



Ash Wednesday

February 14, 2024

* *Please stand if you are able*

Prelude: "Just As I Am, Without One Plea"

arr. Cindy Berry

Gathering

WELCOME & LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

Acolyte: Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. For he didn't consider equality with God something to be grasped, but he emptied himself, even unto death on a cross. As we wait for the day of resurrection let us look to Jesus.

* CALL TO WORSHIP

Liturgist: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy, blot out my transgressions.

All: Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

Liturgist: Against you, you alone, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.

All: Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me.

Liturgist: You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

All: Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

Liturgist: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.

All: **Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.**

Liturgist: O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

All: **For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.**

Liturgist: The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart,
O God, you will not despise.

Psalm 51:1-17 adapted

Choir: "This Still Room"

Johnathan Adams

And so I find it well to come for deeper rest to this still room;
For here the habit of my soul feels less the outer world's control.
The strength of mutual purpose pleads more earnestly, our common needs;
and from the stillness, multiplied by these still forms on either side.
The world that time and sense have known falls off, and leaves us God alone.

ASH WEDNESDAY COLLECT

* **All Singing: 627 "Just as I Am, Without One Plea"**

Proclamation

SCRIPTURE Old Testament: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17
Gospel: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

MEDITATION

* **All Singing: 465 "Precious Lord, Take My Hand"**

Invitation

Liturgist: Friends in Christ, every year at the time of the Christian Passover we celebrate our redemption through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Lent is a time to prepare for this celebration and to renew our life in the paschal mystery. We begin this holy season by acknowledging our need for repentance, and for mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

All: **We begin our journey to Easter with the sign of the ashes. This ancient sign speaks of the frailty and uncertainty of human life, and marks the penitence of this community.**

Choir: "All Things of Dust to Dust Return"

John Ferguson

All things of dust to dust return on earth and in the sky.
The hottest suns that burn in time grow dim and die.
The fish that leap, the birds that soar, the newborn young at play,
The leaves that fill the forest floor revert to dust and clay.
Lord mark with dust and ash so I may comprehend
That ev'ry moment here and now links me to that same end.
I share with all that breathe and burn, that flare and fade and tire
Yet by their waning light discern your own undying fire.
Lord, mark upon my brow this sign: a stark and barren cross
Reminding me that though divine you know my pain and loss,
And at the touch of dust and ash awake my heart to view
How death itself is but a flash that dies away in you.

— Thomas H. Troeger

Minister: I invite you, therefore, in the name of Christ, 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.

Let us bow before God, our Creator and Redeemer, and confess our sin.

Silent Reflection and Confession

Liturgist: We join our hearts in prayer.

All: God of love and faithfulness, forgive our sins, our failures, and our shortcomings. Make our hearts clean and our paths straight.

Imposition

Elder: Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.

All: Jesus is the resurrection and the life.

During the Imposition

Piano Solo: "Create In Me a Clean Heart" arr. Mark Hayes

* **All Singing: 670 "I Waited Patiently for God"**

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING & INTERCESSION

Sending

* BENEDICTION

* **All Singing: 140 "I Want Jesus to Walk with Me"**

Please exit the sanctuary in silence

Worship Leaders

Organist / Pianist:	Dora Diephouse	Acolyte:	Moriah Dykstra
Vocalist:	Aron Reppmann	Liturgist:	Lisa Dykstra
Elders:	Dorothy Wassenaar Helen Van Wyck		
Minister:	Roger Nelson		

Worship Note

Ash Wednesday is an ancient holy day in the Christian church calendar. It marks the beginning of the season of Lent—a time of penitence, discipline, and renewal. In the Ash Wednesday service, we are reminded of our mortality, we confess our sins, and we experience forgiveness through Christ's death and resurrection. The "imposition of ashes" is a central part of the service. During this time, you are invited to come forward to receive the ashes on your forehead.

In Scripture, ashes serve both as symbol of mortality and as a sign of mourning and repentance. But neither sin nor death is the final word. We leave the service in confidence and gratitude: Christ has conquered death, and nothing can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Hymns are from *Lift Up Your Hearts* (Faith Alive Christian Resources, 2013)
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