

ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

139 N. 4th Street
Emmaus, Pennsylvania

March 9, 2011

ASH WEDNESDAY

7:30 PM

The People of God Gather For Worship

Thought for Meditation: *"It is with life as with a play; what matters is not how long it is, but how good it is."*

- Lucius Annaeus Seneca

Prelude: *"Chorale Prelude"*

Buxtehude

Bell Choir: *"You Are my All in All"*

Welcome

...All May Stand...

Call to Worship:

Pastor: Welcome to the season of self-examination;
this is a time for reconciliation with God and neighbor.

People: **Welcome together, elders and children, to meet God,
longing for the abundant mercy of our Creator.**

Pastor: Seek to know God's presence here and everywhere;
let the wisdom of God guide you in truth.

People: **Through hardship, affliction and calamity,
we reach for the power of God to steady us.**

Pastor: Prepare yourselves for a period of testing.
Be open to the grace that enables your growth.

People: **With fasting, with weeping and with mourning,
We seek the steadfast love of God.**

Processional Hymn: *"Forty days and Forty Nights"*
...Please Be Seated...

#179

The People of God Confess Their Sins

Opening Prayer:

Pastor: As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are called to struggle against everything that leads us away from the love of God and neighbor. Repentance, fasting, prayer, study, and works of love help us return to that love.
I invite you, therefore, to commit yourselves to love God and neighbor by confessing your sin and by asking God for strength to persevere in your Lenten discipline.

Silence

Litany of Penitence:

Pastor: Let us pray.

People: **Holy and merciful God, we confess to you and to one another, and to the whole communion of saints in heaven and on earth, that we have sinned by our own fault in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone.**

Pastor: We have not loved you with all our heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven.

People: **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Pastor: We have been deaf to your call to serve as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

People: **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Pastor: We confess to you, O God, all our past unfaithfulness: the pride, hypocrisy, and impatience in our lives.

People: **We confess to you, O God.**

Pastor: Our self-indulgent appetites and ways and our exploitation of other people.

People: **We confess to you, O God.**

Pastor: Our anger at our own frustration and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves.

People: **We confess to you, O God.**

Pastor: Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonesty in daily life and work.

The People of God Share the Word of God

People: We confess to you, O God.

Pastor: Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to commend the faith that is in us.

People: We confess to you, O God.

Pastor: Accept our repentance, O God, for the wrongs we have done, for our neglect of human need and suffering and our indifference to injustice and cruelty.

People: Accept our repentance, O God.

Pastor: For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us.

People: Accept our repentance, O God.

Pastor: For our waste and pollution of your creation and our lack of concern for those who come after us.

People: Accept our repentance, O God.

Pastor: Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us.

People: Favorably hear us, O God, for your mercy is great. Amen.

Imposition of Ashes

(We invite anyone interested in receiving ashes, please come forward.)

Pastor: Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

Pastor: Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,

People: That we may show forth your glory.

Pastor: By the cross and passion of our Savior.

People: Bring us with all your saints to the joy of Christ's resurrection.

All: Amen

Pastor: Almighty God does not desire the death of sinners, but rather that they may turn from their wickedness and live. Therefore, we implore God to grant us true repentance and the Holy Spirit that those things which we do this day may be pleasing to God, that the rest of our lives may be lived faithfully, and that at the least we may come to God's eternal joy; through Jesus the Christ.

All: Thanks be to God!

The Holy Scripture:

First Lesson: Joel 2:1-2,12-17a Page 740

Second Lesson: II Corinthians 5:20b-6:10 Page 940

Gospel Lesson: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 Page 787

Sermon: "What Ashes?"

Rev. Dr. Paul W. Knappenberger

Sharing our Tithes and Offerings

The Offering

The Offertory: "Come Walk With Me"

Martin

...All May Stand...

The Offertory Response: "Doxology"

#46

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise Him; all creatures here below;

Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;

Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication and Commitment

We Share the Lord's Supper

Great Thanksgiving

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Communion Prayer

Seraphic Hymn:

**Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth;
Heaven and earth are full, are full of the majesty
of thy glory;
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord;
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.**

Communion Prayer

Pastor: Great is the mystery of faith.

**All: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will
come again.**

...Please Be Seated...

Lord's Prayer:

**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, for
Amen.**

Breaking the Bread and Blessing the Cup

Communion of the People

Pastor: The gifts of God for the people of God. Come,
for all things are ready.

Pastor: Jesus Lamb of God.

People: Have mercy on us.

Pastor: Jesus, bearer of our sins,

People: Have mercy on us.

Pastor: Jesus, redeemer of the world.

People: Grant us peace.

Sharing The Elements (The center section of the communion tray is filled with grape juice, the outer section with wine.)

...All May Stand...

Prayer of Thanksgiving

**All: God of compassion, through your Son, Jesus Christ,
you reconciled your people to yourself. Following his
example of prayer and fasting, may we obey you with
willing hearts and serve one another in holy love; through
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

The People of God Go Forth In Mission

Benediction

Threefold Amen

Recessional Hymn: *"In the Cross of Christ I Glory"*

#207

Silent Moment

Postlude

Welcome

On this Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, may our love for Christ intensify and our service to Him be ignited and pursued.

Communion

We invite to the Lord's Table "all baptized members of the Christian Church, who look to the Lord Jesus for righteousness and salvation, and who desire to possess His Spirit and walk in His ways." People of any age are welcome to receive communion. When the communion trays are distributed, you will see the cups in the center have white grape juice. The other cups have wine. You may choose whichever one you prefer. It is our custom for members to wait until all have been served, and then the pastor will invite all to commune. Please remember to complete a communion card today.

The **Nursery** is located through the Narthex to the left in the rear hallway. It is not staffed tonight; however the room is open and available for parents supervising their own children.

TODAY'S WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

7:30 PM

Acolytes: Joscelyn Hengeveld, Harrison Ike
Greeters: George Bayer, Kimberly Ike, Adele Schaffer
Ushers: Larry Delhagen, Scott Stenroos, Bill Knappenberger, Tom Capehart, Russell Drabick, Jackie Knappenberger, Barry Miller, John Zayaitz
Sound System: Jim Schaffer

The **Altar Flowers** are sponsored by the Senior Choir of St. John's in memory and honor of all members past and present.

CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Dr. Paul W. Knappenberger, Senior Pastor,
pstpaul@stjohnsuccemmaus.org
Rev. Curt Sandroock, Assisting Pastor
Patrice DiCarne, Minister of Music
Colleen Bernini, Administrative Secretary
Diane Ritter, Financial Secretary, dedemarit@juno.com
Pat Dillman, Director of Christian Education
Keith Draves, Youth Group Advisor
Cheryl Clauser, Sexton
Kayli Freeman, Seminarian
Church Office Hours: 8:30 to 11:30 & 12:30 to 3:30
Phone Number: 610.965.9158
Fax Number: 610.967.5380
Email: office@stjohnsuccemmaus.org
Website: www.stjohnsuccemmaus.org

Why Ash Wednesday?

Traditionally, the Christian church has observed the seven weeks before Easter as a time of penitence and spiritual self-examination.

Ash Wednesday, which marks the beginning of Lent, derives its name from the ancient practice of marking the foreheads of worshippers with ashes from the unused palm branches of the previous year. Ashes historically have had a dual significance.

First, they are Old Testament symbols of sadness and humility. Job, in the midst of all his troubles, cried out to God from the ash heap.

The second symbolic meaning of ashes is a reminder of our mortality. Each of us faces the inevitability of physical death. Our bodies and material positions eventually will turn to dust and ashes. This is a reminder that we dare not trust in things that crumble. But Lent does not leave us on the ash heap. It begins with Ash Wednesday, but ends with Easter. And Easter proclaims that, through Christ, God resurrects us from our dust and ashes, makes us new creatures and brings life out of death!

