

**A Warm Welcome to
Solomon's United Church of Christ**

Wednesday, March 5, 2025 7:00 pm

Pastor Julia L. Brown

Church Website: mysolomonsucc.org

WORDS OF WELCOME

ORGAN PRELUDE & SILENT MEDITATION

***RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on the holy mountain!

Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming, it is near.

All: Gather the people to turn to the Holy One who is gracious, merciful, and abounding love.

One: Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on the holy mountain!

The days are bleak and filled with gloom yet rend your hearts and not your clothing.

All: Feast on righteousness and fast from hopeless, apathy, and despair. Even now, God calls us to reflect, repent, and return.

One: Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on the holy mountain!

Why should it be said among the peoples, ‘Where is their God?’”

All: Declare the sovereignty of God in word and deed, in compassion and solidarity, in trust and faith! Blow the trumpet! Sound the alarm! Amen.

***HYMN “Come, O Fount of Every Blessing” Black #459**

***PRAYER OF INVOCATION**

Holy One, open our hearts, lips, minds, and spirits, and we will declare your praise. We gather in your name and in your presence to worship you, to reorient our lives in your kingdom, and to direct our attention toward you. May your power flow through us as spirit meets spirit. As we reflect upon your goodness and the needs of the world, stir our hearts toward compassion and our lives toward active participation in your realm. Hear our prayers, delight in our songs, and speak through our words. May it be so. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION & WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: 2 Corinthians 6:1 declares, “As we work together with him, we retreat you also not to accept the grace of God in vain.”

All: Holy God, we need your grace towards us and for us to extend to ourselves and others. Help us be agents of your kingdom and citizens of your realm. May our love and compassion have no borders or bounds. Release us from unforgiveness and condemnation in favor of restoration and redemption. Let your way direct, transform, and compel us as your witnesses in the world. Let our feast or fasting not be in vain but a testament to your presence among us and within us. In the name of the Author or Redemptive Love, we pray. Amen.

THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Come forward or indicate that the pastor should come to you.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: Beloved, the Holy One is at work with you. You have the power and authority of the Most High as your Companion and Source.

Through the Spirit, transformation and new life are yours to claim and proclaim. Receive the gift of grace and mercy given without condemnation so that you may be free to love, to live, and to be as crafted through the Breath of Life.

PRAISE HYMN “Spirit of the Living God” Black #283

OLD TESTAMENT READING Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

EPISTLE READING 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

HYMN “Savior, When in Tears and Dust” Black #185

GOSPEL LESSON Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

SERMON

COMMUNION INVITATION

Pastor: Each day invites us to remember the sacred nature of life... until our last breath returns us as seeds of new life, new being, new creation.

People: We are dust. We are oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, carbon, calcium, and phosphorus.

Pastor: We are made of stars. We will reshape the universe

People: We are God’s good creation.

Pastor: Inhale the elements of life... Inhale and exhale and remember that you are part of God’s beloved creation.

People: We are God’s beloved creation.

Pastor: You are dust and so much more than that... you have the power of God at work in you and through you.

Many: We are the Holy One’s co-creators.

Pastor: Beloved, as Jesus considered and faced his own mortality, he shared a meal with his disciples... This table blesses us with community, acceptance, and courage to be the people the Holy One has called us to be.

People: We accept the invitation to commune with Jesus and one another as a community of God's beloved, created from stardust to be co-creators of the kingdom and seeds of renewed life.

Pastor: On that night of betrayal, desertion, and despair... Restore our hope, steady our lives, and empower us in your truth.

People: Bless this feast as we dine with you, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (unison)

Holy One, thank you for this precious meal served with grace, mercy, and love. Ignite and strengthen us with compassion, faith, and boldness in proclaiming your good news, following your path, and pursuing flourishing life for all creation. In the fullness of life, we breathe amen. Amen.

OFFERING INVITATION

*PRESENTATION & OFFERING RESPONSE Black #785

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Holy and Generous One, receive our gifts of thanksgiving and hope as we share our resources to support the ministries of this faith community, the wider church, and the world. May our offerings meet needs, change lives, and proclaim the goodness of God in the land of the living. Amen.

*HYMN "There's a Wideness in God's Mercy" Black #23

*BENEDICTION

One: As you go and embark on this season of reflection and introspection, Remember you are beloved. Go, with the power of the Spirit, the love of the Creator, and the courage of Christ to live this precious life in boldness and faith. Our worship service has ended.

All: May our service never end. Amen.

ORGAN POSTLUDE



Ash Wednesday

**Please stand as you're comfortable*

Liturgies from the UCC Worship Ways, adapted by Rev. Julia Brown