

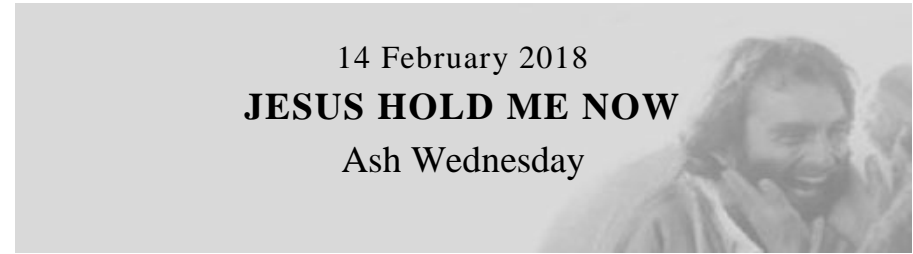
feel him in your live, knowing he's by your side, hearing his voice all the time, living in his embrace.

What do you wish to do with Jesus? I invite you to take some time tonight, over this Lenten season to talk it over with Jesus.

Let us pray.
Jesus, thank you that you wish to be real with us. Thank you that you want us to know you, to hear you, to be embraced by you. Thank you

that you don't just give us concepts and rituals but that you have given us yourself. I want to be open to you, growing in the relationship you have created for us, for me to live in with Father. Jesus I wish to hear your voice and live in your embrace. Jesus I wish for you to be

real and break down my barriers and fears. Jesus, what do I wish to do with you? I wish to live intimately in the loving, affectionate, conversational relationship you've given your life for me to share with you and all your family. Amen



14 February 2018

JESUS HOLD ME NOW

Ash Wednesday

Tonight we begin our journey moving toward celebrating Easter. Celebrating all that Jesus has done for us through his crucifixion and resurrection. I love being reminded, again and again and again of all that Jesus has won for us through his crucifixion and resurrection.

Earlier this year as I was spending time with Jesus, reading through the Gospel of Luke, wondering what to focus on this year, these words were given to me.

I was reading where Jesus was before Pilate and the crowd were yelling for his death. Pilate presented Barabbas and Jesus, where the crowd called for Barabbas to go free. Here's Pilates

response: "As they had requested, he released Barabbas, the man in prison for insurrection and murder. But *Pilate* turned Jesus over to them to do as they wished." (Luke 23:25)
Pilate turned Jesus over to them to do as they wished.

The people then and there wished for Jesus to be crucified; which was amazingly the best thing for them and us. It is through Jesus crucifixion that we are set free from sin, death and the devil.

That's when the curtain in the temple is torn, symbolising our free access to God through Jesus.

The people of Jesus day wished for Jesus to be crucified. What about me? What about you? What do

you wish? Jesus has turned himself over to us, 'to do as we wish'. What do you wish to do with Jesus?

That question forms the basis of our Lenten devotion this year. 'What do you wish to do with Jesus?'

Each night we'll have a song that reflects on what we wish to do with Jesus. Tonight's song was by a group called Casting Crowns, entitled 'Jesus hold me now'.

What do I wish to do with Jesus? I want to be close to him. I want to get to know him; personally. I don't want to push him away. I want Jesus to hold me, now!

Christ Church Lutheran

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am
Pastor: Tim 0427326553



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

I loved the chorus of the song: Jesus hold me now. I need to feel you in this place, know you're by my side, hear your voice tonight, I long for your embrace. That is definitely my prayer. When it comes to Jesus, this is definitely my wish.

What do I wish to do with Jesus?

I wish to reclaim him from being a theory I agree with to be a person I know intimately, lovingly, affectionately, conversationally. I want to feel his presence and not have a bunch of words I agree with.

I love it in the Gospel of John where Jesus is referred to as 'The Word'. John moves me from a written text to a real person, for the text reminds me that God is after you. Is after a personal relationship with you. God's wish is that you get to know him; personally, intimately,

affectionately, conversationally. That's why Jesus came, for he doesn't want to be reduced to a lot of words that I agree with. Jesus wants to be in relationship with me, with you, with us.

What do I wish to do with Jesus? I wish to hear his voice

What do you wish to do with Jesus?

tonight. I want more than a ritual that I perform. I want more, much more that religious ritual; I come to hear Jesus' voice, tonight!

What do I wish to do with Jesus? Give him his voice as I listen. More and more I'm beginning to begin times of prayer by listening. Waiting and listening, giving Jesus the opportunity to speak.

Actually Jesus is always speaking, I'm

giving myself the opportunity to listen. For I wish to hear him speaking, so that I can live in a close, conversational relationship with him. What do I wish to do with Jesus? Give him the opportunity to be heard, that's an important reason why I'm here tonight; I want to hear his voice, tonight! Right now!

I also want to praise him, thank him, worship him as the Lord of my life. I want Jesus to hold me, now!

What do I wish to do with Jesus? Allow him to embrace me, not just figuratively, but in a real way through the spirit. I'm not interested in a figurative Jesus, I want the real deal. What do I wish to do with Jesus? Allow him to be real, to embrace me.

Unfortunately I'm good at pushing him away; sometimes I think I know better.

How well did that go for Adam and Eve? Sometimes fear creeps in and I hid. That didn't work real well for Adam and Eve either. Adam and Eve's legacy has me keeping Jesus at arm's length. I don't believe he can embrace me in a real way, so I reduce Jesus to a symbolic act.

What do I wish to do with Jesus?

Let him be real. Let him be true to his nature, trusting him. Being open to his embrace. I want to let him into my heart, not symbolically but in a real down-to-earth way of living. If all that is said about Jesus is just symbolic and not real, I've successfully kept him at arm's length. That's not my wish.

Good News, that's not Jesus' wish. What does Jesus wish to do with you? Hold you, now!

Have you ever noticed that a key theme of Ash Wednesday is repentance? God calling is to invite him into our lives, as he has made possible through Jesus. In Jesus the door is open. Jesus has sent the Spirit. He wants to come in so that we feel his presence,

The crowd wanted to crucify him. What about you?

that we hear his voice, that we experience his embrace.

So the prophet Joel says; 'the LORD says, "Turn to me now, while there is time. Give me your hearts. Come with fasting, weeping and mourning. Don't tear your clothing in your grief, but tear your hearts instead.'" (Joel 2:12,13) One way of describing repentance is to invite Jesus into your

heart and not push him away.

Notice Jesus what's to come into your heart; that is the core of your being. He's after much, much more than some intellectual pursuit. Jesus wants our hearts to shape our intellect as we use it to know him for who he is.

What do you wish to do with Jesus?

I'd encourage you tonight to talk with Jesus about that question. What do you wish to do with Jesus?

The crowd wanted to crucify him, Jesus wanted to heal and forgive them. The crowd pushed Jesus away, but he embraced them, pouring out his life for them. This is not symbolic or an intellectual exercise; Jesus literally gave his life for you, that you might have life with him, the real deal. That you might