



Second Congregational Church in Wilton,
United Church of Christ

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Ash Wednesday

March 2, 2022

Second Congregational Church in Wilton,
United Church of Christ

**Welcome to the worship of God at the
Second Congregational Church in Wilton,
United Church of Christ.**

We are glad you are here today!

***Bold print means congregational participation.
An asterisk (*) indicates to please stand, if you are able***

GATHERING FOR THE WORD

WORDS OF WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

***CALL TO WORSHIP** *Joel 2:1, Isaiah 58:1, Psalm 51*

One: Lift up your voice like a trumpet!
sound the alarms on the mountains.

All: **We gather to begin again
with fasting, mourning, and hoping.**

One: Take your space, Take deep breaths.
the wilderness is beckoning.

All: **We gather to begin again
Restore to us the joy of your salvation**

One: Create in us clean hearts, O God
Renew a righteous spirit

All: **We gather to begin again
The Lenten Journey calls us forth**

One: Dust will praise, crushed bones will rejoice
Let us join the holy noise

All: **We gather to begin again
Help us to build where all seems broken
We must build where all seems broken**

***HYMN**

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Unison

God of the wanderers in the wilderness—
From Hagar to Elijah, and Miriam to Jesus—
you have been with us in our hunger and our thirst,
in our doubt and uncertainty. We come to you in this
moment of invocation desiring your presence more
deeply; yet we know that your presence needs no
summoning; you need no invoking for you are already
and always with us. Emmanuel in the bleakness.
Emmanuel in our iniquities. So, invoke us, O God.
Renew us as we begin this journey of transformation.
Restore us as we strive to be our most compassionate
selves. Revive us when we feel that all is lost. Help us
to mend what has broken, for the sake of justice and
mercy as we walk humbly with you. Amen.

*HYMN

We Come, O Christ to You

NO. 110

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

Have strips of paper and pencils in the pews. You may also hand them out upon entry into the worship space. Have a few basins of water on tables around the worship space or at the front.

Hear these words of Octavia Butler
“All that you touch - You Change
All that you change - Changes You
The only lasting truth - Is Change
God is Change”

We come into this moment of confession not from place of self-deprecating shame or as a routine offering up of all the ways we've transgressed. We come into this moment not merely seeking forgiveness for the ways we have separated ourselves from God's vision for our lives. We come into this moment seeking change, making a commitment to transformation and mending what has broken for the sake of communal wholeness and liberation. On a few pieces of paper, I invite you to write your commitments to transformation during this Lenten journey and beyond.

INSTRUMENTAL

When you feel ready, you may walk to a basin of water and place your papers in it. We are reminded that following Jesus' baptism, he was swept into the wilderness for forty days. Let us remember our baptisms or our encounters with the readying power of water. We release our confessions so that we can make space for transformation.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

God's grace and mercy abounds.
God is with us in the change.
God's everlasting arms embrace us.
Each of us is beloved, affirmed, and forgiven.

***HYMN** "Meekness and Majesty" NO. 97

MEDITATION "Mend Me"

REFLECTION ON ASHES

It has been two years since our lives changed. Octavia Butler said, "God is change", yet the change we've experienced doesn't always seem Godly. We come into this building that is less full than it was two years ago and run our fingers across the surfaces. Particles of dust meet our fingertips, and we are reminded, ever so slightly that something has been happening in our absence. There has been movement in our absence. There has been organization and, perhaps, life, in our absence. In the silencing of our human sounds and the stilling our human motions, has the dust found a way to praise God?

If the rocks can cry out and the seas can roar—if floods can clap their hands and the hills can sing together with joy—surely this dust has something to tell us about God's creation at work. Surely, the dust can be proof of the transformational possibilities at hand. If we, too are dust, there is transformational possibilities within us all. In this moment of imposition, let us not only make

acquaintance with our mortality; let us, like dust, come alive and awaken to the ever-constant change that shapes us.

MARKING WITH ASHES

All are invited to come forward to receive ashes on their foreheads or hands; the leaders say to each:

Remember that you are God's beloved dust,
and to God's beloved dust you shall return.

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 trespasses as we forgive those
who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

***BENEDICTION**

May God be with us in our fasting, mourning,
and hoping. May there be restoration of joy, cleansing
of heart, and renewing of spirit. May breaches be
repaired. May broken walls be mended. May we, like
dust, awaken to the ever-constant change that shapes
us. Let us go forth and build where all seems broken.

Announcements

If you need or want a visit by the pastor
please contact the church office 603-654-9045
and leave a message or call the pastor directly at
603-620-0235
(Messages are usually returned by the next business day)

On The Calendar

Spring Play Rehearsal, February 6th, 4:-00 PM
Senior Book Club, February 14, 10:00 AM
Council Meeting, February 15, 7:00 PM

PARTICIPATING IN TODAY'S SERVICE

Pastor Kerry Richardson (Interim Pastor)
Patricia Cauchon, Director of Music
Guest Musician, Abbie Velez
All the Congregation, Ministers to the World

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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