

A Service of Ashes

Ash Wednesday

February 14, 2018

About ASH WEDNESDAY

Gathering *(The people gather in quietness.)*

Prelude

Greeting

(L) The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

(P) And also with you.

(L) Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.

(P) God's mercy endures forever.

Why We Are Here

*Hymn *"Alas! and Did My Savior Bleed"* 294

*Opening Prayer *(In Unison)*

O God, maker of everything and judge of all that you have made, from the dust of the earth you have formed us and from the dust of death you would raise us up. By the redemptive power of the cross, create in us clean hearts and put within us a new spirit, that we may repent of our sins and lead lives worthy of your calling; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Scripture Lesson Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 Page 802 (O.T.)
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 Page 11 (N.T.)

"Invitation to the Observance of Lenten Discipline" Rev. Donna Eidson

A Silent Time of Reflection

Prayer Over the Ashes

Imposition of Ashes

*Hymn *"Were You There"* 288

*Dismissal With Blessing

Going Forth *(Please Depart in Silence)*

*The Congregation May Stand.

Ash Wednesday begins the season of Christian worship and devotion called "Lent." Lent is a season of forty days (excluding Sundays) which ends on the Saturday before Easter Sunday. The word comes from the old English word *lengten*, to designate the time of year when the days begin to grow noticeably longer (spring). Historically, Lent has been observed as a "penitential" season, as a time to be sorrowful for sins and to make changes in one's life. It has also involved a time of fasting, to symbolize the suffering and self-sacrifice of Jesus as he went to Jerusalem to die on the Cross. Yet, Lent can be a season of thanksgiving, for only through God's grace in the giving of His Son can we live fully here and beyond.

In the Ash Wednesday service we are reminded of our mortality, that we must all die. We are also reminded of our bent toward sinning, our tendency for self-centeredness, and our temptation to live life apart from the spiritual discipline that creates a Christ centered life.

The symbol of the cross made with the ashes speaks to us of the ultimate sacrifice of the Father as He gave the Son over to sinful humans to be crucified. In the cross we understand the Father's great love for us. It is the ultimate sign of God's desire to reconcile and redeem the world. "For God so loved....."



Ministers	The Congregation
Pastor	Donna S. Eidson
Resident Bishop	Jonathan Holston
District Superintendent	Rev. Dr. Cathy Jamieson

*Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus
Christ for the transformation of the world.*

*Our vision is to Connect, Nurture, Inspire and
Transform*



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