prevent the Israelites from seeing the end of what was passing away. ¹⁴ But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. ¹⁵ Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. ¹⁶ But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸ And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God





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OFFICE HOURS:

MONDAY-FRIDAY 8-4:30

STAFF

Rev. Dr. Leanne Simmons, Pastor

Maureen Chrest, Administrative Assistant

Carol Thompson, Financial Assistant

Carmen Bryhn, Parish Nurse

Erik Hein Sr, Maintenance

Arvy Smith, Pianist/Organist

Gail Snustad, Pianist/Organist

Debi Rogers, Chancel Choir Director

Lael Hoerauf, Westminster Chimes Director

Josh Stokka, Audio/Visual Specialist

Judy Lentz, Membership Services Coordinator

Shawn Stettner, Child Care Center Director

Vanessa Hein, Assistant Child Care Director

Mary Jones, and Laci Rauser, Nursery

Mark Jensen, Youth Ministry Director

Erik Hein Jr, Sunday Security

Ruth Jensen, Christian Ed. Intern