

REID MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

February 21, 2024
6:15 p.m.



2261 Walton Way, Augusta, Georgia 30904
706-733-2275 reidchurchaugusta.org

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Nadine Ellsworth-Moran

Driven by the Spirit, Jesus went out to inhabit a liminal place, barren and open. There he made himself vulnerable to all the world's temptations.

For forty days and nights, homeless and weary, famished and footsore, he wandered and watched and wrestled.

For forty days and nights, companioned and comforted by animals and angels, he traversed this wilderness, tested and tempered.

And then, knowing who he was, seeing where he must go, understanding what he should do...

Jesus, filled with the Spirit, returned from this uncharted place to do the work of the Father and to be the embodied Kingdom here on earth.

Let us worship the Lord in this place as we journey together, forty days and forty nights.

SILENCE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of the liminal places and unseen corners within and around us, you draw us into the quietness of the desert so that we may encounter ourselves. Help us open our eyes to temptations that still attract us and distractions that still turn our path away from you.

SILENCE

You ask us to come with honest hearts that will convict as well as comfort us as we make our way through the wilderness to face you as well as ourselves. Show us what needs to be resurrected in our lives and what needs to be left in the desert.

SILENCE

You call us into the emptiness of the desert so that we can confront the ways we serve ourselves before serving you. We confess that all too often we continue to choose our own comfort rather than serving the needs of others.

SILENCE

You drive us into the dangers of the desert so that we may engage with the reality of the broken world we inhabit. We confess that all too often we prefer the smooth roads of safety over the perilous pathways of justice.

SILENCE

Forgive us, O God, whenever we have chosen to be, or do, or dare less than you have asked of us; and as we walk in the desert with you, help us watch and wrestle with these things so that we might choose life over death.

DECLARATION OF PARDON

The Holy Lord of all mercy speaks forgiveness over you, draws you forth into life and peace, and makes real the hope that you, and all creation, be released from bondage to sin and obtain the freedom of the glory of the beloved children of God,

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 4:1-13

"...When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time." This is the Word of God for the People of God.

Thanks be to God.

SPECIAL MUSIC

Even From Rock

SCRIPTURE READING

James 1:13-18

SILENCE

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION¹

Invitation to the Table

The tent door is open, the table is set, God waits for us to come in from the desert and be refreshed.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us lift up our hearts to the Lord.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The Great Thanksgiving

...And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray:

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God has called us to journey for a season through the wilderness places; and so, as Jesus did before us, we will set out once more to wander in an uncomfortable landscape and wrestle with its challenges, that through the power and guidance of the Spirit, we may emerge ready to do the work of the Kingdom here and now.

For bread and wine, this place and this time,

Thanks be to God.

For the peace we are promised which the world won't destroy,

Thanks be to God.

For the hope of heaven on earth and the final song of joy,

Thanks be to God.

*HYMN 209

My Song is Love Unknown

LOVE UNKNOWN

BENEDICTION²

*All who are able please stand

Communion—Allergy friendly elements available at the door.

Music—Music is reprinted by permission through OneLicense.net #A-721337

¹ Source: Iona Worship—adapted for each service


² Written by Kate Bowler, a blessing as Lent begins, from Good Enough



Hearing assistance. Hearing aid wearers with a "T" (telecoil) setting can now hear the service broadcast directly through their hearing aids. Others desiring hearing assistance may check out a portable receiver / headset.

Symbols of Lent


Ash Wednesday – Ashes



Like each symbol that we will introduce over the season of Lent, ashes are a physical “thing” representative of an idea or theological concept. As George Doyle describes it, “we find that physical objects and human actions, in our experience with them through our senses, can directly convey the grace of God, in their materiality. The meaning of the sacrament is not something arbitrarily imposed on the object from outside, but comes from within, as God makes use of the “thingness” of those objects to convey the grace of the sacrament.”

Ashes serve to remind us that from dust we have come and to dust we shall return, our mortality, as well as our connection to creation. Ashes remind us of the suffering of Christ and the waving palms that turned to cries for crucifixion. The ashes you will receive on your forehead or hands bear witness to the grace of Christ. The painting of the ash cross is also made with ashes mixed into the paint from palms burned from previous years here at Reid Memorial.

Water



The Lenten season is a time when we delve a little deeper into our faith and understanding of our salvation through grace. One symbol for this is water - the waters of chaos pulled into creation; the waters of covenant; the waters of baptism; water turned to fine wine; water for washing hands and feet. We add water to our table this week to symbolize this death and rebirth, this cleansing, and this provision that all point to God’s unbounded grace.