

“I imagine Lent to be for you and for me as a great departure from the greedy, anxious anti-neighborliness of our economy, a great departure from our exclusionary politics that fears the other, a great departure from self-indulgent consumerism that devours creation. And then an arrival in a new neighborhood, because it is a gift to be simple, it is a gift to be free; it is a gift to come down where we ought to be.”

+ Walter Brueggemann,  
*A Way Other Than Our Own: Devotions for Lent*



*Invited In*, Lauren Wright Pittman

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## First Baptist Church on Fifth, Winston-Salem

ASH WEDNESDAY

February 14, 2024 • 6:00 PM

Lent begins with a solemn call to fasting and repentance as we begin our forty-day journey to Easter. During this season the people of God are called to reflect on the meaning of their relationship with Christ — his life, death, and resurrection. The sign of ashes suggests our human mortality and frailty. But what seems like an ending is really an invitation to return to God. With the cross on our brow, we set our hearts on the spiritual renewal made possible through the Good News of Easter, awaiting us at the end of this holy season.

PRELUDE: Op. 122, V. Schmücke dich, o liebe Seele (*adorn yourself, o dear soul*)

J. Brahms

Jacob Hill, Organ

INVITATION TO WORSHIP

Emily Hull McGee

CALL TO WORSHIP: Joel 2: 12-13, 15-16

Zack Jackson

Leader: Yet even now, says the Lord,  
return to me with all your heart,  
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;  
rend your hearts and not your clothing.

**All: Let us return to the Lord, our God,  
for he is gracious and merciful,  
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love,  
and relents from punishing.**

Leader: Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast;

**All: Call a solemn assembly; gather the people in silence.**

*(A silence is kept.)*

TRANSFORMATION OF THE SANCTUARY

RESPONSE: *My Prayers Rise Like Incense*

A. Duba



PRAYER OF CONFESSION: Psalm 51

Amy McClure

Leader: The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit;  
a broken and contrite heart, God will not despise.  
Let us confess our sins to the God  
whose promise to forgive and restore us is sure.

**All: Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your steadfast love;  
according to your abundant mercy  
blot out my transgressions.**

Leader: Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,  
and cleanse me from my sin.  
For I know my transgressions,  
and my sin is ever before me.

**All: Against you, and you alone, have I sinned,  
and done what is evil in your sight,  
so that you are justified in your sentence  
and blameless when you pass judgment.**

Leader: Indeed, I was born guilty,  
a sinner when my mother conceived me.  
You desire truth in the inward being;  
therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

**All: Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;  
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.  
Let me hear joy and gladness;  
let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.  
Hide your face from my sins,  
and blot out all my iniquities.**

Leader: Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and put a new and right spirit within me.  
Do not cast me away from your presence,  
and do not take your holy spirit from me.

**All: Restore to me the joy of your salvation,  
and sustain in me a willing spirit.  
Then I will teach transgressors your ways,  
and sinners will return to you.**

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE: *Out of the Deep*

S. Owens

Out of the deep I call to you, O Lord, hear my plea.

Out of the deep I call to you, O God, an-swer me.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and common time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of lyrics, and the second staff contains the melody for the second line. The notes are simple, using quarter and eighth notes with rests.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Amy McClure

Leader: According to the Lord's abundant mercy, there is  
forgiveness for all who seek repentance, and grace  
for all who turn their hearts to the way of Jesus.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON: 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

Linda Jones

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

HOMILY: "*Distended*"

Emily Hull McGee

IMPOSITION OF ASHES AND CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION

\*HYMN OF RESPONSE 168: *I Take the Cross of Jesus Christ*

KINGSFOLD

\*BENEDICTION

Emily Hull McGee

*(Please depart in silence.)*

\*Those who are able will please stand.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“My Prayers Rise Like Incense” words and music by Arlo D. Duba, ©1980 Arlo D. Duba, Used by permission, Onelicense.net, #A-720038

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### Again & Again: Worship this Lent

In Lent, we’re reminded that, again and again, suffering and brokenness find us. We doubt again, we lament again, we mess up again. Again and again, the story of Jesus on the cross repeats. And yet, in the midst of the chaos of our lives, God tends to us by offering a sacred refrain: “*I choose you, I love you, I will lead you to repair.*” Again and again, God breaks the cycle and offers us a new way forward. Join us this Lent in worship and in study as again and again, we bring all of who we are to God and trust that God will meet us, time and again, along the way.

#### February 25

*Again & Again: Gaining & Losing*  
Mark 8:31-38

#### March 3

*Again & Again: Tearing Down & Raising Up*  
John 2:13-22

#### March 10

*Again & Again: Perishing & Living*  
John 3:14-21

#### March 17

*Again & Again: Losing & Finding*  
John 12:20-33

#### March 24 | Palm Sunday

*Again & Again: Emptying & Filling*  
Mark 11:1-11

#### March 31 | Easter Sunday

*Again & Again: Here & There & Everywhere*  
Mark 16:1-8



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BOLD LOVE. BOUNDLESS COMPASSION.