

Old South Congregational Church, United Church of Christ  
Hallowell, Maine

## ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

March 2, 2022

## CALL TO PRAYER

LEADER: In every generation, women and men have and continue to faithfully and generously respond to the call to serve God and God's holy people. They have been apostles and disciples, leaders, preachers, ministers and priests, educators, counselors, musicians, artists, writers, comforters, chaplains—all offering their gifts to the Body of Christ. Yet, the Church Universal suffers a poverty of spirit brought about by the exclusion of women from full participation in the life, ministry, and leadership in some churches and denominations. Today, we women and men, sisters and brothers, grandmothers and grandfathers, aunts and uncles, mothers and fathers, youth and children—members of the Body of Christ -- gather together as one family to pray for a Church that is truly inclusive and alive with the gifts, spirit and potential of all its members.

As we begin this season of Lent, as we gather in this holy time, we begin this year's journey through these forty days, remembering the time Jesus spent in the wilderness fasting and praying as he was tempted. This year, we reflect as well on the struggles and failures of the Church universal, spending time to consider the place of women and to learn about the women around Jesus.

Let us pray:

Good and Loving God, Creator of all human beings in your own image,

**ALL: Create in us a desire for the wholeness You planned. Empower us to hear and speak Your redeeming truth. Guide us as we work to build a Church in and through which all of your people may give of themselves fully as they are called. In this holy season of Lent, may we open ourselves anew to the stories of the women around Jesus—those women whom Jesus trusted, taught, loved and relied on, those women who witnessed and shared the Good News they experienced. AMEN.**

**READING** From “On Our Foremothers in Faith” by Christine Schenk

**READING** Luke 13:10-17 Warren Bartlett

<b>SPECIAL MUSIC</b>	“Savior, When in Tears and Dust”	Cynthia McGuire, Soloist Brad Krueger, Piano
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## CONSIDERING OUR LENTEN PRACTICE

**POEM** Christine Bartlett

## Storage By Mary Oliver

When I moved from one house to another  
there were many things I had no room for.  
What does one do? I rented a storage  
space. And filled it. Years passed.  
Occasionally I went there and looked in,  
but nothing happened, not a single  
twinge of the heart.  
As I grew older the things I cared  
about grew fewer, but were more  
important. So one day I undid the lock  
and called the trash man. He took  
everything.  
I felt like the little donkey when  
his burden is finally lifted. Things!  
Burn them, burn them! Make a beautiful  
fire! More room in your heart for love,  
for the trees! For the birds who own  
nothing— the reason they can fly.

## SILENT REFLECTION

### HYMN

“When I Survey the Wondrous Cross”

Pilg 177

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| 1. When I survey the wondrous cross<br>On which the Prince of glory died,<br>My richest gain I count but loss,<br>And pour contempt on all my pride.            | 3. See from His head, His hands, His<br>feet,<br>Sorrow and love flow mingled down!<br>Did e’er such love and sorrow meet,<br>Or thorns compose so rich a crown? |
| 2. Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,<br>Save in the death of Christ my God!<br>All the vain things that charm me<br>most,<br>I sacrifice them to His blood. | 4. Were the whole realm of nature<br>mine,<br>That were a present far too small;<br>Love so amazing, so divine,<br>Demands my soul, my life, my all.             |

### PRAYER (with the Lord’s Prayer)

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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

## BLESSING

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Portions of this service have been borrowed and adapted from Liturgy of the Word for A Church of Our Daughters found at: [www.futurechurch.org](http://www.futurechurch.org).

“Storage” is from *Devotions: The Selected Poems of Mary Oliver*, by Mary Oliver [New York: Penguin Press, 2017]