

Seeking: Is this the fast I choose? - Ash Wednesday

Readers : Carolyn Brown, Kristie Conditt, Connie Herbon

## WE GATHER

Stillness

*[JULIE sound the bell/chime or other sound to indicate a time of stillness]*

Out of the Stillness

Pastor Julie

We gather together at the edge of a new season.

**We stand together on the cusp of something new.**

Will we wade into self-reflection?

**Will we invite honesty to dance?**

Will we listen for God's invitation?

**Will we seek deeper faith?**

What kind of fast do we choose? What kind of faith will we build?

**We gather together at the edge of a new season.**

Listen, God is speaking.

Musical Meditation

[VIDEO] "Dust We Are and Shall Return"

Why Lent?

Connie Herbon

Isaiah 58:1-12 NRSV

Carolyn Brown

Call to Confession

Pastor Julie

One: Merciful God, how many times in a day could we choose love?

**ALL: How many times could we choose justice?**

One: How many times could we speak kindly to ourselves?

**ALL: How many times could we offer grace?**

One: How many times, God? And how often do we miss it?

**ALL: Forgive us for choosing the path you did not travel.**

One: Forgive us for following the world's measure of goodness, instead of yours.

**ALL: Return our hearts to you, and guide us continually, even in the parched places.**

One: With gratitude we pray,

**ALL: amen.**

Assurance of Grace

Pastor Julie

Community of faith, when a baby is learning to walk, the parents do not criticize the baby for falling. Instead, they celebrate every wobbly step. They applaud every hesitant stand. They whoop and holler when their child lands in their arms.

Surely the same must be true of God. Although we often lose our way and we often choose a wrong thing, I imagine God whoops and hollers with every step in God's direction.

So hear and believe the good news of the gospel: no matter how many times we fall, no matter how many times we choose a wrong path, God is waiting for us at the end with open arms.

We are forgiven. We are invited. We belong.

**ALL: Thanks be to God for a love like that. Amen.**

In response to this grace, let's sing together, "There is a Longing in Our Hearts", hymn #470

**Hymn # 470**

"There is a Longing in Our Hearts"

**Poem**

"Ash Wednesday no.4"

**Kristie Conditt**

**Blessing the Ashes**

"Ashes"

**Connie Herbon**

**Invitation to Receive Ashes**

**Imposition of Ashes**

**Communion**

**Invitation to the Meal**

**[VIDEO]**

["All Belong Here"](#)

**The Great Thanksgiving**

...Hear us for his sake, in whose name we pray that he taught us...

Lord's Prayer

**Our Creator, in heaven, holy is your name, your kin-dom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kin-dom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.**

**Words of Institution -**

**Pastor Julie**

Here these words from Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

I received a tradition from the Lord, which I also handed on to you:  
on the night on which he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took bread.  
After giving thanks, he broke it and said,  
“This is my body, which is for you; do this to remember me.”

**[pause]**

He did the same thing with the cup, after they had eaten, saying,  
“This cup is the new covenant in my blood.  
Every time you drink it, do this to remember me.”

**[pause]**

Every time you eat this bread and drink this cup,  
you broadcast the death and resurrection of the Lord until he comes again.

### **Sharing the Meal**

**Pastor Julie**

Let us join as one though we are in many places and receive the gift of God,  
Leader: the bread of heaven.

**Unison: We are one in the bread we share.**

Leader: the cup of salvation

**Unison: We are one in the cup we share.**

### **Prayer**

**Pastor Julie**

### **Sending Hymn 753**

*“Make Me a Channel of Your Peace”*

### **Benediction**

**Pastor Julie**

### **Postlude**

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