

Order for Worship

Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, March 2, 2022
12:00 noon and 7:00 p.m.



Ash Wednesday, the seventh Wednesday before Easter Sunday and the first day of the Season of Lent, is a somber day of reflection on what needs to change in our lives if we are to be more fully faithful.

The name, “Ash Wednesday” comes from an ancient practice of placing ashes on worshippers’ heads as a sign of humility before God and a symbol of sorrow at the death that sin brings into the world.

In the early church, ashes were not offered to everyone but were used only to mark the forehead of worshippers who had made public confession of sin. However, over the years others began to show their humility and identification with penitents by asking that they, too, be marked as forgiven sinners. Eventually, the imposition of ashes was extended to the whole congregation.

-Dennis Brasher, adapted

The Church Gathers To ...

Prelude

Enter God's Presence

Call to Worship

from Joel 2: 12-16

Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast;
call a solemn assembly, gather the people.

Sanctify the congregation, assemble the aged;

Gather the children, even infants in arms.

Even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart;

With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;

Rend your hearts and not your clothing.

Let us worship God.

*Hymn

In Remembrance of Me

Ragan Courtney

1. In re - mem brance of me, eat this bread. In re-mem-brance of me, drink this wine.
mem-brance of me, heal the sick. In re-mem-brance of me, feed the poor.

— In re - mem-brance of me, pray for the time when God's own
— In re - mem-brance of me, o - pen the door and let your

1. will is done. 2. In re - in, let them in.
neigh - bors

3. In re-mem-brance of me, search for truth. In re-mem-brance of me, al-ways love.

— In re - mem-brance of me, don't look a - bove, but in your heart,

— look for God. Do this in re - mem-brance of me.

Confess to a Forgiving Creator

Call to Confession

from Joel 2:13

“Return to the Lord your God, who is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.”

In the name of Christ, let us observe a Holy Lent, by self-examination and penitence, by prayer and fasting, by practicing works of love, and by reading and reflecting on God’s Word. Let us begin our Lenten journey by confessing our sins together, with faith and hope:

Prayer of Confession

The Wisdom of Ash

John van de Laar

“There is wisdom in ash,

that we need so much, but seldom hear.

It’s the wisdom of grief, that reminds us of our mortality,
and that life is more than this dust can contain.

It’s the wisdom of confession,

that brings our darkness out of hiding,

and opens the windows to light.

It’s the wisdom of repentance,

that stops us in our tracks, and charts the way to love.

There’s a wisdom in ash, and we welcome it, Jesus,

With gratitude for the renewing gift it brings.”

Assurance of Forgiveness

2 Cor. 6:2

*Standing at the baptismal font,
the minister speaks these words with confidence and joy,
while pouring water generously, slowly, visibly, and audibly
into the font.*

God says, “At an acceptable time I have listened to you,
and on a day of salvation I have helped you.”

See, now is the acceptable time; now is the day of salvation!

Friends in Christ,

I declare to you in the name of Jesus Christ,

our sins are forgiven!

Thanks be to God!

Listen for God's Word

Prayer for Illumination

Is. 58: 11, from Feasting on the Word

O Lord, by your Spirit open to us the Words of life,
a spring of water that shall never fail; Amen

Psalm of the Day

Psalm 51: 1-17

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my
sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.
For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.
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 judgement. Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when
my mother conceived me. 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 brighter than
snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have
crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my
iniquities. 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. Restore to me the joy of
your salvation and sustain in me a willing spirit. Then I will teach
transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you. Deliver me
from bloodshed, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will
sing aloud of your deliverance. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth
will declare your praise. For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I
were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased. The
sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite
heart, O God, you will not despise.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Respond to God's Word

Meditate in Silence

We have been showered with baptismal grace; let us claim it.

In silence, let us call to mind any burdens

we would like to leave at the foot of the cross.

It might be grief or sorrow; it might be an injustice against

ourselves or others; it might be unhealthy habits;

it might be specific sin or sins; it might be a struggle with

illness; it might be a fear or a trauma.

Lenten Commitment

Liturgy Alive, Claretian Publications

Let us pray: God of life and mercy, set us free from the shackles of our broken humanity and the burdens we would like to leave at the foot of the cross. Bless us as we receive these ashes as a sign of our turning to you, as a token that we want to meet you today in the silence of our prayer, and in our neighbors, and in the needs of the world. Let the sign of the cross encourage and heal us, so we may serve you and our neighbor by the strength of Jesus Christ our Lord; Amen.

Sacrament of Holy Communion

Invitation to the Table

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

Lord's Prayer

Words of Institution

Communion of the People

Jesus, Remember Me

Jacques Berthier



Prayer Following Communion

Here at this table, O God, you have forgiven and fed us, and made us strong for the days ahead. Lord Jesus, who gave up everything that we might be free for life in your grace, lead us, that we may be found faithful to follow you. Holy Spirit, who burns away into ashes the chaff of our lives, free our hearts, that we might live for you and for those around us. Make us into the bread of happiness and the cup of joy for all to see and be blessed; Amen.

Imposition of Ashes

We begin our journey to Easter with the sign of ashes. This ancient sign speaks of the frailty and uncertainty of human life and marks the penitence of this community. Because of COVID mitigations, we will distribute ashes at the door to take home to impose on ourselves.

As you impose your ashes at home, you may want to say this prayer:

Let us pray: Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth. May these ashes be for us a sign of our mortality and penitence, and a reminder that only by your gracious gift are we given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

*Hymn

Sign Us With Ashes

William Rowan

Sing 3 times

Sign us with ash-es, mer-ci-ful God, chil-dren of dust, as to dust we re-turn.

Sign us with ash-es, mer-ci-ful God. Mark us and make us your own.____

Blessing

Lisa Frenz

The End is God's. The Beginning is God's.

The Storm is God's. The Peace is God's.

The Depths are God's. The Heights are God's.

The Shadows are God's. The Light is God's.

For all times, all things, and all ALL belong to God.

Travel with God through Lent, from the beginning to the end.

Walk with the Lord of your salvation.

Continue with God during the storm as well as the peace.

Walk with the God of your deliverance.

Journey with God through the depths and the heights.

Walk with the Lord of your restoration.

Tarry with God in the shadows and the light.

Walk with the Lord of your assurance.

And may the God of reconciliation bless you;

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ keep you,

And the power of the Holy Spirit strengthen you.

Postlude

Prayer for Lent's Beginning
From Seasons of the Spirit

Lent begins here, O God, with one foot planted here in the present and the other inching into the promise of tomorrow.

Lent begins here, O God, in this place where we remember every part of the world and every person on this earth who has blessed us with vision and hope.

It begins in our wondering and quiet contemplation for the world we imagine to be dawning.

It begins with our questions of what we are called to do to usher in this new creation.

Lent begins here, O God, in the quiet where every question opens to wonder and awe.

It begins with our hearts open to what could be, in shared expectation, praying that our expectation will move us together into new life.

O God, help us to find the holiness not just in this place or in this season but in the whole marvel of life in this world.

We pray in your hope. Amen.

REMEMBER: do not mix ashes and water as this will create caustic lye which is corrosive to skin, eyes and esophagus.
Use OIL as the substrate when you impose your ashes and oil-based cleansers (NOT water!) to remove ashes from your forehead.