



FEBRUARY 17, 2021
THE SANCTUARY
6:30 PM

First Presbyterian Church of Tulsa
Born by grace in 1885

A Service of Ashes

(A journey with Jesus to the cross.)

The Words of Preparation

It is impossible for anybody to leave behind the darkness of the world he carries on his back like a snail, but for God –all things are possible.

Frederick Buechner

If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead –you will be saved. Romans 10:9-10

The Welcome

Dr. Jim Miller

The *Shema Yisrael*: Hear, O Israel!

Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. When the Lord your God has brought you into the land that he swore to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you—a land with fine, large cities that you did not build, houses that you did not fill with all sorts of goods that you did not fill, hewn cisterns that you did not hew, vineyards and olive groves that you did not plant—and when you have eaten your fill, take care that you do not forget the Lord, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

The Silence

Be silent before the Lord, all people, for He has roused Himself from His holy dwelling.

Zechariah 2:13

The Prayer of Preparation

Rev. Daniel Hutchinson

O Lord, hear my prayer; O Lord, hear my prayer, when I call answer me! O Lord, hear my prayer; O Lord, hear my prayer. Come, and listen to me. (2x)

(Congregation joins in the third singing of this prayer)

O Lord, hear my prayer; O Lord, hear my prayer, when I call answer me! O Lord, hear my prayer; O Lord, hear my prayer. Come, and listen to me.

The Call to Worship

Join me in echoing the Lord's command:

Tell the people of Israel to make tassels for the hems of their clothes...and to attach the tassels to their clothes with a blue cord.

The tassels, says the Lord, are to remind you of my commandments: that you are to obey my laws instead of following your own desires, going your own ways, serving other gods. They will remind you to be holy to your God. For I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt; yes, I am the Lord your God. Numbers 15:37-41

Good Lord, forgive me. I *have* followed my own desires; I *have* gone my own way. On this night of ashes, I come looking for grace. Come, Lord Jesus. Come, abide with me.

❖ The Hymn Abide With Me

EVENTIDE

Abide with me, fast falls the eventide! The darkness deepens, Lord, with me abide. When other helpers fail and comforts flee, Help of the helpless, O, abide with me!

Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes; Shine through the gloom and

point me to the skies. Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee; In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me!

The Confession *(from Romans 7)*

What I don't understand about myself is that I decide one way but then I act another, doing things I absolutely despise. So if I can't be trusted to figure out what is best for myself and then do it, it becomes obvious that God's command is necessary. But I need something more! For I know the law but still can't keep it, and if *the power of sin within me keeps sabotaging my best intentions*, I obviously need help!

I realize that I don't have what it takes. I can will it but I can't do it. I decide to do good, but I don't really do it; I decide not to do bad but then I do it anyway. My decisions, such as they are, don't result in actions. Something has gone wrong deep within me and gets the better of me every time.

It happens so regularly that it's predictable. The moment I decide to do good, sin is there to trip me up. I truly delight in God's commands but it's pretty obvious that not all of me joins in that delight.

Parts of me covertly rebel, and just when I least expect it, they take charge. I've tried everything and nothing helps. I'm at the end of my rope. Is there no one who can do anything for me? Isn't that the real question?

The Homily What Do You Do With the Ashes of Disordered Life?

Lord, to whom else shall we go...? John 6:68

The Hymn

Lord, Hear Our Prayers

HAMBURG

Lord, hear our prayers in a world filled with strife, marked by the ashes of disordered life, broken and hurting, and needing your care: Lord, in your mercy, hear now our prayers.

Lord, hear our prayers in this dark place of rest, called to be faithful, but failing the test. Sin-sick and wounded, with burdens to bear: Lord, in your mercy, hear now our prayers.

Lord, hear our prayers for our loved ones nearby; grant them your mercy and hear now their sigh. Marked by the cross may they welcome your love; grant them, dear Jesus, strength from above.

The Imposition of Ashes

For those viewing from home, you're encouraged to participate in this: make the sign of the cross on your forehead, then your lips, then your heart while saying these words:

The presence of Christ:

- 1) be ever in my mind,*
- 2) proclaimed by my lips,*
- 3) piercing my heart,*

Leading me into a deeper communion with you, Lord Jesus!

(The congregation comes forward, beginning from the back of the Sanctuary)

*From dust you have come and to dust you shall return:
stay close to the Master.*

The Gospel

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,
who gave himself for our sins to set us free from the present evil age,
according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be the glory forever
and ever. AMEN. *Galatians 1:3-4*

❖ The Hymn

My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less

SOLID ROCK

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness!
I dare not trust the sweetest frame but wholly lean on Jesus' name. On Christ
the solid Rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand, all other ground is
sinking sand!

His oath, his covenant, his blood, supports me in the 'whelming flood!
When all around my soul gives way He then is all my hope and stay. On Christ
the solid Rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand, all other ground is
sinking sand!

When He shall come with trumpet sound, O may I then in Him be found!
Dressed in his righteousness alone, faultless to stand before the throne.
On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand, all other
ground is sinking sand

❖ The Prayer and the Benediction

May the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwell in you, and may
He give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit –now, forever, and
always. *Romans 8:11*

❖ Please stand

Leading in Worship:

Organist

Ron Pearson

Pastors

Rev. Daniel Hutchinson,

Dr. Jim Miller