

Ash Wednesday Services	
3/5/25	
Call to Worship	Joel 2:1-17
Praise Song	“Be Thou My Vision”
Reading 1	Psalm 103
Praise Song	“Have Thine Own Way Lord”
Reading 2	2 Cor 5:20-6:10
Text for Meditation	Luke 14:25-33
Meditation	Rev. Brian Carpenter “The Crucified Life”

Responsive Reading

Leader: Let us humbly confess our sins to Almighty God. Most holy and merciful Father, we confess to you, and to one another, and to the whole communion of saints in heaven and on earth, that we have sinned, through our own fault in thought, word, and deed; by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others, as we have been forgiven. We have been deaf to your call to serve, as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit. Reader Lord, have mercy upon us:

People: For we have sinned against you.

Leader: For all our unfaithfulness and disobedience; for the pride, vanity, and hypocrisy of our lives; Lord, have mercy upon us:

People: For we have sinned against you.

Leader: For our self-pity and impatience, and our envy of those we think more fortunate than ourselves; Lord, have mercy upon us:

People: For we have sinned against you.

Leader: For our unrighteous anger, bitterness, and resentment; for all lies, gossip, and slander against our neighbors; Lord, have mercy upon us:

People: For we have sinned against you.

Leader: For our sexual impurity, our exploitation of other people, and our failure to give of ourselves in love; Lord, have mercy upon us:

People: For we have sinned against you.

Leader: For our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our intemperate pursuit of worldly goods and comforts; Lord, have mercy upon us:

People: For we have sinned against you.

Leader: For our dishonesty in daily life and work, our ingratitude for your gifts, and our failure to heed your call. Lord, have mercy upon us: People For we have sinned against you. For our blindness to human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty; Lord, have mercy upon us:

People: For we have sinned against you.

Leader: For our wastefulness and misuse of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us; Lord, have mercy upon us:

People: For we have sinned against you.

Leader: For all false judgments, for prejudice and contempt of others, and for all uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors; Lord, have mercy upon us:

People: For we have sinned against you.

Leader: For our negligence in prayer and worship; for our presumption and abuse of your means of grace; Lord, have mercy upon us:

People: For we have sinned against you.

Leader: For seeking the praise of others rather than the approval of God; Lord, have mercy upon us:

People: For we have sinned against you.

For our failure to commend the faith that is in us; Lord, have mercy upon us:

People: For we have sinned against you.

All: Show favor to your people, O Lord, who turn to you in weeping, fasting, and prayer. For you are a merciful God, full of compassion, long-suffering, and abounding in steadfast love. You spare when we deserve punishment, and in your wrath you remember mercy. Spare your people, good Lord, spare us; in the multitude of your mercies, look upon us and forgive us; through the merits and mediation of your blessed Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Leader: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who in his great mercy has promised forgiveness of sins to all those who sincerely repent and with true faith turn to him, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

*Praise “Just a Closer Walk With Thee”

The Imposition of the Ashes

The Absolution and the Comfortable Words

Hear the Word of God to all who truly turn to him. Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

People: O Lord our God, grant us grace to desire you with our whole heart: that desiring you, we may seek you; and that seeking you, we may find you; and that finding you, we may love you; and that loving you, we may hate those sins from which you have delivered us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Benediction

Concerning Ash Wednesday

The first Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church to prepare for them by a season of penitence and fasting. This season of Lent provided a time in which converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism. It was also a time when those who, because of notorious sins, had been separated from the body of the faithful, were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to the fellowship of the Church. In this manner, the whole Congregation was put in mind of the message of pardon and absolution set forth in the Gospel of our Savior, and of the need that all Christians continually have to renew our repentance and faith.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent: a time of penitence, fasting, and prayer, in preparation for the great feast of the resurrection. The season of Lent began in the early days of the Church as a time of preparation for those seeking to be baptized at the Easter Vigil. The forty days refer to our Lord's time of fasting in the wilderness; and since Sundays are never fast days, Ash Wednesday is the beginning of the Lenten Fast. Throughout the Old Testament, ashes are used as a sign of sorrow and repentance, and Christians have traditionally used ashes to indicate sorrow for our own sin, and as a reminder that the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). Like Adam and Eve, we have disobeyed and rebelled against God, and are under the same judgment, "you are dust, and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19). But as we are marked with ashes in the same manner that we were baptized, we are also reminded of the life we share in Jesus Christ, the second Adam (Romans 5:17, 6:4). It is in this sure hope that we begin the journey of these forty days, that by hearing and answering our Savior's call to repent, we may enter fully into the joyful celebration of his resurrection.

