

NORTH OAK CHRISTIAN CHURCH-DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

*In the grace of God, we embrace unity, we celebrate diversity
and demonstrate Christ's love as an open and affirming faith community.*

March 5, 2025 – Ash Wednesday

Worship Leader- Mel Adams, Music-Regina Kellogg, Minister-Rev. Mark Willis

The Journey Begins

Call to Worship - Joel 2: 12-13

Worship Leader

“Yet even now”, says the Holy One, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the Lord, your God, who is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing.”

Song

Congregation

“Lord Who Throughout These Forty Days” Chalice Hymnal #180 (All)

Prayer

Rev. Mark Willis

Statement of Purpose

Rev. Mark Willis

First Scripture Reading - Isaiah 58:1-12

Worship Leader

Shout out, do not hold back! Lift up your voice like a trumpet! Announce to my people their rebellion, to the house of Jacob their sins. Yet day after day they seek me and delight to know my ways, as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness and did not forsake the ordinance of their God; they ask of me righteous judgements, they delight to draw near to God. “Why do we fast, but you do not see? Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?” Look, you serve your own interest on your fast-day, and oppress all your workers. Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight and to strike with a wicked fist. Such fasting as you do today will not make your voice heard on high. Is such the fast that I choose, a day to humble oneself? Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush, and to lie in sackcloth and ashes? Will you call this a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord?

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin? Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the Lord shall be your rearguard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday. The Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water,

whose waters never fail. Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.

Song

Congregation

“Forty Days and Forty Nights” Chalice Hymnal #179 (All)

Second Scripture Reading - II Corinthians 5:20-6:10

Worship Leader

So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says, “At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you.” See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! We are putting no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

Song

Congregation

“If You Will Trust in God to Guide You” Chalice Hymnal #565 (All)

Gospel reading - Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Worship Leader

“Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust

consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Message

“What Will I Sacrifice for God”

Rev. Mark Willis

The Sign of the Ashes

Rev. Mark Willis

Prayer Over the Ashes

Rev. Mark Willis

Imposition of Ashes

You may come forward to receive the sign of the cross in ashes on your forehead. After receiving the ashes, quietly return to your seat.

Act of Penitence and Reconciliation

Please join me in prayer by responding to each spoken petition with the words: “Hear our prayer, O God”.

That as disciples of Christ we might start using our hands, feet, money, time, and energy for the good of the poor, let us pray to the God of mercy.

Hear our prayer, O God

That citizens everywhere might realize that care for their neighbor consists of more than the mere giving of money, let us pray to the God of mercy.

Hear our prayer, O God

For the needy, that they may not have to remain despondent and alone, let us pray to the God of mercy.

Hear our prayer, O God

For all of us here that may be honest enough to admit what we are selfish about and what we can do to remedy our lack of love, let us pray to the God of Mercy.

Hear our prayer, O God

For those who share Christ's charity towards sinners, toward the broken, toward the hurting, toward the outsider, and the outcast, and the unloved, let us pray to the God of Grace and Mercy.

Hear our prayer, O God

Merciful god, the ashes are our pledge to take up the cross of life. We came from the earth, and we will go back to it. In the meantime, beginning with these 40 days, we will try to live right here, right now, in these times and these situations and we will strive make it a better home for every single one of your children. Through Christ our lord, **Amen**

The Declaration of God's Mercy

Rev. Mark Willis

The Doxology

Congregation

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly Host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Amen

Song

Congregation

“Rise Up, O Saints of God” Chalice Hymnal #611 (All)

Benediction

Rev. Mark Willis