



ASH WEDNESDAY

FEBRUARY 14, 2024 | 7:00 PM

Ash Wednesday begins the Christian season of Lent. We will spend the coming weeks journeying with Jesus toward the cross; toward the death that ultimately brings resurrected life. Many of us will spend our days practicing a new spiritual discipline or giving up something that seems to be getting in the way of the life we long to live.

Tonight we come together to mark the beginning of this Lenten journey.

As part of tonight's worship, the imposition of ashes will be offered.

Ashes have been used in Christian churches to mark the beginning of Lent since at least the 10th Century, and ashes are mentioned in scripture as a symbol of purification and repentance.

PRELUDE

How Deep the Father's Love for Us
Stuart Townend, arr. James Koerts

Rachel Williams

WELCOME**GATHERING MUSIC**

Grace Greater Than Our Sin
Daniel Towner, arr. Bill Wolaver

CALL TO LENT

Sheila Sheldon

OPENING PRAYER

Loving God, we come to you on this holy night aware of our need for rebirth and renewal. We have fallen short of your desires for our lives and our world, and we stand ready to hand everything we are over to you.

We recognize that we have come from the dust and everything that we are can only be so because you have breathed life into us from the beginning. Remind us of our dependence on you and your care for us. May we know the power of your mercy as we work to heal our hearts. May we know the strength of your love as we seek your face in our world. May we know the presence of your Spirit as we rebuild ourselves to become repairers of the breach. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

HYMN #475***Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing***

*Come, thou Fount of every blessing; tune my heart to sing thy grace;
streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above;
praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it, mount of God's unchanging love!*

*Here I raise my Ebenezer; hither by thy help I'm come;
and I hope, by thy good pleasure, safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger, wandering from the fold of God;
he, to rescue me from danger, interposed his precious blood.*

*O to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be!
Let that grace now, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;
here's my heart; O take and seal it; seal it for thy courts above.*

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Isaiah 58:1-12

Sheila Sheldon

MEDITATION

The Fast We Choose

Rev. Jim Cochrane

MUSICAL REFLECTION

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross
Lowell Mason, arr. Carol Tornquist

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

SHARING OF THE BREAD & CUP AND MARKING WITH ASHES

HYMN #836

Abide with Me (verses 1, 3 & 5)

*Abide with me: fast falls the eventide.
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide!
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
help of the helpless, O abide with me.*

*I need thy presence every passing hour;
what but thy grace can foil the tempter's power?
Who, like thyself, my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, Lord, abide with me.*

*Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes;
shine through the gloom and point me to the skies.
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
in life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.*

PRAYERS FOR OUR LENTEN JOURNEY

Holy God, we give you thanks for the simple gifts of bread and cup, and for our communion with one another in this place as well as with believers across time and space. Just as Christ offers his body to us, may we be his body in a weary world.

Put your mark on our lives, we pray, and remind us that we are followers of your Son. As we enter the wilderness of Lent, open our ears so we might hear your call. Rebuild the ancient ruins of our hearts so we might raise up new foundations and restore the streets we live in. As we go out into this holy night, surround us with your presence so we can hear your voice say, "Here I Am," when we cry for you. In Christ we pray. Amen.

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

It Is Well with My Soul
Philip Bliss, arr. Carol Tornquist

SPECIAL OFFERING: THE FATHER PROJECT Fostering Actions To Help Earnings and Responsibility

Founded in 1999, their mission is to assist fathers in overcoming barriers that prevent them from supporting their children economically and emotionally. Andy Freeberg (Valley member) is the Executive Director. Valley continues to raise funds to support Father/Child activities and various services for dads.

Wednesdays in Lent

6:00 pm | Dinner in Fellowship Hall

Lent is a time for internal reflection on who we are as followers of Christ. This is done both individually and communally, and Valley will make space for that intentional reflection on Wednesday nights.

We will gather for dinner at 6:00pm in Fellowship Hall, then come together for a time of singing, praying, listening for the Word, and discussion in small groups. The topic will be different each week, so you are guaranteed to come away with something new every time you come! Each of these discussions will also help the work of the upcoming Ministry and Mission Study Committee.

Meals will be provided by committee, and attendees are encouraged to bring **desserts if your last name is A-L**, and **a side dish if your last name is M-Z**. Make Lenten services part of your journey from Ash Wednesday to Easter, and may learning from others illumine new avenues of your own personal faith.

February 21

Jesus Sought Me: Luke 5:1-11
Hosts: Stewardship, Finance, and Property
Discussion Focus: *Christ's Call on Your Life*

February 28

Rescue Me From Danger: Matthew 14:22-33
Hosts: Technology, and Worship & Music
Discussion Focus: *Barriers to Faithfulness*

March 6

Praise the Mount: Matthew 16:13-20
Hosts: Education
Discussion Focus: *Living Our Faith*

March 13

I'm Fixed Upon It: Matthew 16:21-23
Hosts: Mission Possible, and Personnel
Discussion Focus: *Navigating New Territory*

March 20

Teach Me: Matthew 18:15-22
Hosts: Fellowship, and Growth
Discussion Focus: *Healing Relationships*