

St. Andrews Presbyterian Church



March 5, 2025

Ash Wednesday

March 5, 2025

12:00 P.M.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

THE GATHERING

The congregation gathers in silence, helping to create an atmosphere of reverence and awe in anticipation of the worship of God.

CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive)

Liturgist

God sent Christ into the world not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.

God's love endures forever.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea; though the waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

God's love endures forever.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

In quiet trust, in simple words, we enter a space of prayer. The door to God's heart is open as we open ourselves to God's grace and mercy. Let us pray, first in silence and then together:

Silence

Almighty God, you despise nothing you have made and you forgive the sins of all who trust in you. Create in us new and contrite hearts, that truly repenting of our sins, and acknowledging our brokenness, we may receive from you, the God of all mercy, full pardon and forgiveness; through your Son, Jesus Christ our redeemer, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

*HYMN 470

"There Is a Longing in Our Hearts"

LONGING

THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Liturgist

THE HEBREW TESTAMENT READING: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

THE PSALM: Psalm 51:1-17

The Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

CHORAL ANTHEM

"Sign Us with Ashes"

PHOENIX

THE EPISTLE READING: 2 Corinthians 5:20b – 6:10
Holy wisdom, holy word.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

“Reality Check”

THE RESPONSE

INVITATION TO THE OBSERVANCE OF THE LENTEN DISCIPLINE

LITANY OF PENITENCE (Responsive)

Holy and merciful God, we confess to you and to one another, and to the whole communion of saints in heaven and on earth, that we have sinned by 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.

Have mercy on us, O God.

We have not listened 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.

Have mercy on us, O God.

We confess to you, O God, all our past unfaithfulness: The pride, hypocrisy, and impatience in our lives,

we confess to you, O God.

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways and our exploitation of other people,

we confess to you, O God.

Our anger at our own frustration and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,

we confess to you, O God.

Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonesty in daily life and work,

we confess to you, O God.

Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,

we confess to you, O God.

Accept our repentance, O God, for the wrongs we have done. For our neglect of human need and suffering and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,

accept our repentance, O God.

For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us,

accept our repentance, O God.

For our waste and pollution of your creation and our lack of concern for those who come after us,

accept our repentance, O God.

Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us.

Favorably hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

(You are invited to come to the chancel so that ashes may be imposed on your forehead, symbolizing an awareness of our humanity and the need for God's grace. After receiving the ashes, please gather around the communion table in a circle where we will partake of a common loaf and cup through the ancient practice of intinction: the dipping of a generous portion of bread into the cup.)

THE EUCHARIST

The Invitation to the Table

The Prayer of Great Thanksgiving and the Lord's Prayer

The Words of Institution

The Sharing of the Meal

Communion Hymn 227

"Jesus, Remember Me"

BERTHIER

Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.

Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.

The Prayer after Communion

THE SENDING

*BENEDICTION

(The Congregation departs in silence.)

PARTICIPANTS IN WORSHIP

Rev. Margie Osborn, Guest Pastor

Jane Elzerman, Liturgist

Michael Beery, Director of Music Ministry

Chris Jahr, The Rev. Margie Osborn, Communion Preparers

Dennis and Sally Keeney, Ushers

Tim Quist, Organist

The Chancel Choir

The Meaning and Symbols of Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent with a public act of confession. Acknowledging that we have all sinned and fallen short of God's glory, we repent and return to our loving Creator. Acutely aware of our failure and frailty, we express our utter reliance on God's saving grace.

Ash Wednesday developed in the medieval period as a time when penitent sinners were presented for church discipline during the season of Lent, to be reconciled with the community of faith on Maundy Thursday. Ash Wednesday also came to be the occasion for new believers to enroll in the catechumenate, a period of preparation for baptism at Easter. For those who undertake spiritual disciplines, Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Lenten fast.

Ashes are an ancient symbol of repentance, sorrow and sacrifice. Traditionally, the ashes for this service are made from the palm branches of the previous year; thus the ashes and palms together frame the season of Lent.