



*We welcome all.*

*North Decatur Presbyterian Church is called by God to be a community of faith and worship, dedicated to Christian education and nurture so that we may go into the world to serve, work for peace and justice and share God's love with all people.*

611 Medlock Road, Decatur, GA 30033  
www.ndpc.org

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## Ash Wednesday

February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024

7PM

*\* stand in body or spirit*

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### PREPARATION & ADORATION

PRELUDE

*Largo from the "New World" Symphony*

Antonin Dvořák

WELCOME

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

The season of Lent calls us to journey to the borderlands,  
**a place beyond our certainty.**

Lent leads us to the cutting edge,  
**where death is inevitable**

**and so is new life bursting forth.**

Lent is a bidding to give up what is familiar,

**and to participate in the mystery of God-with-us.**

God, we go because you call us

**from grief to gladness,**

**despair to hope,**

**estrangement to communion**

**with ourselves, each another, and you.**

\*OPENING SONG

*Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God v. 1-3*

Glory to God #423

FIRST READING

Welcome dear feast of Lent: who loves not thee,  
He loves not Temperance, or Authority,  
But is composed of passion.

The Scriptures bid us fast; the Church says, now:  
Give to your Mother, what you would allow  
To every Corporation...

It's true, we cannot reach Christ's fortieth day;  
Yet to go part of that religious way,  
Is better than to rest:  
We cannot reach our Savior's purity;  
Yet are bid, Be holy ev'n as he.  
In both let's do our best.

Who goes in the way which Christ has gone,  
Is much more sure to meet with him, than one  
Who travels the by-ways:

Perhaps my God, though he be far before,  
May turn, and take me by the hand, and more  
May strengthen my decays.

Yet Lord instruct us to improve our fast  
By starving sin and taking such repast  
As may our faults control:

That ev'ry [one] may revel at [our] door,  
Not in [our] parlor; banqueting the poor,  
And among those [Christ's] soul.

-“Lent: Ash Wednesday,” by George Herbert

## SECOND LESSON

Isaiah 58:1-12

Shout out, do not hold back!

Lift up your voice like a trumpet!

**Announce to my people their rebellion,  
to the house of Jacob their sins.**

<sup>2</sup> Yet day after day they seek me  
and delight to know my ways,  
as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness  
and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;  
they ask of me righteous judgments,  
they delight to draw near to God.

<sup>3</sup> **“Why do we fast, but you do not see?  
Why humble ourselves, but you do not  
notice?”**

Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day,  
and oppress all your workers.

<sup>4</sup> Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight  
and to strike with a wicked fist.

Such fasting as you do today  
will not make your voice heard on high.

<sup>5</sup> **Is such the fast that I choose,  
a day to humble oneself?**

**Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush,  
and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?**

**Will you call this a fast,  
a day acceptable to the Lord?**

<sup>6</sup> Is not this the fast that I choose:  
to loose the bonds of injustice,  
**to undo the thongs of the yoke,**  
to let the oppressed go free,  
**and to break every yoke?**

<sup>7</sup> Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,  
and bring the homeless poor into your house;  
**when you see the naked, to cover them,  
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?**

<sup>8</sup> Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,  
and your healing shall spring up quickly;  
your vindicator shall go before you,  
the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.

<sup>9</sup> Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer;  
you shall cry for help, and God will say,  
**Here I am.**

If you remove the yoke from among you,  
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,

<sup>10</sup> **if you offer your food to the hungry  
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,**

then your light shall rise in the darkness  
and your gloom be like the noonday.

<sup>11</sup> The Lord will guide you continually,  
and satisfy your needs in parched places,  
and make your bones strong;

**and we shall be like a watered garden,  
like a spring of water,  
whose waters never fail.**

<sup>12</sup> Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;  
you shall raise up the foundations of many  
generations;

**we shall be called the repairer of the breach,  
the restorer of streets to live in.**

ANTHEM

*Pie Jesu*

Andrew Lloyd Webber

NDPC Community Choir

Soloists: Marielle Mai, Emily Halbert

## THIRD LESSON

John 10:9-11

<sup>9</sup> I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. <sup>10</sup> The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. <sup>11</sup> I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”

## FOURTH LESSON

It is my Lent to break my Lent,  
To eat when I would fast,  
To know when slender strength is spent,  
Take shelter from the blast  
When I would run with wind and rain,  
To sleep when I would watch.  
It is my Lent to smile at pain  
But not ignore its touch.

It is my Lent to listen well  
When I would be alone,  
To talk when I would rather dwell  
In silence, turn from none  
Who call on me, to try to see  
That what is truly meant  
Is not my choice. If Christ's I'd be  
It's thus I'll keep my Lent.

-“For Lent, 1966” by Madeleine L'Engle

MEDITATION

Rev. David Lewicki

## SILENT PRAYER

*Sit comfortably, giving thanks for the seat that holds you up and the gravity that holds you down. Unburden your hands and let them rest. Breathe deeply, and bring your attention to your body. Notice what you are carrying in your body this evening. What feelings or physical sensations do you sense?*

*Be aware of your heart as the site where the tenderness of divine mercy flows through you. Allow your heart to soften by the presence of Love, cherishing you, welcoming you exactly as you are.*

*Lent is a season to be released from the sin that clings closely, and to receive the healing and the freedom that flows from God's grace and mercy. In the quiet, talk to God about what this season of Lent might be intended to do in you...*

*Silence is kept.*

In the softness of the evening,  
in the solace of silence, we come, O Christ.

**Searching  
for acceptance for ourselves;  
for true and trusting community;  
for forgiveness for our own particular  
sins.**

(Sung) *O, Lord Hear My Prayer...*

In the quiet of day's end,  
within the sacred vessel of worship, we  
come, O Christ.

**For rest;  
for wholeness;  
for unconditional love.**

(Sung) *O, Lord Hear My Prayer...*

In the harbor of this night,  
in the gentle darkness, we come, O Christ.  
**We come with old wounds;  
with grief that isn't healed;  
with a hope for justice that is flickering.**

(Sung) *O, Lord Hear My Prayer...*

**We come to you, Wounded Healer,  
seeking a path we can't find on our own;  
we come for strength we don't have  
within.**

**We come because we have tried and  
failed.**

**But we believe your love, once crucified,  
never fails.**

## \* SUNG RESPONSE

*Lord, Have Mercy*

KYRIE ELEISON

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### Kyrie Eleison 10

5

*Ky-ri-e, Ky-ri-e, e-le-i-son; Ky-ri-e, Ky-ri-e, e-le-i-son. (hum)*

D.C.

## \*ASSURANCE OF GRACE

God is gracious and merciful,  
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

Turn toward God in confidence and know:

**In Christ Jesus we are forgiven, loved, and free.**

## IMPOSITION OF ASHES

*All who wish to receive ashes are invited to come forward and form two lines in the center aisle.*

*Upon receiving ashes, you are invited to offer the ashes to the person behind you in line. Rub a finger in the ashes and place the sign of the cross on their forehead as you say:*

**Remember, you are made from the dust and to the dust you will return.**

MUSIC DURING THE IMPOSITION

*Please join in singing the refrains*  
Glory to God #544

*Bless the Lord*

**Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God’s holy name.  
Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me into life.**

\*BLESSING

by Bruce Prewer

Happy are they who know where the real treasure is to be found.  
**Happy are they who take from the treasure and share it.**

Friends of God, Leave this church with spirits lighter than when you came in;  
**Trusting Christ will take an intimate interest  
in the costly investment Christ has made.**

Invest in others as Christ’s love has invested in you;  
**Rejoicing in the communion of the Spirit.**

*NOTES ON WORSHIP TODAY:*

**Image of the Day:** *One poppy grows out of the ash in the Tonto National Forest, east of Cave Creek, Arizona, 9 months after a wildfire decimated the area. Feb. 13, 2006, by cobalt123, flickr.com (Creative Commons)*

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**Livestream and video** are produced by NDPC volunteers. If you would like to help with our weekly audio and video production, come up to the balcony and introduce yourself to the team.

*WELCOME, VISITORS!*

We’re happy that you’ve joined us! Please introduce yourself to those around you as you are comfortable. You may share your email address with us by using the QR code on this bulletin—we will send you our weekly e-newsletter. You can learn more about NDPC’s ministries and social justice work at **www.ndpc.org**. We come from different backgrounds, traditions, and cultures to worship. Please use language and pronouns for God and for yourself that are authentic to you. After worship, the pastors would love to meet you.



**Welcome, Visitors!**

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*FOR YOUR INFORMATION:*

**Children are always welcome in worship at NDPC.** There is a Children’s Corner in the Narthex with fun things for kids to do during worship.

**Magnifying glasses and large print hymnals** are available in the lobby. **Hearing assist devices** are also available. Ask an usher and they will gladly help.

**If you would like to** donate flowers, volunteer to serve as an usher or liturgist, or share comments about worship, email [worship@ndpc.org](mailto:worship@ndpc.org).

**Videos of worship services** are available at [ndpc.org](http://ndpc.org). Subscribe to our **sermon podcast** through any major podcasting service.

*CONTACT NDPC:* Office Phone: 404-636-1429; Office Email: [office@ndpc.org](mailto:office@ndpc.org)

**Revs. David Lewicki, Mary Anona Stoops, and Erin Reed Cooper** are available to meet to support your spiritual, mental, and physical health. Pastoral care is confidential and can be held in-person or virtually. Email [david@ndpc.org](mailto:david@ndpc.org), [maryanona@ndpc.org](mailto:maryanona@ndpc.org), and [erin@ndpc.org](mailto:erin@ndpc.org).