



March 5, 2025

Ash Wednesday: Forgiver

I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. John 15:15

Invocation and Call to Worship

P: We gather together as friends in the presence of the Triune God who has called us friends. We gather together in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: A friend loves at all times,

C: And a brother is born for adversity.

P: The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear him,

C: And he makes known to them his covenant.

P: A man of many companions may come to ruin,

C: But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

P: What a friend we have in Jesus,

C: All our sins and griefs to bear!

P: Precious Savior, still our refuge—

C: Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Opening Hymn ... "Jesus Sinners Doth Receive" vrs. 1-6

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Jesus, friend of sinners, hear me as I confess my sins.

C: My thoughts have befriended sin and shame, not truth and righteousness.

P: O Lord, you have searched me and known me!

C: My words have befriended lies and slander, not love and mercy.

P: Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know it altogether.

C: My deeds have befriended hate and hurt, not peace and kindness.

P: You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways.

C: Lord, have mercy! Christ, have mercy! Lord, have mercy!

*(Please silently reflect on the ways that you have befriended sin—
and yet Jesus still calls you a friend.)*

P: Friends in Jesus: You have a Savior who has lived for you, died for you, and left the tomb empty for you. Your Servant

Jesus has humbled himself to care for you. Your Friend, Christ Jesus, has cleansed you from all unrighteousness and washed away your sin. Jesus forgives you and loves you. Jesus is your friend now and for all eternity.

C: What a friend we have in Jesus.

Imposition of Ashes

(Participants are invited to come forward at the direction of the ushers to receive a mark of ashes.)

Prayer of the Day

P: Lord Jesus...one God, now and forever. Amen.

Old Testament Reading ... Joel 2:12-17

Epistle Reading ... Colossians 1:9-14

Gospel Reading ... Luke 7:36-49

Sermon Hymn ... "Just As I Am, without One Plea"

Sermon

Nicene Creed

Offering and Attendance/Involvement Cards

Prayers

P: Amid our trials, temptations and troubles, we have a friend who sticks with us. Where else can we find a friend so faithful? And, so, we take it to the Lord in prayer. Jesus, you know our every weakness and have promised to be our friend, so we lift our prayers and raise our petitions.

C: Lord, hear our prayer.

P: Deliver us from the mess of our sin, and let us never be defined by the messes that we make.

C: Lord, hear our prayer.

P: Deliver this world from the mess of evil and injustice, and befriend the vulnerable, the sojourner and all who need a friend.

C: Lord, hear our prayer.

P: Deliver the self-righteous from their delusions, and teach us to

never underestimate the debts that you have forgiven on our behalf.

C: Lord, hear our prayer.

P: Deliver us from death, and remind us that friendship with you means that we are more than mere dust.

C: Lord, hear our prayer.

P: Deliver us from sorrow, discouragement and pain by the power of your abiding friendship.

C: Lord, hear our prayer.

P: Deliver us from apathy and malaise so that we can befriend our neighbors with your love.

C: Lord, hear our prayer.

P: Jesus, deliver us from isolation, and give us a seat at your table where we receive your body and blood.

C: Jesus, what a privilege it is to be your friend. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Words of Our Lord

Communion / Distribution Hymns

“Go to Dark Gethsemane”

“I Come, O Savior, to Thy Table”

“O Dearest Jesus, What Law Hast Thou Broken” vs. 1-6

Benediction

P: Jesus has called you friends and made known to you all that he has heard from the Father. Go now as friends of Jesus befriending others in the name of Jesus. Amen.

C: What a friend we have in Jesus!

Closing Hymn ... “What a Friend We Have in Jesus”