

A close-up photograph of water splashing, creating numerous droplets and ripples. The image has a dark, moody blue-green color palette. A semi-transparent dark horizontal band is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text "Renewed in Mercy" in a white, serif font.

Renewed in Mercy

Ash Wednesday Combined Service:

Episcopal Church of the Savior

First Christian Church of Hanford

First United Methodist Church of Hanford

Welcome & Opening Prayer- Rev. Pastor Pablo Vargas

Call to Worship- First Christian Church

Children of God, we gather to prepare for our journey through Lent, a journey of repentance and mercy.

We gather to be renewed in God's mercy.

We gather to confess, to tell the truth about sin and our dependence on God's grace.

We gather to call upon God's mercy.

We gather to repent, to receive and cooperate with grace as we turn from sin and toward love of God and neighbor.

We gather to live in the promise of God's mercy.

People of God, we gather to worship God, whose steadfast mercy and love never fail!

All: We gather to worship, trusting in God's mercy as we follow Jesus on the road to new life.

Prayer of Confession and Words of Assurance- Episcopal Church of the Saviour

On this first day of Lent we pause, look within, and examine our consciousness.

Have mercy on us, O God, according to your steadfast love.

Where we have neglected prayer, been apathetic in worship, found reasons to avoid generosity, or lacked compassion:

Have mercy on us, O God, according to your steadfast love.

Where we have colluded in the oppression of those who become invisible in their suffering, and ignored on the streets:

Have mercy on us, O God, according to your steadfast love.

Where worry has eroded the gift of Your peace, and where we have cared too much about what others think:

Have mercy on us, O God, according to your steadfast love.

Words of Assurance

As Lent begins, know that God understands how we struggle to stay open and compassionate. The invitation is not to focus on our inadequacies, but on God's gift of grace and love which transforms our hearts and minds. That gift is given to us again, here and now. Be encouraged. May the peace of God be with you

And also with you.

"Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days" UMC-269

Rev. Father Luke Martinez- Reflection Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

"O Sacred Head Now Wounded" UMC-286

Pastor Patreeza Newton- Reflection on Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

"Ah holy Jesus" UMC Choir

Rev. Pastor Pablo Vargas - Reflection on 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

Invitation to the Observance of Lenten Discipline

Pastor Pablo: Dear siblings in Christ: the early Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church that before the Easter celebration there should be a forty-day season of spiritual preparation.

Father Luke: During this season, converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism.

It was also a time when persons who had committed serious sins and had separated themselves from the community of faith were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to participation in the life of the Church.

In this way, the whole congregation was reminded of the grace and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ and the need we all have to renew our faith, to continually receive God's mercies anew.

Pastor Patreeza: We invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to observe a holy Lent: by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's Holy Word. To make a right beginning of repentance, and as a mark of our mortal nature, let us now kneel (bow) before our Creator and Redeemer.

Pastor Pablo: Thanksgiving over the Ashes

Imposition of Ashes

Closing Hymn "Come Ye Sinner Poor and Needy" UMC 340

Benediction