**Ash Wednesday Worship, 2022**

**First Mennonite Church of Christian**

Welcome

Words about Ash Wednesday and Lent

Prayer of Releasing

Leader: Holy, holy, holy God**People: We place ourselves in your presence; we rest in the promise of your grace**.
Leader: Our minds and our spirits are cluttered with many thoughts and feelings that threaten to pull our attention away from you.

**People: Let us unclench our fists and release these things:**

Leader: We release all that we have done today–whether for good or for ill.

**People**: **We release all that we feel like we should have done today, but did not do.**

Leader: We release all that we need to do tomorrow.

**People: We release our fear. We release our anxiety.**

Leader: We release our impatience. We release our pride.

**People**: **All of the thoughts, all of the feelings that pull us away from you, O God, we release. [silence]**

Leader: Fill us now with the joy and the peace of your deep, abiding presence.

**All:** **We offer all of ourselves to you, our One God, Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer. Amen**

Scripture Reading: Psalm 51: 10-17 [Silence]

Prayer of Confession

**Leader**: O God of life,

**People: we confess the ways we turn away from the fullness of life that you offer. [silence]**Leader: God of love,

**People: we confess the hatred we hold in our hearts. [silence]**Leader: God of compassion,

**People: we confess our indifference. [silence]**Leader: God of justice,

**People: we confess that our efforts to be fair sometimes fall short. [silence]**Leader: God of peace,

**People: we confess the violent movements of our hearts, the violent realities of our world. [silence]**Leader: Holy God,

**All**: **we confess our sins to you**. [Silence]

Assurance of Pardon

Scripture Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10 [Silence]

Imposition of Ashes

Scripture Reading: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 [Silence]

Hymn – “What Wondrous Love Is This” (v. 1 & 4) VT #564

Prayer for Guidance

Leader: Generous God who fills the earth with abundance–Oceans and skies full of water, fields that yield food, flowers and birdsong and beauty of all sorts–

**People: May we live with generous hearts, with open hands.**

Leader: Humble God who became flesh and entered into our humanity–who touched the untouchable, spoke to the outcasts, washed the disciples’ feet–

**People: May we live with humble hearts, looking always to the needs of others.**

Leader: Righteous God who longs for us to be in relationship with you–through sincere prayer, fasting, worship, scripture reading, fellowship–

**People: May we love you with all of our hearts, minds, and souls.**

Leader: Walk with us on this Lenten journey, Lord.

Benediction – from “Marked by Ashes”, by Walter Brueggemann

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