

***Welcome to this Ash Wednesday service of worship.***

As Jesus Christ welcomes each one of us, we hope you sense the friendly welcome of this congregation of God's people.

**Bold type** signifies congregational response.

WE GATHER IN JESUS' NAME

PIANO PRELUDE

WELCOME AND CALL TO WORSHIP

Welcome to this season of self-examination. This is a time for reconciliation with God and with our neighbors.

**Welcome together, sisters and brothers, to meet God, longing for the abundant mercy of our creator.**

Seek to know God's presence here and everywhere; let the wisdom of God guide you into the truth.

**Through hardship, affliction, and crisis, we reach for the power of God to steady and strengthen us.**

Prepare yourselves then for this time of renewal. Be open to the grace that enables your growth.

**Together as a family of faith, we seek God's love and grace. Let us worship our God together!**

SONG

*Spirit of the Living God*

**Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me;  
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.  
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.  
Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.**

\*PRAYER (unison)

**Gracious and loving God, out of your great mercy you breathed your spirit of life into the dust, creating women and men to serve you and our neighbors. Strengthen our prayers and acts of kindness that we might reach out in your name. Remove our fear of death, and replace it with trust in your love, made known in Jesus Christ, Amen.**

WE SHARE A SIMPLE MEAL IN FELLOWSHIP AROUND THE TABLES.

WE CONFESS OUR SIN

Let us ask God to help us confront all that we keep in the dark.

**For our preoccupation with ourselves,**

O God, forgive us and set us free.

**For our secret lusts for pleasure, power, and revenge,**

O God, forgive us and set us free.

**For the grudges and resentments that poison our souls,**

O God, forgive us and set us free.

**For the raw wound of some past loss not yet offered to you,**

O God, forgive us and set us free.

**For the fear of failure or ridicule that saps our initiative,**

O God, forgive us and set us free.

**For the pessimism that is an insult to your will and power,**

O God, forgive us and set us free.

**Here and now, O Holy One, we bring our secret sins to you and lay them open to your sight. Let your**

**piercing light also be our healing, in the name of Jesus Christ, who taught us your forgiveness, Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Hear the good news: The Lord our God is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. Christ came not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might have life! In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 58:1-12, Matthew 6:1-6,16-21

MESSAGE

IMPOSITION OF ASHES (for those desiring)

SONG

*Let Us Break Bread Together*

**Let us break bread (drink wine) (praise God) together on our knees; (repeat)**

**When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun, O Lord, have mercy on me.**

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION AND THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

*All who put their trust in Christ are invited to receive the Sacrament, no one is excluded.*

Today we will receive Communion by intinction. You may receive a piece of bread from one of those serving and dip it in the cup (the cup holds grape juice) and eat. As you pass the bread or cup to your neighbor, please say, "This is the bread/cup of healing." The response is, "Thanks be to God."

#### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**God of compassion, through your son Jesus Christ you reconciled your people to yourself. Following his example of prayer and fasting, may we obey you with willing hearts and serve one another in holy love, Through Christ our Lord, Amen.**

#### PASSING OF THE PEACE

#### SONG

*Day is Done*

**Day is done, but love unfailing, dwells ever here;  
Shadows fall, but hope prevailing, calms every fear.  
God our maker, none forsaking, take our hearts of  
love's own making, Watch our sleeping, guard our  
waking, be always near.**

**Dark descends, but light unending, shines through  
our night; You are with us, ever lending, new  
strength to sight: One in love, your truth confessing,  
one in hope of heaven's blessing,  
May we see, in love's possessing, love's endless light!**

#### BENEDICTION

#### POSTLUDE

**Welcome!** This is a welcoming Church, embracing sisters and brothers without regard to age, race, ethnic background, sexual orientation, family status, economic situation or theological viewpoint. We want our visitors to feel a part of the family.

"Following the risen Christ, and seeking to make the Church a true community of hospitality, the mission of More Light Presbyterians is to work for the full participation of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people of faith in the life, ministry and witness of the Presbyterian Church (USA)."

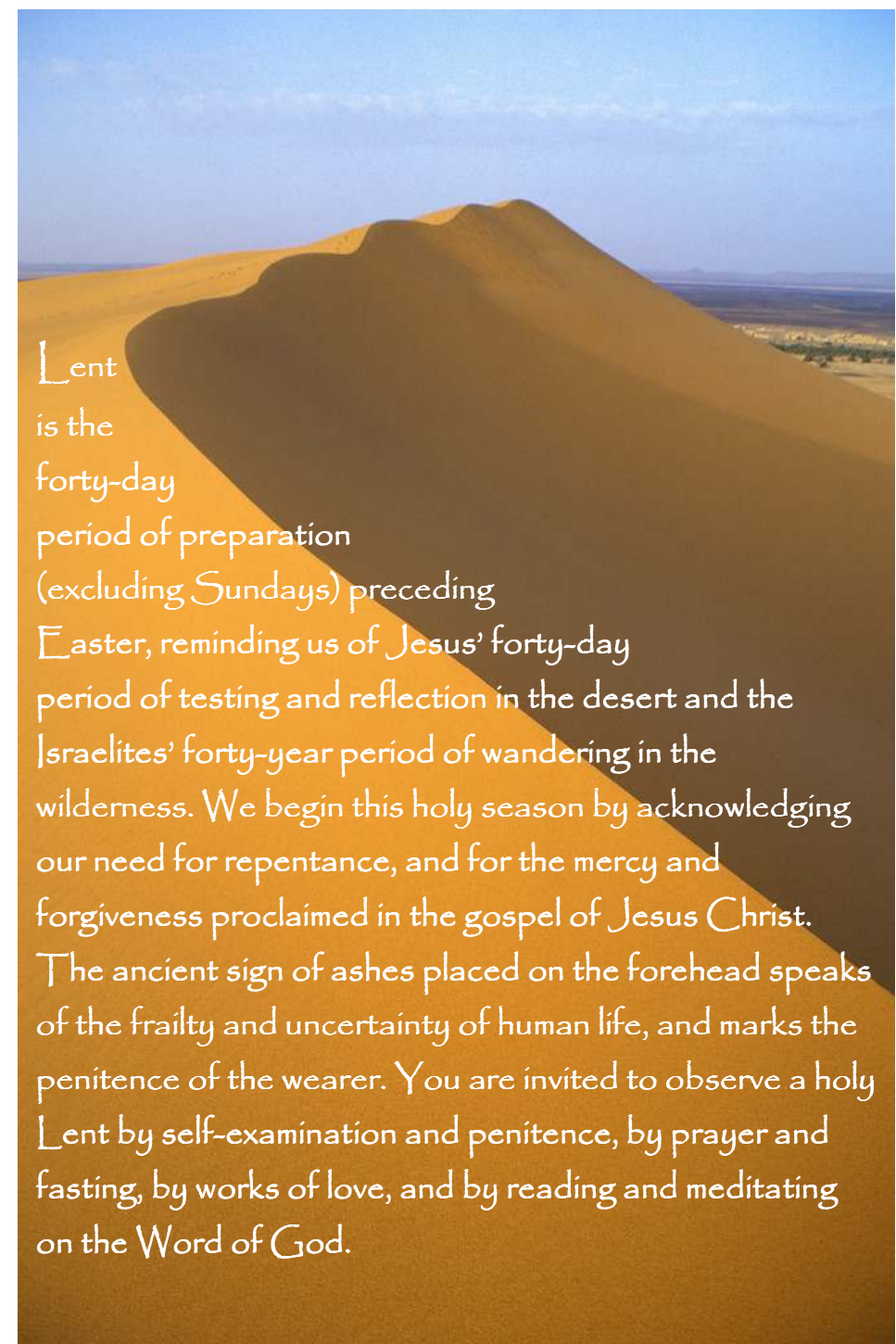
**We worship on Sunday Mornings at 10:30 AM; children attend the opening part of service and leave for Sunday School following the Pastor's time with the children. Adult Forum is held in the Library at 9:15 AM on the first and third Sunday of the month.**

First Presbyterian Church  
136 Capitol Avenue  
Hartford, CT 0610624  
[fpchartfordct@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fpchartfordct@sbcglobal.net)  
[www.firstpreshartford.org](http://www.firstpreshartford.org)



**Our guest speaker** this evening is Rev. Damaris Whittaker, co-pastor of New Hope Christian Church with Rev. Edwin Ayala. She is also the director of Marketing and Development at the Christian Activities Council (CAC).

CAC is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting human equality and social justice in the metropolitan Hartford area. Its mission is to serve and empower the poor, the disenfranchised, the stranger and persons with special needs while promoting social, economic and racial justice in the Hartford region. The programs span vital areas of human life—including housing, youth education and health care—and are informed by the faith of the Christian community.



Lent is the forty-day period of preparation (excluding Sundays) preceding Easter, reminding us of Jesus' forty-day period of testing and reflection in the desert and the Israelites' forty-year period of wandering in the wilderness. We begin this holy season by acknowledging our need for repentance, and for the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ. The ancient sign of ashes placed on the forehead speaks of the frailty and uncertainty of human life, and marks the penitence of the wearer. You are invited to observe a holy Lent by self-examination and penitence, by prayer and fasting, by works of love, and by reading and meditating on the Word of God.

## First Presbyterian Church

136 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT

Rev. Russell Feroe, Interim Pastor

6:00 PM

Wednesday, February 17, 2010