

*Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent, a time of prayer and preparation as we move toward Holy Week and the celebration of Easter. The name "Ash Wednesday" comes from the ancient practice of applying ashes to the heads of worshipers as a sign of humility before God and the great need for redemption through Christ. Our service today will focus on reminding us of our sinful nature and calling us to deeper reflection and repentance. Ashes, an ancient symbol of grief for sins, are placed on the foreheads of worshipers in the form of a cross as we are reminded "That from dust you have come, to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19). This cross is a tangible reminder of our sin and our need for Christ's sacrifice.*

### **Welcome/Prayer**

#### **Call To Worship**

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,  
so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.  
God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world,  
but in order that the world might be saved through him. (John 3:16–17)

O God the Father, creator of heaven and earth,

**Have mercy on us.**

O God the Son, redeemer of the world

**Have mercy on us.**

O God the Holy Spirit, advocate and guide,

**Have mercy on us.**

Holy, blessed and glorious Trinity,  
three persons and one God,

**Have mercy on us.**

#### **Prayer for Illumination**

We Reflect upon Our Lot

**Our hearts burst for Jesus Christ;**

Our thirst cries out in awe.

**The one who has broken bread for us**

Was broken without flaw.

And blood was poured to quench our lives

**Never as we had thought**

But salvation came and taught us love.

**We reflect upon our lot.**

#### **How Deep The Father's Love For Us - Hymn #80**

#### **Scripture Reading**

##### **Joel 2:1-2, 12-17**

2:1 Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming, it is near-

**2:2 a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness spread upon the mountains a great and powerful army comes; their like has never been from of old, nor will be again after them in ages to come.**

2:12 Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;

**2:13 rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the LORD, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing.**

2:14 Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the LORD, your God?

**2:15 Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly;**

2:16 gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her canopy.

**2:17 Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep. Let them say, "Spare your people, O LORD, and do not make your heritage a mockery, a byword among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'"**

### **Psalm 51:1-17**

51:1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.

**51:2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.**

51:3 For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

**51:4 Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.**

51:5 Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me.

**51:6 You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.**

51:7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

**51:8 Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.**

51:9 Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

**51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.**

51:11 Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.

**51:12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.**

51:13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

**51:14 Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.**

51:15 O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.

**51:16 For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.**

51:17 The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

### **Teaching from Psalm 51**

### **'Tis So Sweet to Trust In Jesus - Hymn #179**

### **Prayer of Confession**

*Through the prayer of confession, we acknowledge our sin and need for God's mercy.*

*This is the time in our service where we confess our sins before God. Cleansing and freedom begin with being honest with our sins and failures before God so that He can restore us back to Joy and peace. Take a few moments to confess sin before God. You can use this scripture to help you do that.*

Have mercy upon us, O God, according to your steadfast love;

**According to your abundant mercies, blot out our transgressions.**

Wash us thoroughly from our iniquity, and cleanse us from our sin.

For we know our transgressions, and our sin is ever before us.

**Create in us a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within us.**

Cast us not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from us.

**Restore to us the joy of your salvation,**

And uphold us with a willing spirit.

**Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

For all the times we fail to do what we know is right,

**We are sorry, Lord.**

For all the times we do what we know is wrong,

**We are sorry, Lord.**

For all the times we fail to love each other,

**We are sorry, Lord.**

For all the times we fail to love you,

**We are sorry, Lord.**

From: Isaiah 58:1-12

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, 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.**

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.

**Please hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.**

O God the Father, creator of heaven and earth,

**Have mercy on us.**

O God the Son, redeemer of the world,

**Have mercy on us.**

O God the Holy Spirit, advocate and guide,

**Have mercy on us.**

Holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three persons and one God,

**Have mercy on us.**

Remember not, Lord Christ, our offenses, nor the offenses of our forebears.

**Spare us, good Lord,**

Spare your people whom you have redeemed with your precious blood.

**Spare us, good Lord,**

From all spiritual blindness; from pride, vainglory, and hypocrisy; from envy, hatred, and  
malice; and from all want of charity,

**Good Lord, deliver us.**

From all deadly sin; and from the deceits of the world, the flesh, and the devil,

**Good Lord, deliver us.**

From all false doctrine, heresy, and schism; from hardness of heart, and contempt for your  
Word and commandments,

**Good Lord, deliver us.**

From earthquake and tempest; from drought, fire, and flood; from civil strife and violence;  
from war and murder; and from dying suddenly and unprepared,

**Good Lord, deliver us.**

By the mystery of your holy incarnation, by your baptism, fasting, and temptation; and by  
your proclamation of the kingdom,

**Good Lord, deliver us.**

By your bloody sweat and bitter grief; by your cross and suffering; and by your precious  
death and burial,

**Good Lord, deliver us.**

By your mighty resurrection; by your glorious ascension; and by the coming of the Holy  
Spirit, Good Lord, deliver us.

In our times of trouble; in our times of prosperity; in the hour of death, and on the day of  
judgment,

**Good Lord, deliver us.**

Gracious God, You created us out of the dust of the earth  
and breathed into us the breath of life.

By your hand we live and to your hands we return when all our days are done.  
Grant that the awareness of our mortality may lead us not to fear, but to faith.

**In our weakness teach us to look to you for strength,  
in our failures to turn to you and find forgiveness,  
and in our dying to await the gift of everlasting life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

### **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**ALL: 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 debts as we forgive our debtors.  
Lead us, not into temptation, but deliver us from evil;  
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

### **THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES**

#### **Lead Me To The Cross**

Savior I come  
Quiet my soul, remember  
Redemption's hill  
Where Your blood was spilled  
For my ransom  
Everything I once held dear  
I count it all as lost

Lead me to the cross  
Where Your love poured out  
Bring me to my knees  
Lord I lay me down  
Rid me of myself  
I belong to You  
Oh, lead me, lead me to the cross

You were as I  
Tempted and trialed  
Human  
The word became flesh  
Bore my sin and death  
Now you're risen

Everything I once held dear  
I count it all as lost

Lead me to the cross  
Where Your love poured out

Bring me to my knees  
Lord I lay me down  
Rid me of myself  
I belong to You  
Oh, lead me, lead me to the cross

To Your heart  
To Your heart  
Lead me to Your heart  
Lead me to Your heart

Lead me to the cross  
Where Your love poured out  
Bring me to my knees  
Lord I lay me down  
Rid me of myself  
I belong to You  
Oh, lead me, lead me

### **Hallelujah What A Savior - Hymn #296**

#### **Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus**

Turn your eyes upon Jesus  
Look full in His wonderful face  
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim  
In the light of His glory and grace

#### **Prayer of Gratitude from Romans 8:31–35, 37–39 (ESV)**

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

**He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?**

Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.

**Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.**

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

**No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

#### **CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

Created from dust, held together by God's extravagant love,

**we turn away from sin, and leave today embracing God's grace, forgiveness, mercy, and love.**

*Go now in Silence.*