



# Ash Wednesday



*Remember that you are dust and  
to dust you shall return.*

February 22, 2022  
7:00 pm

**PRELUDE** "Dust and Ashes"

**COMMUNITY GATHERS**

**THE TRADITION OF ASH WEDNESDAY**

Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent. The early Christians held that before people could experience new life at Easter, they had to let their faults and bad habits die away or more symbolically, "turn to ash". Ashes were scattered over the heads of those who had sinned and who were seeking forgiveness. Ash continues to be used by many churches to remind people to repent; that is, to be sorry for their mistakes, to change their way of thinking and to look for ways to be better and stronger. During the service, a cross is marked in ash on the forehead of each member of the congregation. The ash is a reminder that when we die, our bodies then decay and turn to ash. The cross reminds us that the Spirit exists forever.

There are forty days of Lent (not counting Sundays), from Ash Wednesday until Easter morning. The number forty recalls the forty hours that Jesus was in the tomb between Good Friday and Easter morning. We are reminded as well of the forty days that Jesus fasted during his temptation in the wilderness. The early church believed that the number forty, when applied to time - forty hours, forty days, forty years - is the necessary period for cleansing or testing and strengthening which allows the "fullness of wisdom to become reality."

**THE LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE**

**INTROIT** "Come and Find the Quiet Center"

## THE CALL TO WORSHIP

Everywhere that life awakens

*you are there, Divine Spirit.*

Every living thing that finds rest in death

*is welcomed home to you, Great Mystery.*

Every breath of laughter that bubbles up within us

*is shared by you, Holy One.*

Every tear that we cry

*is collected and valued by you, Wisdom of the Ages.*

All the grief and joy, suffering and celebration, that comes to any corner of the universe

*has a place in the eternal, cosmic journey of becoming  
which connects us all with each other  
and with you, Lover of All.*

*Once again as we worship,  
in faith, hope and love*

*we open our minds, hearts, souls,  
and bodies to you, O God. Amen.*

## HYMN "Draw Me Nearer"

*1 I am thine, O Lord, I have heard thy voice,  
and it told thy love to me;  
but I long to rise in the arms of faith,  
and be closer drawn to thee.*

*Refrain:*

*Draw me nearer, nearer, blessed Lord,  
to the cross where thou hast died;  
draw me nearer, nearer, nearer, blessed Lord,  
to thy precious, bleeding side.*

*2 Consecrate me now to thy service, Lord,  
by the power of grace divine;  
let my soul look up with a steadfast hope,  
and my will be lost in thine. [Refrain]*

*3 O, the pure delight of a single hour  
that before thy throne I spend,  
when I kneel in prayer, and with thee, my God,  
I commune as friend with friend! [Refrain]*

*4 There are depths of love that I cannot know  
till I cross the narrow sea;  
there are heights of joy that I may not reach  
till I rest in peace with thee. [Refrain]*

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

As we receive the symbol of ash  
we remember that we are also dust,  
we are flawed, broken and ever-evolving beings.

*We recognize our humanity  
and we know now that brokenness, grief and loss  
are part of the journey,  
but they can also be part of our evolution  
into our best selves.*

*Thank you Jesus, that in your humanity,  
you have shown us what humanity can be.*

But we also remember that we are divine and beloved beings,  
and there is magnificence in us  
even in the pain and grief.

*We hold on to our brilliance in the darkness  
knowing it will be our strength  
that will carry us through.*

*Thank you Jesus, that in your divinity,  
you have shown us the divine image within us.*

We are aware of the brokenness that every person carries,  
we know that grief and sorrow are present  
within each person.

*In this community we want to be witnesses  
to each other's stories,  
all the good and the brokenness.*

May we know that there is a space  
where we can find healing,  
rest, and companionship.

***We pray for each person carrying a little more  
than they feel they can manage;  
may they find rest here. Amen.***

TAIZÉ MEDITATION “Sing Praises” (3 times)

***Sing praises, all you peoples,  
sing praises to the Lord.  
Sing praises, all you peoples,  
sing praises to the Lord!***

PRAYER OF PRAISE AND CONFESSION

God, we take this time out of our busy schedules  
to reconnect with you  
to recollect our emotions  
to recognize the sorrows and the joys the pain and the healing.

***We come as we are,  
we put aside our masks  
and our ‘we’re fine’ responses.  
We see that there is brokenness in us too.***

We recognize that this is a vulnerable moment,  
and we don’t like showing the brokenness.  
We have been taught not to show weakness—  
that it’s honorable to suffer in silence.

***But we need the comfort of knowing we’re not alone,  
that there are others who have gone through the troubles and  
trials we’re facing and they’ve made it!***

We are so grateful for a place where we can share  
our stories and victories,  
our experiences and failures.  
There’s healing found in acknowledging,  
in sharing,  
in listening.

*God, you have been the presence in the darkness,  
the whisper in the wind,  
the warmth in the sun.*

*And we recognize you now in these moments  
of sharing with each other.*

*Thank you for being present in every moment. Amen.*

TAIZÉ MEDITATION “Lord Jesus Christ” (3 times)

*Lord Jesus Christ, your light shines within us.  
Let not my doubts and my darkness speak to me.  
Lord Jesus Christ, your light shines within us.  
Let my heart always welcome your love.*

ANTHEM “What a Wondrous Love Is This”

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

“Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. “So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

“And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

“And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

## ASH WEDNESDAY MESSAGE "Underneath it All"

### MEDITATION AND CONFESSION

### APPLICATION OF ASHES

### PRAYER OF THE PENITENT

Gracious God, out of your love and mercy you breathed into dust the breath of life, creating us to serve you and our neighbors.

*In this season of repentance, restore to us the joy of our salvation and strengthen us to face our mortality, that we may reach with confidence for your mercy, in Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*

### HYMN "I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light"

*1 I want to walk as a child of the light.  
I want to follow Jesus.  
God set the stars to give light to the world.  
The star of my life is Jesus.*

*Refrain:  
In him there is no darkness at all.  
The night and the day are both alike.  
The Lamb is the light of the city of God.  
Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.*

*2 I want to see the brightness of God.  
I want to look at Jesus.  
Clear sun of righteousness, shine on my path,  
and show me the way to the Father. [Refrain]*

*3 I'm looking for the coming of Christ.  
I want to be with Jesus.  
When we have run with patience the race,  
we shall know the joy of Jesus. [Refrain]*

### THE BENEDICTION

## THE IRISH BLESSING

*May the road rise to meet you,  
May the wind be ever at your back,  
May the sun shine warm upon your face,  
And the rains fall soft upon your fields.  
And until we meet again, and until we meet again,  
May the God who loves us all  
Hold you in the palm of His hand.*

Minister of Word and Sacrament  
**Rev. Bruce K. Cornwell**

Director of Music Ministries  
**Benjamin April**

Soloist  
**Benjamin April**

Elder of the Day/Liturgist  
**Marissa Lombardo**

Deacon of the Day  
**Jessica Kaercher**

Technical Director  
**Cameron Kaercher**

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**Cameron Kaercher**

Welcome Host  
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### Sing Praises

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### Lord Jesus Christ

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### I want to Walk as a Child of the Light

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## ZOOM

To join Sunday Worship via Zoom, use the link below:

<https://tinyurl.com/CRCCZoom>

Meeting ID: 688 088 7155

By Phone: 1-646-558-8656

