

TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH



Ash Wednesday

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

Psalm 51.10



TRINITY
Methodist Church
卫理公会三一堂



TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH

34 Serangoon Garden Way, Singapore 555940

Tel: 62824443, Fax: 6282 0094

14 February 2018

ASH WEDNESDAY

8.00 pm

Lighting of the Lenten Candle

Time of Silence *(as organist plays softly)*

Mr Nicholas Leow

*Call to Worship *(based on Joel 2:1-2, 12-17)*

Pastor Paul Nga

Old Testament Lesson: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 (NRSV)

Leader: Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord is coming, it is near ...

Men: *... a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness spread upon the mountains a great and powerful army comes; their like has never been from of old, nor will be again after them in ages to come.*

Women: *Yet even now, says the Lord, 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, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing.*

Leader: Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the Lord, your God?

ALL: Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her canopy. Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep. Let them say, "Spare your people, O Lord, and do not make your heritage a mockery, a byword among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, "Where is their God?" "

Leader: Worship the Lord your God.

ALL: Together, let us worship God! Let our hearts be renewed in this time of worship.

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1. Depth of mercy! Can there be
mercy still reserved for me?
Can my God His wrath forbear,
me, the chief of sinners, spare?
2. I have long withstood His grace,
long provoked Him to His face,
would not hearken to His calls,
grieved Him by a thousand falls.
3. I my Master have denied,
I afresh have crucified,
oft profaned His hallowed name,
put Him to an open shame.
4. There for me the Saviour stands,
shows His wounds and spreads His hands.
God is love! I know, I feel;
Jesus weeps and loves me still.
5. Now incline me to repent,
let me now my sins lament,
now my foul revolt deplore,
weep, believe, and sin no more.

Let us now together reflect on our relationship with the Lord ... whether we have strayed from Him ... thus the need to repent and to return to Him ... thus being prepared for the “Day of the Lord” ...

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Do we know the God who is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love?2. What do we need / repent of knowing that the day of the Lord is near?3. What is our motivation for repentance ... so as to experience the Lord who relents from punishing?4. How can we encourage each other to prepare for the day of the Lord? |
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ASH WEDNESDAY ... the start of the season of Lent, a 40 day period of time, not including Sundays, that is designed to be an intense time of SELF-REFLECTION AND INTROSPECTION ... reminds us of the time that Jesus spent in the wilderness following his baptism, described in the gospels as a time of trial and testing ... seeks to strip us down, ... removes those distractions in our lives, ... helps us focus our attention on what really matters in our lives – the very condition of our souls ... to ensure we store our treasures in heaven. (written by Rev. Elizabeth Lovell Milford)

Gospel Lesson Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 (NRSV)

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.

Men: *"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.*

Women: *"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.*

Left: *"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.*

Right: *"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.*

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1. Breathe on me, Breath of God, fill me with life anew,
that I may love what Thou dost love, and do what Thou wouldst do.
2. Breathe on me, Breath of God, until my heart is pure,
until with Thee I will one will, to do and to endure.
3. Breathe on me, Breath of God, till I am wholly Thine,
till all this earthly part of me glows with Thy fire divine.
4. Breathe on me, Breath of God, so shall I never die,
but live with Thee the perfect life of Thine eternity.

Let us now together reflect on our “spiritual disciplines” (charitable deeds / prayer / fasting / etc) ... whether to grow our relationship with the Lord for the good of God’s people ... or merely for “others to see” and draw attention to ourselves ...

1. Where is our treasure ... where is our heart?
2. Whom do we worship and serve ... how do we do so?
3. Do we “give alms”, “pray”, and “fast” at all? When we do so, do we do so sincerely towards the Lord or merely for others to see?
4. How do we view those who are seemingly different from us? Do we adopt a “better-than-thou” attitude?

Time to reflect on our relationship with our loved ones, and others

VALENTINE’S DAY ... an annual festival on 14 February to CELEBRATE romantic love, friendship and admiration by sending messages of love and affection to PARTNERS, FAMILY and FRIENDS...

Scripture Reading

Psalm 51:1-17 (NRSV)

Leader: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

Men: *Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment. Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me.*

Women: *You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.*

ALL: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me. RESTORE to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.

Hymn

“Search Me, O God”

Author: James E. Orr, 1936. Music: Maori melody. Public Domain.

1. *(Verses 1 & 2 will be sung by Mrs Patricia Zoey Tan)*
Search me, O God, and know my heart today;
try me, O Saviour, know my thoughts, I pray.
See if there be some wicked way in me;
cleans me from every sin and set me free.
2. I praise thee, Lord, for cleansing me from sin;
fulfill Thy word and make me pure within.
Fill me with fire where once I burned with shame;
grant my desire to magnify Thy name.
3. *(Congregation will join in from verses 3 & 4)*
Lord, take my life, and make it wholly Thine;
fill my poor heart with Thy great love divine.
Take all my will, my passion, self, and pride;
I now surrender, Lord - in me abide.
4. O, Holy Ghost, revival comes from Thee;
Send a revival, start the work in me;
Thy Word declares Thou wilt supply our needs;
For blessings now, O Lord, I humbly plead.

Let us now together open our hearts and minds to the Lord, and ask the Lord to “search us” ...

1. Have we sinned against the Lord with regards to our loved ones?
2. What do we need to confess to the Lord to experience His mercy and cleansing?
3. Do we want to experience the creating of a clean heart, a new and right spirit, and the restoring of joy?
4. Who should we reach out to after we are reconciled with and restored by the Lord?

Time to reflect on the past and hope for a brighter future for oneself and loved ones

CHINESE NEW YEAR (Spring Festival) ... a time for SPRING CLEANING ... for FAMILY BONDING over reunion meal and visits with relatives and friends ... to INDULGE in food and snacks ... and exchanging or receiving of the lucky red packets ... a significant time symbolizing a NEW BEGINNING ...

Second Reading 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10 (NRSV)

Leader: ... 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.

Women: *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!*

Men: *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:*

ALL: ... through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love,

Song

“Speak, O Lord”

CCLI # 4615235. Authors: Keith Getty, Stuart Townend.
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Speak, O Lord, as we come to You
To receive the food of Your Holy Word.
Take Your truth, plant it deep in us;
Shape and fashion us in Your likeness,
That the light of Christ might be seen today
In our acts of love and our deeds of faith.
Speak, O Lord, and fulfill in us
All Your purposes for Your glory.

Teach us, Lord, full obedience,
Holy reverence, true humility;
Test our thoughts and our attitudes
In the radiance of Your purity.
Cause our faith to rise; cause our eyes to see
Your majestic love and authority.
Words of pow’r that can never fail—
Let their truth prevail over unbelief.

Speak, O Lord, and renew our minds;
Help us grasp the heights of Your plans for us—
Truths unchanged from the dawn of time
That will echo down through eternity.
And by grace we’ll stand on Your promises,
And by faith we’ll walk as You walk with us.
Speak, O Lord, till Your church is built
And the earth is filled with Your glory.

Let us now together reflect on our witness as Christ’s salt and light, Christ’s ambassadors within our spheres of influence ... being reconciled with the Lord ... are we pointing people to the Lord or are we pushing them away? ...

1. Have we been reconciled to God ... through Jesus Christ?
2. Have we accepted the grace of God in vain?
3. Are we as the Lord’s salt and light, putting any obstacles by attitude and action in anyone’s way?
4. Are we as servants of God commending ourselves in every and any situation through our positive response?

The palms that we waved last spring to welcome our Lord have been burned and reduced to ashes. The ashes are a sign of our mortality and our unworthiness, a reminder that we are incapable of saving our own souls. It is only by the gracious gift of God that we are forgiven, restored and blessed with a new life. We are dust and ashes, but God is merciful.

***Hymn**

“Sunday’s Palms are Wednesday’s Ashes”

Tune UMH 581

CCLI # 3413445. Authors: Benjamin Franklin White, Rae E. Whitney.

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Sunday's palms are Wednesday's ashes
As another Lent begins
Thus we kneel before our Maker
In contrition for our sins
We have marred baptismal pledges
In rebellion gone astray
Now returning seek forgiveness
Grant us pardon God this day

We have failed to love our neighbours
Their offences to forgive
Have not listened to their troubles
Nor have cared just how they live
We are jealous proud impatient
Loving over much our things
May the yielding of our failings
Be our Lenten offerings

We are hasty to judge others
Blind to proof of human need
And our lack of understanding
Demonstrates our inner greed
We have wasted earth's resources
Want and suffering we've ignored
Come and cleanse us then restore us
Make new hearts within us Lord

Imposition of Ashes (The congregation to sing during imposition of ashes:
UMH 121, 382, 417)

***Hymn of Promise “Lord, Throughout These Forty Days”**

UMH 269

CCLI # 280458. Author: Claudia Frances Ibotson Hernaman. © Words & Music: Public Domain.
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1. Lord, who throughout these forty days
For us didst fast and pray,
Teach us with Thee to mourn our sins
And close by Thee to stay.
2. As Thou with Satan didst contend,
And didst the victory win,
O give us strength in Thee to fight,
In Thee to conquer sin.
3. As Thou didst hunger bear, and thirst,
So teach us, gracious Lord,
To die to self, and chiefly live
By Thy most holy word.
4. And through these days of penitence,
And through Thy passiontide,
Yea, evermore in life and death,
Jesus, with us abide.
5. Abide with us, that so, this life
Of suffering over past,
An Easter of unending joy
We may attain at last.

***Benediction**

Organ Postlude

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*indicates congregation to stand

Pulpit Ministry		
<i>Sermon Series: Basic Kingdom Living</i>		
18 February 1st Sunday in Lent	“The Parable of the Weeds” (Matthew 13:24-30)	Pastor Timothy Yong
25 February 2 nd Sunday in Lent	The Parable of the Lost Sheep (Luke 15:1-32)	Mr Ang Hern Shung
4 March 3 rd Sunday in Lent Holy Communion	The Parable of the Hidden Treasure/Pearl of Great Value (Matthew 13:44-46)	Pastor Alvin Chan
11 March 4 th Sunday in Lent	The Parable of the Wedding Feast (Luke 14:7-11)	Pastor Sng Chong Hui
18 March 5 th Sunday in Lent	The Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30)	Pastor Timothy Yong
<i>(Break in Sermon Series)</i>		
25 March Palm Sunday	(TBA)	
26 March (8.00pm) Monday of Holy Week	Dr Jeanette Hui	
27 March (8.00pm) Tuesday of Holy Week	Dr Jeanette Hui	
28 March (8.00pm) Wednesday of Holy Week	Dr Jeanette Hui	
29 March (8.00pm) Maundy Thursday Holy Communion	Pastor Paul Nga	
30 March (3.00pm) Good Friday	Pastor Sng Chong Hui	
Sermons Online: www.tmc.org.sg/pulpit.html		

Ash Wednesday marks the first day of Lent. It is so called from the custom in the ancient church marking the foreheads of worshippers with ashes. The appointment of Ash Wednesday as the first day of Lent occurred sometime in the seventh century and the custom of imposing ashes upon the congregation probably from sometime in the eighth century. In the early church, Christians who had fallen into grave sin were admitted to the “order of penitents” to do their penance so that they could be reconciled to the church during Holy Week, ready for their Easter Communion. The widespread use of this form of public penance decreased in the early Middle Ages, but the ceremonies associated with it ~ notably the ashes ~ were extended to the whole congregation. The ashes are placed on the foreheads of the worshippers with the words, **“Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.”**