

# First Presbyterian Church of Rumson, NJ

*Ash Wednesday Service  
March 2, 2022*



*Our Mission Statement - “We, the First Presbyterian Church of Rumson, are called by God to be a spiritual and visible presence by living out our faith and sharing our gifts among God’s people.”*

# Ash Wednesday

March 2, 2022 : 7:30 P.M.

**PRELUDE** “*What Wondrous Love is This*” ..... Wonderous Love  
~ Offered by *Suzanne Parmly* ~

## CALL TO WORSHIP

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

**People:** Do not cast me away from your presence,  
and do not take your holy spirit from me.

*Leader:* Restore to me the joy of your salvation and sustain in me a willing spirit.

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

*Leader:* For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt offering,  
you would not be pleased.

**People:** The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit;  
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

**HYMN #166** “*Lord, Who throughout These Forty Days*” ..... St. Flavian  
~ Led by *Suzanne Parmly* ~

## CONFESSION

*Leader:* Rend your hearts and not your garments; return to your God.

**People:** For God is merciful and gracious, slow to anger,  
and abounding in steadfast love.

*Leader:* Let us ask God to break forth light into the dark places of our hearts and  
confront us with hidden and secret sins, all that we keep in the dark.

**People:** O God, open our hearts.

*Leader:* Our preoccupation with ourselves,

**People:** O God, open our hearts.

*Leader:* Our lustful imaginations, our secret ambitions,

**People:** O God, open our hearts.

*Leader:* The buried grudge, the half-acknowledged enmity,

**People:** O God, open our hearts.

*Leader:* The bitterness of some past loss not yet offered to you,

**People:** O God, open our hearts.

*Leader:* The private comforts to which we cling,

**People:** **O God, open our hearts.**

*Leader:* The fear of failure which saps our initiative,

**People:** **O God, open our hearts.**

*Leader:* The pessimism that is an insult to your will and power,

**People:** **O God, open our hearts. Here and now, O Holy One, we bring our secret sins to you, we lie open in your sight. Let your piercing light be also our healing, for the sake of Jesus Christ, who taught us and brought us your forgiveness. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE READINGS .....2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10 (pg. 221 NT)  
Matthew 6:1-6,16-20 (pg. 6 NT)

HOMILY "*The Journey with Christ*" ..... Rev. John Monroe. III

SOLO "*Ashes*" ..... Tom Conry

### THE ASHES

Ash Wednesday invites us to come back to earth.

To wonder at the gift of life, my life,  
our life

with the earth, the shared body of our existence.

These ashes were once trees and shrubs,  
and places where life was lived to its fullest.

Once they were full of life.

Now they are black and grey.

Dry.

Lifeless.

But mixed with the oil and water of our baptism make good fertilizer:

it helps the seeds of the gospel take deeper root in us

and bring forth the fruits, the harvest of justice, peace, and generosity.

These are ashes worth wearing. May we accept this gift and be blessed.

And be assured we will be different at the end of this season.

For from the burnt ashes will spring the green shoot of life

and the purple flower of attentiveness to God.

**BLESSING**

May these ashes be blessed.  
May they be for us a symbol of our stardust, and of our return to the earth.  
May we be blessed.  
And may we be earthed in an inclusive love,  
as forgiven and forgiving people.

**DISTRIBUTION**

Those who wish to be marked are invited to come forward.

**PRAYER**

We are thankful for forgiveness and healing.  
Mindful of faith that sees possibilities,  
faith that endures, faith that inspires. . .  
Mindful of love’s call to be faithful, to endure,  
to be generous and forgiving whatever the cost.  
Mindful of the hope of new life as we follow Jesus during this Lenten journey.  
Amen.

**SILENCE**

**HYMN #169 “Dear Lord and Father of Mankind”** .....Rest  
~ Led by *Suzanne Parmly* ~

**DEPARTURE**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE**