

EMMANUEL COLLEGE ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

March 6, 2019

Room set-up

- *Semi-circle with table in the middle*
- *Low table with white table cloth*
- *Broken baptismal font interspersed with broken bread and grapes and candles (pre-lit)*
- *No screen – there will be a printed bulletin*
- *Ashes already on the table (premixed)*
- *Pulpit at end of chapel and Christ Candle placed*
- *Lent banners up, cross in-between*
- *Piano as part of community*

Welcome & Announcements

- *Becca welcomes folks to Ash Wednesday and asks for community announcements, Becca then introduces Chyvonne and Deborah.*
- *Chyvonne to instruct how the imposition of ashes will work – two stations.*
- *Becca reads the broken baptismal font story*

Acknowledgement of the land: Terri Palmer

As we come together today,
we take a moment to acknowledge this sacred
land on which Emmanuel College and the University of Toronto stands.
This has been a site of human activity for many thousands of years.
This land is the territory of the Huron-Wendat and Petun First Nations,
the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River.
Today, the meeting place of Toronto is home to many
Indigenous people from across Turtle Island.
We are grateful for the opportunity to live and work on this territory.

... silence ...

Light Christ Candle (The person who says the Call to worship)

Call to Worship: *Castien Jowahieorr*

Please join me in our responsive Call to Worship

When joys or sorrows fill our hearts,

God's love abides with us.

When the brokenness of the world comes knocking on our door,

God's love abides with us.

When mourning and grief become too much to bear,

God's love abides with us.

When we turn from the love of God,

God's love abides with us.

Let us take strength in the knowledge that
when dust and ashes touch our face,

They are infused with God's love, steadfast and true.

Come let us sing and worship our God who abides with us.

Hymn VU 436 "Abide with me"

Deborah Park is the musician throughout

Poem: "The Wisdom of Ash" by John Van de Laar, *Reader: Saya Ojiri*

There is a wisdom in ash,
that we need so much, but seldom hear.

It's the wisdom of grief,
that reminds us of our mortality,
and that Life is more than this dust can contain.

It's the wisdom of confession,
that brings our darkness out of hiding,
and opens the windows to Light.

It's the wisdom of repentance,
that stops us in our tracks,
and charts the way to Love.

There's a wisdom in ash,
and we welcome it, Jesus,
thankful for the renewing gifts it brings.

Hymn: MV 71 “When the Wind of Winter Blows”

Poem: “Ashes To Ashes, Dust To Dust” by Alfred Castner King

Reader: Shawn Houston

Is there a Death? The light of day
At eventide shall fade away;
From out the sod's eternal gloom
The flowers, in their season, bloom;
Bud, bloom and fade, and soon the spot
Whereon they flourished knows them not;
Blighted by chill, autumnal frost;
'Ashes to ashes, dust to dust!'

Is there a Death? Pale forms of men
To formless clay resolve again;
Sarcophagus of graven stone,
Nor solitary grave, unknown,
Mausoleum, or funeral urn,
No answer to our cries return;
Nor silent lips disclose their trust;
'Ashes to ashes, dust to dust!'

Is there a Death? All forms of clay
Successively shall pass away;
But, as the joyous days of spring
Witness the glad awakening
Of nature's forces, may not men,
In some due season, rise again?
Then why this calm, inherent trust,
'If ashes to ashes, dust to dust?'

Hymn MV 78 “God Weeps”

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 58:1-12 – Rhiannon Hill

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

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?

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?
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 rearguard.
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,
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.
The Lord will guide you continually,
and satisfy your needs in parched places,
and make your bones strong;
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters never fail.
Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to live in.

The Word of God for the people of God
Thanks be to God

Musical Offering: “Ecce Tempus Idoneum” by Thomas Tallis
Matthew Boutda and Alex Jebson

Now is the healing time decreed for sins of heart, of word or deed,
when we in humble fear record the wrong that we have done the Lord;

who, always merciful and good, has borne so long our wayward mood,
nor cut us off unsparingly in our so great iniquity.

Therefore with fasting and with prayer, our secret sorrow we declare;
with all good striving seek his face, and lowly-hearted plead for grace.

Cleanse us, O Lord, from every stain, help us the meed of praise to gain,
till with the Angels linked in love joyful we tread thy courts above.

Father and Son and Spirit blest, to thee be every prayer addressed,
who art in threefold Name adored, from age to age, the only Lord.

Scripture Reading: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 – *Tessica Hackshaw*

A reading from the gospel according to Matthew

‘Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from God in heaven.

‘So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and God who sees in secret will reward you.

‘And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray in secret; and your God who sees in secret will reward you.

‘And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your God who is in secret; and your God who sees in secret will reward you.

‘Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn: MV 76 “If I Have Been the Source of Pain”

Poem: “Rend Your Heart” by Jan Richardson – *Florence MacGregor*

To receive this blessing, all you have to do is let your heart break.
Let it crack open.
Let it fall apart so that you can see its secret chambers,
the hidden spaces where you have hesitated to go.

Your entire life is here, inscribed whole upon your heart’s walls:
every path taken or left behind,
every face you turned toward or turned away,
every word spoken in love or in rage,
every line of your life you would prefer to leave in shadow,
every story that shimmers with treasures known
and those you have yet to find.

It could take you days to wander these rooms.
Forty, at least.
And so let this be a season for wandering
for trusting the breaking
for tracing the tear that will return you to the One who waits
who watches
who works within the rending
to make your heart whole.

Prayers of the People – *Morgan Bell and Matthew Boutda*

Sung Response: MV 67 Kyrie Eleison (Becca to lead)

Reader 1:

Holy God, God of righteousness and justice, we pray for your mercy.

We hear Isaiah's prophetic words of rebuke and yet we struggle to head
the call to seek justice, love mercy and walk humbly in your ways.

Help us to see the ways we continue to serve our own interests. Help us
to understand the ways we still oppress our neighbors, both near and far.

When we do not answer your call to accompany the poor, the oppressed,
those caught in war, those experiencing violence, those lost and sick and
those needing care, we do violence to your image in us.

God open our eyes to those things that we try not to see.

Kyrie Eleison

Reader 2:

Patient God, we confess that we can be seduced by self-righteous postures which make us feel good. When we use our Christian faith to separate ourselves from the rest of the world, rebuke us O God.

When we use our piety—our Lenten fasts—to turn our heads upwards to the heights of heaven, to you, while we crush the people around us under our feet, remind us that we are called to humility and service.

When we walk in ignorance, unaware of our destruction, God, break into our awareness, don't let us look away.

Kyrie Eleison

Reader 1:

Loving God, you call us “to loose the bonds of injustice, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke... to share our bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into our houses; and when we see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide ourselves from the needy.”

God, strengthen our conviction,
make us confident in purpose to care for all of your creation.

Kyrie Eleison

Reader 2:

Tender God, we repent of our sins.

We pray that in your mercy, O God, you will go with us, preparing our eyes, ears and hearts to contemplate our lives during this season of Lent.

May we learn to see injustice in the lives of those victimized by hate, by way, by poverty, by discrimination, by the wanton abuse of power.

May your “light break forth from our midst like the dawn,” and your healing hands work through ours.

Bestow on us your gift of building your Kingdom, that we may participate in your work of redemption.

God, turn our lives towards you and the fruit of your eternal life.

Kyrie Eleison

Reader 1:

God, Hold us in your grace.

Teach us true piety.

Make us disciples of justice.

That we may join in the holy and loving embrace
with which you hold the whole world. Amen

Reader one continues: Let us pray the prayer Jesus taught us in our mother tongue or the language of our heart, “Our father...”

Hymn: VU 105 “Dust and Ashes Touch our Face”

Imposition of the Ashes: *Phyllis Airhart and Brian Clark*

Speaker 1:

Our ancestors in the faith
used ashes as a sign of our repentance,
a symbol of the uncertainty and fragility
of human life.

Like them,
we have tasted the ashes of hopelessness;
we have walked through the ashes
of our loss and pain;
we have stood knee-deep
in the ashes of our brokenness.

Speaker 2:

God of our lives,
out of the dust of creation
you have formed us and given us life.
May these ashes not only be a sign
of our repentance and death,
but reminders of your gift of abundant life,
life that miraculously rises up from the ashes of despair,
that by your gift of grace
in Jesus Christ, our Redeemer,
we may be granted life forever with you.
Amen.

(Please stand together to say this at the pulpit. A period of silence will follow. Move to the bowl filled with ashes and call people forward **Worship team take the lead) in two separate lines facing opposite directions. Those who wish to do so, may come forward to have the sign of the cross placed on their foreheads or hands).

Imposition of Ashes:

Each person will be marked with the words:

From dust you have come and from dust you shall return.

Silence.... (no music)

Prayer after Imposition:

Let us pray:

God of the palm and God of the ash,

Thank you for holding us tight and journeying with us in all of life's joys and pains.

We are grateful for the way that you transform our brokenness into wholeness, like clay in the potter's hand.

As we set our sights on the road to Jerusalem:

Root us in your justice for all of your creation;

Wrestle with us as we heal ourselves and others;

Unburden our vision from the distractions of this world;

Quench our thirst in the wilderness;

Nourish our souls with your steadfast love; and

Reconcile, renew, and bless us on our way through Lent, to the cross, and beyond.

This we pray in the name and spirit of Jesus.

Hymn: VU 149 "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"

Music to be included in bulletin

Sending Us Forth on Our Lenten Journey: *Chyvonne Pancer*

In the footsteps of centuries of pilgrims,
go now to embark on your Lenten journey.

Consider how you may simplify your days,
so that you may travel lightly.

Be alert to all that could side-track you:
notice that which beckons alluringly,
or with apparently greater urgency,
than the pilgrim journey Christ invites.

Do not try to cover
more than one good day's journey at a time.
Know when to stop for food and sleep,
so that the journey will not be too great for you.

Walk humbly, knowing that the goal
is not recognition, achievement or reward,
but simply to have come to know Christ
and yourself more intimately.

Be on the lookout for other pilgrims,
caring for those who falter, or fall;
those who cannot see the way forward;
Having enough courage to ask for help when we need it:
pilgrimage is richer in community.

Break open our hearts and our lives,
that we may see your face in all of your creation;
Make the light shine forth from the darkness;
heal us with your treasure of love and forgiveness.
in our brokenness, you are with us.

Go now: place your hand
into the outstretched hand of Jesus Christ,
allow the words of the story to guide you,
and pray for purity of heart and mind. Amen.

Postlude: Arioso from Harpsichord Concerto in F Minor
BWV 1056 by J. S. Bach