

## The Wilderness is Somewhere We've Been Before

I'm not the first.  
That's what I tell myself when I wake up in the  
wilderness—  
Big sky, worried heart, wondering which way to start.  
I have been here before.  
We have been here before.  
For as long as there has been creation,  
There has been wilderness.

First it was an endless void,  
Until God and God's paintbrush painted the sky gold.  
And then it was all that lies east of Eden,  
Which is everywhere that our story unfolds.

So like a child memorizing their home address,  
You'd think I'd learn my way out of this wilderness.  
But like the Israelites who wandered for forty plus years,  
I think I'll spend most of my day to day here.

For the wilderness is everywhere that I start to grow.

Cracks in the sidewalk, daisies take hold.  
And the wilderness is every single place of unknown  
Or when shame and fear move into my home.  
And the wilderness is where dusty feet tread,  
Familiar with the truth that we have days left.

So where is God, you ask?

God is in the big sky and in my worried heart.  
God is the sidewalk cracks where new life starts.  
God is in the realization that I am not the first.  
So may we take these limited days left  
And remember that we've been here before—

God and I and this untamed world.

God and the Israelites and the gathered assembly.

God and the horizon and the new day beginning.

Sarah Ann | Sanctifiedart.org



### DAY OF THE LORD by Hannah Garrity

Graphic image for ASH WEDNESDAY inspired by Joel 2:1-12, 12-17

**ARTIST STATEMENT:** God calls us home. In this image I imagined God weeping for our return, calling out to his children, "Come home to me. I love you." Specifically, I am "abounding in steadfast love," says the Lord (Joel 2:13).

**Lent begins in the wilderness.** God led the Israelites into the wilderness after their escape from slavery in Egypt. They wandered for forty years enduring temptation and struggle as they were shaped and formed into the people of God. The Spirit guided Jesus into the wilderness where he came face to face with temptation and struggle. Yet, in his forty days of fasting, resisting, and wandering, Jesus is shaped and formed for his ministry. Similarly, through the wilderness of Lent, we are invited to surrender to the wild leadings of the Spirit. We rarely enter the wilderness willingly, but hopefully through our wandering we remember who we are and whose we are. We learn who God is in the wilderness. We learn how to take the next step, how to find comfort with the unknown, and how to trust God's call in the wilderness. In the wilderness our faith is born, nurtured, challenged, and resurrected. Let us begin our wilderness journey.

## Corbin Presbyterian Church

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The Rev. Lisa R. Eye, Pastor; Clay Howard, Music Director/Organist; Shelby Stanaford, Administrative Assistant



February 26, 2020

6:00 p.m.

## Order of Worship

Prelude

*Sarabande In E Minor*

George Frideric Handel

(Suite In E Minor, G 160-162)

1685-1789

Greetings and Invitation to the Observance of the Lenten Discipline

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

\*Call to Worship

This day

is the start of something new.

This day

marks the beginning of a season.

This day

reminds us who we are.

This day

reminds us who we long to be.

So on this day,

let us worship God.

\*Hymn #81

*Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days*

ST. FLAVIAN

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

New Testament: Matthew 4:1-11

Meditation

*Entering the Wilderness*

Scripture & Labyrinth Refrain: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

### Concerning Almsgiving

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 in heaven who sees in secret will reward you.

From dust you came and to dust you will return.

### Concerning Prayer

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.

From dust you came and to dust you will return.

### Concerning Fasting

And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others 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.

From dust you came and to dust you will return.

### Concerning Treasures

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 treasure 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.

From dust you came and to dust you will return.

### Call to Confession

#### Prayer of Confession (unison)

Creator God, you breathed life into dust. You dreamed us up and brought us into existence. The least we could do would be to follow you, but even that is hard. Forgive our distracted, impatient ways and our outright disobedience. Create in us clean hearts and renewed spirits. Remind us that in life and in death, we belong to you. On our best days and on our worst days, we belong to you. May the ashes we are about to receive be a sign of our mortality and penitence, for it is only by your gracious gift are given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

### Imposition of Ashes

*All who desire may come forward to receive and imposition of ashes as a sign of penitence not only for individual sin, but also in recognition of our complicity in the sin of the world. The ashes are prepared from the palm fronds used on Palm Sunday as a way to point toward the Gospel message of the upcoming Easter Resurrection. The ashes are mixed with oil and placed with the sign of the cross on the forehead (or back of the hand, if preferred) with the words, "From dust you have come and to dust you will return." This can be a startling statement to hear! However, the purpose is not to alarm, but to remind us that we have been created by God and it is God who holds us in life and in death.*

Assurance of Pardon from Ezekiel 36:25-27

\*Hymn #85

*What Wondrous Love is This*

WONDROUS LOVE

\*Prayer & Dismissal from Isaiah 58:6-9

\*Postlude

*Adagio*  
The Messiah

George Frideric Handel  
1685-1789

