



SERVICE OF PRAYER

March 6, 2019

Noon and 7:30 p.m.

**Trinity Chapel
Evangelical Reformed United Church of Christ
15 West Church Street**

www.erucc.org • 301-662-2762

† *All who are able, please stand.*

Prelude

Hymn

12:00 noon - *Before the Cross of Jesus.*

- No. 261

7:30pm - *Before Your Cross, O Jesus*

- No. 191

Gathering

Gathered in community
we share spiritual union
with God and one another.

Surrounded by Love,

we express our deepest thoughts and feelings

The Ever Present One

moves within, between, and beyond
and we rest in gentle currents of peace.

Surrounded by Love,

we express our deepest thoughts and feelings

Sensing the vulnerability of this season,
we shiver at our frailty
and seek the strength of Love.

Surrounded by Love,

we express our deepest thoughts and feelings

Longing for renewal

we turn to Love

knowing Love, alone, is our hope.

Surrounded by Love,

we express our deepest thoughts and feelings

Opening prayer

**We pray that Love will hold all of us –
our deepest thoughts and feelings –
and that all that we are
can be welcomed into this community.**

**May Love hold and heal
and shape us into something new.**

Amen.

Scripture reading Isaiah 58:1–7

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.
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 judgements,
they delight to draw near to God.

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.
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.
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?

What kind of fasting do you desire?

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?
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?

**May our love shine like the dawn
and may the healing of the world
burst forth like flowers in the spring.**

Confession (based on Psalm 51)

Have mercy on us, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out our transgressions.

Wash us thoroughly from our iniquity, and cleanse us from our sin! For we know our transgressions, and our sin is ever before us.

Against you, you only, have we sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.

Hide your face from our sins, and blot out all our iniquities.

Create in us a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within us.

Cast us not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from us.

Restore to us the joy of your salvation, and uphold us with a willing spirit.

Amen.

Assurance of God's Love

When we cry for help, God will respond, "Here I am."

The sincerity of our confession is more pleasing to God than all our boasting of accomplishments.

Through our Guide, our Nourishment, our Strength, we can repent of our wrongdoing and rebuild our relationships, and the light of God's unfailing love will be magnified in us.

Hymn

12:00 noon - *Sunday's Palms Are Wednesday's Ashes* - tune- *BEACH SPRING*

Sunday's palms are Wednesday's ashes

As another Lent begins

Thus we kneel before our Maker

In contrition for our sins

We have marred baptismal pledges

In rebellion gone astray

Now returning seek forgiveness

Grant us pardon God this day

We have failed to love our neighbors

Their offences to forgive

Have not listened to their troubles

Nor have cared just how they live

We are jealous proud impatient

**Loving over much our things
May the yielding of our failings
Be our Lenten offerings**

**We are hasty to judge others
Blind to proof of human need
And our lack of understanding
Demonstrates our inner greed
We have wasted earth's resources
Want and suffering we've ignored
Come and cleanse us then restore us
Make new hearts within us Lord**

Anthem

7:30pm - *Create in Me*

*- M. Larkin
Senior Choir*

Scripture Reading **Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-21**

Meditation

Anointing with Ashes

Response to the anointing

At this moment, on Ash Wednesday,
we have made our choice.

**We choose to travel the Lenten way
and we carry in our lives the ashes and oil
of human and Divine reality.**

The path is uncertain,
some days may feel unfamiliar.

**Still, may we choose to go deeper along the way
for nothing can separate us
from the love of God in Christ Jesus.**

Service of Holy Communion

Communion Prayer

You invite us to this table, Holy One:

out of our places of testing,
in our wonderings of the possibility of rebirth,
for the sake of our yearnings
for life-giving waters and bread enough for all,
into new ways and hopes of seeing.
So gathered, may we open ourselves to you.

We give you thanks, O God,
for your steady presence all through our journeys.
Whether in wilderness or community,
whether in word or sacrament,
you come to us:
seeking our wholeness,
binding our wounds,
challenging our presumptions,
restoring our life.

And so we join the song of witnesses long past and yet to come:

**Holy, holy, holy One, God of power and might
heaven and earth are full of your glory
Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is the One who comes in the name of our God
Hosanna in the highest!**

Our praise flows from and toward
the mystery of your grace.
Such mystery marks this table before us,
where disciples of old gathered on the eve of betrayal,
and Jesus broke bread and shared the cup.
The gifts of bread and wine were offered to all,
even to the ones who betrayed and denied,
even to the ones who fled into the night,
even to them – so that this table might also be opened, even to us. So come,
Holy One, in grace and peace,
in bread and fruit of the vine,
in faith that embraces the mystery of your presence,
in spirits turned now to Spirit. Amen.

Sharing of the Bread and the Cup

A Blessing

God, you called to the chaos and it became order and the universe and everything that exists sprang into life.

In Christ you call us through the water in baptism.

On our journey through Lent from life to death to life once more, travel with us, God.

Mark us with the ash of the earth; life become death to nurture life again.

As we fast, make us hungry for a world where no one goes without.

When we give, may we give for the peace of the earth.

And may we always and everywhere pray with humble and grateful hearts.

We pray all this in the name of Jesus who goes before us forever loving as you love. Amen.

Closing Hymn *Again We Keep This Solemn Fast* - tune- *OLD HUNDREDTH*

**Again we keep this solemn fast
A gift of faith from ages past,
This Lent which bids us lovingly
To faith and hope and charity.**

**The law and prophets from of old
In figured ways this Lent foretold,
Which Christ, all ages' Lord and Guide,
In these last days has sanctified.**

**More sparing, therefore, let us make
The words we speak, the food we take,
Our sleep, our laughter, ev'ry sense;
Learn peace through holy penitence.**

**Let us avoid each harmful way
That lures the careless mind astray;
By watchful prayer our spirits free
From scheming of the Enemy.**

**We pray, O blessed Three in One,
Our God while endless ages run,
That this, our Lent of forty days,
May bring us growth and give you praise.**

WHAT IS LENT

The church year is divided into seasons. The church year begins on the first Sunday in Advent, which is the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day. After Advent we enter into the season of Christmas, followed the seasons of Epiphany, Lent, Easter, and Pentecost.

Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent. The traditions of Lent are derived from the season's origin as a time when the church prepared candidates, or "catechumens," for their baptism into the Body of Christ. It eventually became a season of preparation not only for catechumens but also for the whole congregation. Self-examination, study, fasting, prayer and works of love are disciplines historically associated with Lent. Conversion—literally, the "turning around" or reorientation of our lives towards God—is the theme of Lent. Both as individuals and as a community, we look inward and reflect on our readiness to follow Jesus in his journey towards the cross. The forty days of Lent correspond to the forty-day temptation of Jesus in the wilderness and the forty-year journey of Israel from slavery to a new community.

On Ash Wednesday, ashes are placed on the foreheads of the congregation as a symbol that we have come from dust and one day will return to dust. It is one of many Lenten and Easter customs that remind us of our historical connection with Jewish tradition. With this sobering reminder of life's fragility, we begin a spiritual quest that continues to the celebration of the risen Christ at Easter.

Each season of the Church Year is symbolized with different colors. The colors express emotions and ideas that are associated with each of the seasons of the liturgical year. The cloths on the altar, lectern and pulpit – paraments – reflect these changing seasons. On Wednesday through Good Friday, the purple or violet paraments will be present in the sanctuary. Violet is the ancient royal color and therefore a symbol of the sovereignty of Christ. Violet is also associated with repentance from sin.

Please join us as we enter the season on Lent.

Wednesday Noon Services

March 13, 20, 27 April 3, 10, 17

A brief worship service followed by a soup lunch and fellowship.