



# ASH WEDNESDAY

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**Sunday, March 5, 2025**

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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.



Valley Community

**PRELUDE**

*Romance*  
Op. 23 by Amy Beach

Rachel Williams, piano  
Jenni Volby, violin

**LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY****GATHERING MUSIC**

*Romantische Stucke*  
Op. 75 No. 1 by Antonin Dvorak

**CALL TO LENT****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.

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION****SCRIPTURE READING**

Psalm 51:1-17

**MEDITATION**

*Create in Me a Clean Heart*

Rev. Jim Cochrane

**MUSICAL REFLECTION**

*Meditation*  
from *Thais* by J. Massenet

**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 and 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.

## PRAYER FOR OUR LENTEN JOURNEY

*By Jan Sutch Pickard of Patmos Abbey*

Truly dust we are, and to dust we shall return; and truly yours we are, and to you we shall return. Help this to be a time of turning round and beginning again. Through the forty days of Lent, help us to follow you and to find you: in the discipline of praying and in the drudgery of caring – in whatever we deny ourselves, and whatever we set ourselves to learn or do. Help us to discover you in our loneliness and in community, in our emptiness and our fulfilment, in our sadness and our laughter. Help us to find you when we ourselves are lost.

Help us to follow you on the journey to Jerusalem to the waving palms of the people's hope, to their rejection, to the cross and empty tomb. Help us to perceive new growth amid the ashes of the old. Help us, carrying your cross, to be signs of your Kingdom. Amen.

## BENEDICTION

## POSTLUDE

*Ave Maria*  
by Bach-Gounod

# 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.

## **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.