Wednesday, February 2023
Ash Wednesday

Bethany United Methodist Church
1270 Sanchez Street
San Francisco, CA 94114
415-647-8393
Rev. Sadie Stone
Music Director: Evan Alparone

Guided by God's radical love for all, Bethany seeks to… Offer sanctuary, Inspire personal transformation, Foster a faith community, and Engage locally and globally for social justice.

Worship Celebration: February 22, 2022 7pm
Bethany United Methodist Church *Ash Wednesday*

WE GATHER IN COMMUNITY

PRELUDE Evan Alparone

WELCOME Rev. Sadie Stone

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather together at the edge of a new season. *by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.*
We stand together on the cusp of something new.
Will we wade into self-reflection?
Will we invite honesty to dance?
Will we listen for God's invitation?
Will we seek deeper faith?
What kind of fast do we choose? What kind of faith will we build?
We gather together at the edge of a new season.
Listen, God is speaking.

***OPENING SONG** *Dust In the Wind*[i] *UMH #269*

I close my eyes
Only for a moment and the moment's gone All my dreams
Pass before my eyes, a curiosity
Dust in the wind
All they are is dust in the wind

Same old song
Just a drop of water in an endless sea
All we do
Crumbles to the ground, though we refuse to see Dust in the wind
All they are is dust in the wind----
Oh--

Don't hang on
Nothing lasts forever but the earth and sky, It slips away
All the money won't another minute buy Dust in the wind
All we are is dust in the wind
Dust in the wind
All we are is dust in the wind----

PRAYER OF CONFESSION & WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

Merciful God, *Prayer by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org."*
How many times in a day could we choose love?
How many times could we choose justice?
How many times could we speak kindly to ourselves?
How many times could we offer grace?
How many times, God? And how often do we miss it?

Forgive us for choosing the path you did not travel.
Forgive us for hitching our horse to the world's measure of goodness,
instead of yours. **Return our hearts to you, and guide us continually,**
even in the parched places. With gratitude we pray,
amen.

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

WE ENGAGE THE WORD

SCRIPTURE READING **Isaiah 58:1-12**

58 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.
2 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.
3 '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.
4 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.
5 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?
6 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?
7 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?

[8] 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.
[9] 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,
[10] 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.
[11] 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.
[12] 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.

POEM *Seeking: Is this the Fast I Choose? by Sarah A. Speed*

SONG *Sunday's Palms are Wednesday's Ashes*[ii] *TFWS #2138*

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 neighbors, 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!

REFLECTION *"Blessing the Dust"* Rev. Sadie Stone
By Jan Richardson

OUR RESPONSE TO GOD

UNISON PRAYER

Prayer by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

God,
We want to hear your voice.
Shout loudly;
don't hold back.
Move in our spirits
the way you moved over the waters of creation.
We are beginning a new season today, God,
and we don't want to begin anything without you.
So speak to us today—
through silence,
through scripture,
through song.
Speak to us
as you spoke to the Israelites so many moons ago.
Speak to us like a gentle breeze
or a loud trumpet.
We don't care how,
we just long to hear your voice.
So don't hold back.
We are here.
We are listening.
Amen.

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

***CLOSING SONG** *Beautiful Things*[iii]

All this pain
I wonder if I'll ever find my way
I wonder if my life could really change, at all

All this earth
Could all that is lost ever be found?
Could a garden come out from this ground, at all?

You make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of the dust
You make beautiful things
You make beautiful things out of us

All around,
Hope is springing up from this old ground
Out of chaos life is being found, in you

You make me new,
You are making me new
You make me new,
You are making me new

***BENEDICTION**

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[i] Title: Dust in the Wind. Words: Music: Kerry Livgren, 1977. CCLI#1103931
[ii] Title: Sunday's Palms are Wednesday's Ashes. Words: Rae E. Whiteney. Music: Attr. To B.F. White. Words © 1991 Selah Publishing Co., Inc. CCLI#1103931
[iii] Title: Beautiful Things. Words & Music: Lisa Gungor & Michael Gungor. © 2010 BMG Rights Management, Capitol CMG Publishing, Sony/ATV Music Publishing LLC. CCLI#1103931