



**Community Ash Wednesday
and Ukraine Prayer Service**

at

**United Church of Christ
11 West Main St., Norwich, New York**

**Community Ash Wednesday
Ukraine Prayer Service**
held at
Unted Church of Christ
First Congregational, Norwich NY

February 22, 2023

7:00 p.m.

PREPARING TO WORSHIP GOD

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

PRELUDE *Adoration*

Florence Price

WELCOME

(Please sign the attendance pad found in the pew.)

GATHERING

CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: We now commence our Lenten Journey this night -
this Ash Wednesday, with open hearts in the
presentness of God.

**ALL: We partake in our daily things of life may we see
them as sacred, may we be empowered to perform
simple acts of concern and love, and real works of
reform and renewal.**

ONE: Let us love deeply the earth which gives us air to
breathe, water to drink, and food to sustain us.

**ALL: May we remember that life is begotten from dust,
radiant in light and heat.**

ONE: We commence our Lenten Journey this night with
knowledge of pain in our world.

*Please stand in body or in spirit.

Large Print Bulletins are available from the ushers.

Permission to reprint, podcast, and / or stream the music in this service obtained
from ONE LICENSE with license #735996-A. All rights reserved.

ALL: We acknowledge that as we receive holy ashes this night, that our kindred in Ukraine continue to receive the unholy ashes of bombs and drone attacks, of missile destruction and war.

ONE: We acknowledge that this night, the ash we receive is also the ash that has fallen on homes and our kindred in Kyiv, Lviv, and Kharkiv for a full year.

ALL: We mourn this night that our kindred in Odessa, Mariupol, and Bakhmut receive not ashes on their foreheads in worship, but ashes on their bodies from war and destruction.

ONE: We proclaim as Christ did that we are all one - all of creation, all that now live, all that have ever lived.

ALL: We remember we are dust, and to dust we return.

ONE: We remember we are connected and to connection we return.

ALL: We remember in our connection that this holy dust is all the dust of all the Earth, of Norwich, of Ukraine, of all God's Creation.

ONE: We remember we are part of the great mystery.

ALL: With our hearts open in the presentness of God, we remember we are dust and to dust we return.

UNISON ASH WEDNESDAY PRAYER OF FAITHFULNESS

God of our Hearts, not of our outer garments, nor our church structures, nor our programs and human plans, you are the only one who can make us pure. You are the only one who can wash us clean of all our sin and guilt. You alone can save us from the terrible Day of the Lord. You are the merciful and just God. If we turn, we see you. Help us to turn, O God of all hearts, and find you here with us: Emmanuel – the Christ-heart within us all. We light our fires for you, to reflect your shining. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray, Amen.

***OPENING HYMN**

Dust and Ashes Touch Our Face
(Tune: DUST AND ASHES)

#186

TIME OF SHARING

PASTORAL BLESSING OF PEACE

ONE: May the Peace of Jesus Christ be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

SUNG RESPONSE

Peace

Words and Music Judy A. Rose

Peace be to you in all you do.
Peace be the way in all you say.
Peace be the light that shines so bright
from your heart on the world this day.
Peace, peace, peace, peace.
Peace be to you in all you do.
Peace, peace, peace, peace.
Peace be to you in all you do.

LENTEN INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

ONE: O gracious God, we hear your voice calling us ...

ALL: To share whatever gift it is that you have given to us to do your work on Earth.

ONE: Gracious God, give us generous hearts ...

ALL: To acknowledge you as the giver of all good gifts, and to give without counting the cost.

ONE: Gracious God, give us generous hearts ...

ALL: To give without counting the cost, and to share without expecting something in return.

ONE: Gracious God, give us generous hearts ...

ALL: To share without expecting something in return.

ONE: Gracious God, give us generous hearts ...

ALL: To be wise in the way of caring for ourselves and others, and to hold all of our treasures and values with open hands.

ONE: Gracious God, give us generous hearts ...

ALL: To be gracious and unbegrudging in our giving, and to recognize the abundance of blessings in each passing day.

ONE: Gracious God, give us generous hearts ...

ALL: To grow in giving thanks for everything, to be happy with having what we need, and to be wise enough to know what it is that we want and do not need. . .

ONE: Give us generous hearts, and let us pray together....

ALL: O gracious God, who so generously lavishes our lives with goodness, create in our hearts a deep center of gratitude, a center that grows so strong in its thanksgiving that sharing freely of our treasures becomes the norm and the pattern of our existence. Remind us often of how much you cherish us, of how abundantly you have offered gifts to us, especially in the hours of our greatest need. May we always be grateful for your reaching into our lives with surprises of joy, growth, and unearned love. Amen.

Offering plates are located at both Nave doors for your convenience. Tonight's offering will benefit the Food Pantry and the United Church of Christ Fund for Ukraine.

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

SCRIPTURE READING (RESPONSIVE)

Psalm 51

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

ALL: Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, 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. Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me.

ONE: 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.

ONE: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

ALL: Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.

ONE: Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

ALL: Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.

ONE: O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

ALL: For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt-offering, you would not be pleased. The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. Do good to Zion in your good pleasure; rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, then you will delight in right sacrifices, in burnt-offerings and whole burnt-offerings; then bulls will be offered on your altar.

CHOIR ANTHEM

Create In Me A Clean Heart, O God

by Arnold B. Sherman

SCRIPTURE READING - Psalm 31

(Read by Ukrainians from bunkers and shelters. English translation below.)

In you, O Lord, I seek refuge; do not let me ever be put to shame; in your righteousness deliver me. Incline your ear to me; rescue me speedily. Be a rock of refuge for me, a strong fortress to save me.

You are indeed my rock and my fortress; for your name's sake lead me and guide me, take me out of the net that is hidden for me, for you are my refuge. Into your hand I commit my spirit; you have redeemed me, O Lord, faithful God.

You hate those who pay regard to worthless idols, but I trust in the Lord. I will exult and rejoice in your steadfast love, because you have seen my affliction; you have taken heed of my adversities, and have not delivered me into the hand of the enemy; you have set my feet in a broad place.

Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am in distress; my eye wastes away from grief, my soul and body also. For my life is spent with sorrow, and my years with sighing; my strength fails because of my misery, and my bones waste away.

I am the scorn of all my adversaries, a horror to my neighbors, an object of dread to my acquaintances; those who see me in the street flee from me. I have passed out of mind like one who is dead; I have become like a broken vessel. For I hear the whispering of many— terror all around!— as they scheme together against me, as they plot to take my life.

But I trust in you, O Lord; I say, 'You are my God.' My times are in your hand; deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors. Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love. Do not let me be put to shame, O Lord, for I call on you; let the wicked be put to shame; let them go dumbfounded to Sheol. Let the lying lips be stilled that speak insolently against the righteous with pride and contempt.

O how abundant is your goodness that you have laid up for those who fear you, and accomplished for those who take refuge in you, in the sight of everyone! In the shelter of your

presence you hide them from human plots; you hold them safe under your shelter from contentious tongues.

Blessed be the Lord, for he has wondrously shown his steadfast love to me when I was beset as a city under siege. I had said in my alarm, 'I am driven far from your sight.' But you heard my supplications when I cried out to you for help.

Love the Lord, all you his saints. The Lord preserves the faithful, but abundantly repays the one who acts haughtily. Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all you who wait for the Lord.

ASH WEDNESDAY REFLECTION Rev. Jason Boyd

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

INTERLUDE

MARKING WITH ASHES

UNISON PRAYER OF BLESSING OF THE ASHES

Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth. Grant that these ashes may be to us a sign of our mortality and penitence, so that we may remember that only by your gracious gift are we given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

RECEIVING THE ASHES

UNISON ASH WEDNESDAY PRAYER

O God, who makes all things new, new stars, new dust, new life; take my heart, every hardened edge and measured beat, and create something new in me. I need your newness, God, the rough parts of me made smooth; the stagnant, stirred; the stuck, freed; the unkind, forgiven. And then, by the power of your Spirit, I need to be turned toward Love again. Amen.

RESPONSIVE PRAYER FOR UKRAINE / Молитва за Україну

ONE: Боже великий, єдиний, Нам Україну храни. Волі і світу промінням Ти її осіни.

ALL: Lord, oh the Great and Almighty, protect our beloved Ukraine. Bless her with freedom and light of your holy rays.

ONE: Світлом науки і знання Нас, дітей, просвіти, В чистій любові до краю, Ти нас, Боже, зрости.

ALL: With learning and knowledge enlighten us, your children small, in love pure and everlasting. Let us, oh Lord, grow.

ONE: Молимося, Боже єдиний, Нам Україну храни, Всі свої ласки й щедроти Ти на люд наш зверни.

ALL: We pray, oh Lord Almighty, protect our beloved Ukraine. Grant our people and country all your kindness and grace.

ONE: Дай йому волю, дай йому долю, Дай доброго світу, щастя, Дай, Боже, народу І многая, многая літа.

ALL: Bless us with freedom, bless us with wisdom. Guide us into a kind world, Bless us, oh Lord, with good fortune forever and evermore.

THE 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 forever. Amen.

COMMISSION AND BLESSING

***CLOSING HYMN**

How Deep the Silence of the Soul
(Tune: TALLIS' THIRD TUNE)

#509

UNISON CLOSING PRAYER FOR PEACE

Almighty and Eternal God, we hang our heads in overwhelming sorrow while witnessing the massive number of deaths in Ukraine and the destruction into ash of its cities. We deeply mourn these deaths, especially the children who have lost their young lives filled with promise. Be present with all who weep and cry out in anguish. With your divine presence, O God, bring an end to this war by Russia. Move Russia's leaders to stop its war on Ukraine and the killing of its people. Give wisdom to world leaders about the most effective ways to intervene and dissipate the harm being caused. Fill the people of Ukraine with hope and fortitude that peace will prevail and their freedom will endure. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Great God of Might and Glory

David Paxton

Bulletin Notes:

Call to Worship by Rev. Rex A E Hunt

Attribution for Prayer of Faithfulness by Rev. Marilyn K. Levine

Psalm 31 Video - Attribution: UK Bible Society - The "Prayer for Ukraine," or Молитва за Україну, was first published as a hymn in 1885 in Ukraine, and you may have heard it in a variety of places, including having been sung by the Ukrainian Chorus Dumka of New York on Saturday Night Live approximately one year ago immediately after the Russian invasion.

Closing Prayer for Peace by National Council of Churches

**THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING
PARTICIPANTS IN TONIGHT'S SERVICE:**

The Reverend Jason Boyd
United Church of Christ, First Congregational

The Reverend Linda Powell-Owens
Smyrna United Methodist Church

The Reverend Mary Rublee
Broad Street United Methodist Church

The Reverend Laura Wade
Christ Lutheran Church

Jason Handy, Organist

Chris McSweeney, Livestream

Liam Hunter, Livestream

Ellie Hunter, Sexton

Fiora Breese, Nursery

Pat Burke, Flowers

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST FIRST CONGREGATIONAL

11 West Main St., Norwich NY 13815

607-334-3434 - office@uccnorwichny.org - www.uccnorwichny.org

MINISTERS: All the People

PASTOR AND TEACHER: Rev. Jason Boyd

MODERATOR: John Kolb

CHAIR OF DEACONS: Mary Williams

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES: Mary Williams

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRIES: Ericka Tyler

PARISH COORDINATOR: Cheri Oakley

FINANCIAL ASSISTANT: Jennifer Mallozzi

facebook



CHURCH OFFICE OPEN

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday

8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

February 22, 2023

UCC Norwich Reopening Guidelines

Revised 03/31/22

COVID Protocols that have been modified:

- Face coverings in the church building will be optional
- Social distancing of 6 feet is still recommended.
- Childcare will be available again beginning in September 2022
- Parishioners may choose their own seating in the Nave. Distancing between non-family groups is still recommended.
- Hymnals, Pew Bibles will be in the pew racks and may be used.
- Congregational singing is now permitted.
- Prayer requests may be spoken during the worship service or may be submitted in the prayer basket. (Usher will bring microphone around to congregation. Microphone cover will be supplied)
- Coffee Hour will resume April 24, 2022 and will be hosted and coordinated by the Deacons.
- Passing of the peace will continue to be suspended at this time.
- Offerings will be collected by placing your envelope in a basket upon entering or exiting the Nave.
- Communion will be offered in the pews using individually portioned elements.
- Hearing assistive devices will be available for those that need them. You will receive the headset in a bag. Please write your name on the bag and store the headset in the same bag for use during future services.
- Hand sanitizing stations are located near the Nave entrance hall and in each pew. Please wash your hands or use sanitizing stations frequently.
- We ask that if you are not feeling well and /or may be exhibiting cold or flu-like symptoms, that you refrain from attending until you feel better.
- Disinfection Plan: our Custodian will disinfect all high touch surfaces, including rest rooms and seating areas, before and/or after weekly services.