

North Kildonan United Church
174 Pentland St, Winnipeg, MB R2G 2S3
Church Office: 204-667-7408
email: nkuc@mymts.net
www.nkuc.ca



Minister: *Rev. Susan Reed*
Pianist/Choir Director: *Joanne Diplock*
Office Administrator: *Wilma Fehr*
Property Manager: *Heinz Goetz*

Our Mission...

to be an accepting Christian community dedicated to living, sharing and teaching the Word of God.

We respect all aspects of people including race, ethnicity, gender expression, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, age, religion, mental wellness, and ability.

February 14th, 2024
Ash Wednesday Service

The asterisk invites all to stand, if they are able. **Bold print indicates a congregational response.*

GATHERING TO WORSHIP GOD

PRELUDE (*Music played with permission under license #A-620529 One License*)

~Joanne Diplock

WELCOME

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT of the LAND

We acknowledge that we meet on Treaty 1 land, the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe, Cree and Dakota peoples, and the homeland of the Metis nation. We are thankful for these first inhabitants, and we commit to working together towards justice, truth and reconciliation.

LIGHTING of the CHRIST CANDLE

LIGHTING of the PEACE CANDLE

As we light this candle, we pray for peace:

**peace in our hearts,
peace in our homes,
peace in our world.**

As we remember Jesus, the Prince of Peace,

O God, we pray for peace. Amen.

SHARING the PEACE of CHRIST

INTRODUCTION to the SERVICE

CENTERING WORDS (inspired by Joel 2) (Written by Karin Ellis; from *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2022.*)

The invitation to renew our hearts is before us.

The assurance of God's steadfast love is always with us.

CALL to WORSHIP (inspired by Psalm 51) (Written by Karin Ellis; from *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2022.*)

Praise God, who has taught us to sing.

Praise God, who has gathered us together.

*We come before God to begin again,
to renew our hearts and our spirits.
Be assured that God's steadfast love surrounds us and upholds us.
Thanks be to God!*

OPENING PRAYER (inspired by Matthew 6) (Written by Karin Ellis; from *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2022*.)

**On this day, merciful God,
we begin a journey of repentance,
a journey of renewal,
a journey of healing.
Sometimes the journey is hard.
We often don't know where we are going.
Help us remember that we follow in the footsteps
of your Son, Jesus, our guide and guardian.
Help us be faithful on this day and all days.
In the name of Christ, we pray. Amen.**

***OPENING HYMN: #79 MV – "Spirit, Open My Heart"**
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(Duck/Clyde)
~Joanne Diplock

**Spirit, open my heart
to the joy and pain of living.
As you love, may I love,
In receiving and in giving,
Spirit, open my heart.**

- 1 God, replace my stony heart,
with a heart that's kind and tender.
All my coldness and fear
To your grace I now surrender. R**
- 2 Write your love upon my heart
as my law, my goal, my story.
In each thought, word and deed,
may my living bring you glory. R**
- 3 May I weep with those who weep,
share the joy of sister, brother.
In the welcome of Christ,
may we welcome one another. R**

PRAYER of CONFESSION (inspired by Joel 2, Matthew 6)
*(Adapted from Karin Ellis; from *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2022*.)*

**God of love and grace, we come to you
with our hearts wide open.
There are times when our hearts reject your love;**

**times when we go against your ways;
times when we display an unfaithful attitude.**

Forgive us.

**Remind us of your steadfast love
and put a new spirit within us.**

In your holy name, we pray...

SILENT PRAYER

WORDS of ASSURANCE (Adapted from Karin Ellis; from *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2022*.)

LISTENING FOR AND REFLECTING ON GOD'S WORD

Scripture Reader: *Betty Clark*

Joel 2: 1-2, 12-17

*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—
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.*

*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.*

*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?*

*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?"'*

Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-21

'Beware of practising 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.

May God bless to our understanding these readings from the Holy Scriptures. Amen.

CHOIR ANTHEM:

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~Joanne Diplock

REFLECTION: "Ashes and Valentines"

~Rev. Susan Reed

RESPONDING TO GOD IN PRAYER AND ACTION

PASTORAL PRAYER

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,
the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

INTRODUCTION to the RITUAL of ASHES

*HYMN: *VU #105 – "Dust and Ashes Touch Our Face"*

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*(Wren/Klusmeier)
~Joanne Diplock*

- 1 Dust and ashes touch our face,
mark our failure and our falling.
Holy Spirit, come, walk with us tomorrow,
take us as disciples, washed and wakened by your calling.
Take us by the hand and lead us,
lead us through the desert sands,
bring us living water,
Holy Spirit, come.**
- 2 Dust and ashes soil our hands -
greed of market, pride of nation.
Holy Spirit, come, walk with us tomorrow,
as we pray and struggle through the meshes of oppression. R**

PRAYER for RECEIVING the ASHES

*(Written by Bill Steadman and Catherine Somerville; from *Gathering L/E 2017.*)*

**I come, God. I come as I am.
I can come in no other way.
My heart holds my joys, my burdens,
my hopes, my dreams, my successes, and my failures.
I come to meet you and have my hope renewed.
I come to you seeking life in all of its fullness.
*Grant that these ashes, the dust of once-joyous palms,
may remind us of our mortality but, more than that,***

*may remind us of the life towards which you call us.
Bless these ashes.
Bless those who will receive them
and carry them out from this place into the world.
In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.*

RECEIVING the MARK of the ASHES

Beloved of God, remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.

SENT INTO GOD'S WORLD

*CLOSING HYMN: "Sing Out! We're Made of Common Dust"

(Words by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette)

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~Joanne Diplock

- 1. Sing out! We're made of common dust;
One day, to dust we shall return!
Yet, God, you've placed your mark on us
And so for you our spirits yearn.**
- 2. This gift of ashes we receive
Reminds us we belong to you.
You call us to repent, believe,
and seek your Way in all we do.**
- 3. The dust and dirt of children's play,
of youthful times, of working years
Are part of life — and life's decay;
We wash the dust with sorrow's tears.**
- 4. We sing, O God, of what you give:
This ash reminds us we are yours.
In life we're claimed, in death we live!
In Christ our life, your love endures.**

*BLESSING

*CHORAL BENEDICTION

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(Price/Besig)

~Joanne Diplock

**May the Lord go with you,
let him take your hand.
Keep His love within you,
until we meet again. Amen.**

POSTLUDE *(Music played with permission under license #A-620529 One License)*

~Joanne Diplock