

HARVARD

The Memorial Church



Order of Worship

Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, February 26, 2020
12:10–12:30 pm

PLEASE SILENCE ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES UPON ENTERING
THE SANCTUARY OF THE MEMORIAL CHURCH.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

The congregation stands at the entrance of the ministers.

BIDDING PRAYER FOR LENT

Dear People of God: The first Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became their custom to prepare for those days by a season of penitence and fasting. In the early church, the season of Lent provided a time in which converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism. It was also a time when those who had been separated from the community were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to the fellowship of the faithful. Thereby, the whole congregation was put in mind of the message of pardon and absolution set forth in the Gospel of our Savior, and of the need which all Christians continually have to ask for repentance and to renew their faith.

I invite you, therefore, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word. And let us now pray together unto almighty God, our maker and redeemer.

THE COLLECT FOR THE DAY

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

THE FIRST LESSON

Joel 2:1–2, 12–17

Pew Bible, pages 800–801 (OT)

The congregation is seated for the lessons.

HYMN

No. 145, "Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days"

St. Flavian

The congregation standing

THE SECOND LESSON

Matthew 6:1–6, 16–21

Pew Bible, page 5 (NT)

PSALTER

Psalm 51:1–17

Pew Bible, pages 483–484 (OT)

To be read responsively; the congregation standing

LITANY OF PENITENCE

The congregation sits, and the minister begins the litany by saying:

Minister: Most holy and merciful God:

People: We confess to you and to one another, and to the whole communion of saints in heaven and on earth, that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed; by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.

Minister: We have not loved you with our whole 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, Lord.

Minister: We have ignored your call to serve, as Christ served us. We have not had in us the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

People: Have mercy on us, Lord.

Minister: We confess to you, Lord, all our past unfaithfulness: the pride, hypocrisy, and impatience of our lives.

People: We confess to you, Lord.

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

People: We confess to you, Lord.

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

People: We confess to you, Lord.

Minister: Accept our repentance, Lord, for the wrongs we have done: for our obliviousness to human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty.

People: Accept our repentance, Lord.

Minister: 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, Lord.

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

People: Accept our repentance, Lord.

Minister: Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us.

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

Minister: Accomplish in us the work of your salvation.

People: That we may show forth your glory in the world.

Minister: By the cross and passion of your Son our Lord.

People: Bring us all to the joy of his resurrection.

Minister: May the almighty and merciful God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desires not the death of sinners, but rather that we turn from our wickedness and live, accept our repentance, forgive us our sins, and restore us by his Holy Spirit to newness of life.

People: Amen.

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Minister: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Minister: Let us pray.

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, that we may remember that it is only by your gracious gift that we are given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

People: Amen.

Those who desire the imposition of ashes may proceed to the foot of the chancel steps by way of the center aisle, returning to their seats by way of the side aisles..

BLESSING

The congregation leaves the Church in silence.

The service is conducted by Professor Stephanie Paulsell, Interim Pusey Minister in the Memorial Church, Susan Shallcross Swartz Professor of the Practice of Christian Studies, Harvard Divinity School; the Reverend Westley P. Conn, Ministry Fellow in the Memorial Church; Minister Kevin P. Bryant, Affiliated Minister in the Memorial Church of Harvard University; and KMarie Tejada MDiv III, Seminarian in the Memorial Church.

*For more information on upcoming services and events:
memorialchurch.harvard.edu • facebook.com/harvardmemorialchurch • twitter.com/memchurch
To subscribe to the Memorial Church e-mail list, visit our website: memorialchurch.harvard.edu.*