

Memorial First India United Methodist Church

FEBRUARY 22, 2023 at 7:30 PM ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

Ministers: The Whole Congregation Together We Can Make a Difference

** Indicates that you are invited to stand as you are able. At those places marked “*unison*” or printed in **bold** you are invited to join in reading aloud with the entire congregation

PRELUDE

Peter Kotiah

GREETING & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Rev. Saroj Sangha

****CALL TO WORSHIP**

Vijaya Henry

Leader: Come, young and old.....Sanctify yourselves before the Lord.

People: We gather to hear the word of God.

Leader: Come and do not delay.... Return to God.

People: We gather to be in the presence of God.

Leader: Come, cry out to God.... Trust in God’s mercy.

**ALL: We gather to renew our spirits,
as we acknowledge our failings before God.**

**** OPENING HYMN # 526 UMH “What a Friend We Have in Jesus”**

**** CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER (Unison)**

Holy and Gracious God, Creator of all living things, the beginning and the end of our lives. We gather as your people, ready to begin our Lenten journey. Make us ready to acknowledge our sins and weaknesses. Remove our hearts of stone, and create in us hearts and minds ready to hear your words of forgiveness and acceptance. Today and through this season, we return our hearts to you, grateful for your mercies and secure in your love. Bless our worship with your presence, and fill our minds with new wisdom, that we may rise with you at Easter and lift up others in your name. This we ask in the name of the one who walked the way of the Cross, Jesus the Christ. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Joel 2: 12-14

Navanetha Akula

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

****GOSPEL READING: Matthew 6:16-21**

Premalatha Manohar

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE: *“Repentance”*

Rev. Saroj Sangha

**HYMN *“Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross”*

UMH #301

INVITATION TO THE OBSERVANCE OF LENTEN DISCIPLINE

THANKSGIVING OVER THE ASHES

Minister: The Lord be with you,

People: And also with you.

Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth. Gracious God, you have formed us from the dust; dust we are, and to dust we shall all return. May these ashes be a reminder that our lives are always in your hands; and that though we will die, yet shall we live. Amen.

**IMPOSITION OF ASHES

(Congregation will receive the ashes, in the form of a cross, on their foreheads)

**HYMN OF PRAYER #351 UMH *“Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior”*

(Organ will be played softly during the Imposition)

LITANY OF CONFESSION (Responsive)

Vijaya Henry

Leader: Rend your hearts and not your garments; return to your God.

**People: For God is merciful and gracious, slow to anger,
and abounding in steadfast love.**

Leader: I know well my misdeeds, and my sin is ever before me.

People: Wash away my guilt and cleanse me from my sin.

Leader: We have not loved you with our whole heart, soul, and mind.

People: We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.

Leader: We have turned away from those in need,

People: and squandered our inheritance with self-indulgence,

Leader: Have mercy on us, O Lord and forgive all our sins and weaknesses,
our anger and hate.

All: We confess our prejudice and intolerance, our greed and envy.

Leader: We have sinned against heaven and before you;

All: And we are no longer worthy to be called your children,

Leader: Merciful God, You promised that you will be with your creation this night,
that you will comfort the fearful, strengthen the weak, be present to the lonely,
and encourage the faithful.

**All: Like a loving mother and father, welcome us back into your arms,
that we may know your forgiveness and acceptance. Amen.**

WORDS OF ASSURANCE AND PARDON:

Minister: May the almighty and merciful God, who desires not the death of a sinner but desires we turn from wickedness and live, accept our repentance, forgive our sins, and restore us by the Holy Spirit to newness of life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ALL: Thanks be to God. Amen.

****OFFERING (Organ Music)**

*Presentation of our Offerings
Dedication of the Offering*

**** HYMN # 354 UMH “I Surrender All”**

****DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING**

Minister: Return to God with all your hearts.
 Turn to your neighbors with the compassion of Christ.
 May the God who makes all things new,
 restore within you a spirit of joy and hope as you go forth this day.

ALL: Amen.

POSTLUDE

Peter Kotiah

All Friday Lenten Bible Studies will be held in the Sanctuary and via Zoom at 7:30 pm., starting from February 24th through March 31st. Those joining via Zoom will not be able to participate in the discussions. Please join us!

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

**February 22, 2023
7:30 p.m.**



Memorial First India United Methodist Church
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Rev. Saroj Sangha, Pastor