

AN INVITATION TO LENT ASH WEDNESDAY



Community Ash Wednesday Service

February 17, 2021

Newell Presbyterian Church
Rev. Matthew D. Conner

NuVision Church
Pastor James McLean

Torrence Grove AME Zion
Rev. Wayne Harris

Advent Lutheran
Rev. Ward Misenheimer

Call to Worship for Ash Wednesday

L: We are invited—

**A: Into a story,
Into this place,
Into this time of worship.**

L: We are invited—

**A: Into reflection,
Into community,
Into our own spiritual journeys.**

L: We are invited—

**A: The broken and the bruised,
The hopeful, the new,
The faithful, the doubting,
The wondering, the waiting.**

L: We are invited—

A: Because God loves us;

L: Listen, trust the invitation and bring your whole self.

A: All are invited here.

Prelude (*12pm*) “Precious Lord” Annette Nolan

Opening Anthem (*6:30pm*) “Dust & Ashes”
Carol Riddell and Laura Torrence

The Greeting

L: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray. Holy God, you are ever-present – though sometimes we cannot feel you near.

You continue to invite us to move toward you, drawing us forth. When we are quiet, we know that presence is the Holy Spirit, moving to awaken Love in us.

So we are here.
And we are still.
And we are quiet.

On this first day of Lent, as we hear your scripture read aloud, open the door for us to move toward you, toward Love and into your presence once again. Gratefully we pray.

C: Amen.

The First Reading

Isaiah 58:1-12

The Holy Gospel

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

The Sermon

Pastor Matt Conner

Song of the Day (*12 pm*)

“The Lord is My Song”
Carol Riddell

Song of the Day (*6:30pm*)

Leah Woehr (soloist)

Invitation to Lent

Friends in Christ, today with the whole church we enter the time of remembering Jesus' Passover from death to life, and our life in Christ is renewed.

We begin this holy season by acknowledging our need for repentance and for God's mercy. We are created to experience joy in communion with God, to love one another, and to live in harmony with creation. But our sinful rebellion separates us from God, our neighbors, and creation, so that we do not enjoy the life our creator intended.

As disciples of Jesus, we are called to a discipline that contends against evil and resists whatever leads us away from love of God and neighbor. I invite you, therefore, to the discipline of Lent — self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love—as we are strengthened by the gifts of word and sacrament. Let us continue our journey through these forty days to the great Three Days of Jesus' death and resurrection.

Lenten Confession

L: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence for reflection and self-examination

L: Holy God,

A: We confess to you and to one another, and to the whole company of heaven, that we have sinned by our own fault, by our own fault, by our own most grievous fault, in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone.

A: 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.

C: Have mercy on us.

L: We have shut our ears 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.

C: Have mercy on us.

A: Our past unfaithfulness, the pride, envy, hypocrisy, and apathy that have infected our lives, we confess to you.

C: Have mercy on us.

L: Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people, we confess to you.

C: Have mercy on us.

A: Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to share the faith that is in us, we confess to you.

C: Have mercy on us.

L: Our neglect of human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty, we confess to you.

C: Have mercy on us.

A: Our false judgments, our uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us, we confess to you.

C: Have mercy on us.

L: Our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us, we confess to you.

C: Have mercy on us.

A: Restore us and renew our spirits.

C: Holy God, hear us, for your mercy is great.

Imposition of Ashes

L: Holy God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth. Let these ashes be a sign of our mortality and penitence and remind us that only by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ are we given eternal life. Amen.

Friends in Christ, I invite you to receive these ashes as a sign of the spirit of penitence with which we shall keep this season of Lent.

In family units, you are invited to mark one another with Cross of ashes. Share these words with one another as you make the sign of the Cross, "Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return."

Lenten Instrumental (12 pm) “Stay with Us” Carol Riddell
Anthem (6:30pm) “Speak to Me in Ashes” Rob Beyersdorf

L: Holy God, accompany us through these 40 days of Lent. By your Holy Spirit renew us in the gift of baptism that we may provide for those who are poor, pray for those in need, fast from self-indulgence, and above all that we may find our treasure in the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen.

Affirmation of Faith

L: We believe in an inviting God
Who invites the poor and sick,
The outcast and the lonely,
The immigrant and the refugee,
The awkward and the abrasive,
The young and the innocent.
We believe God invites the best and the worst—
In all of us.

We believe God invites us to:

A life of faith,
A crowded table,
A messy church,
A deeper truth,
A resilient joy,
A place to belong,
A family among strangers,
A world that is just,
And a love that knows no bounds.

We believe this invitation exists for all people.

We believe this invitation exists for us.

And when we miss the call or ignore the invite,
We believe that God invites us again.
Thanks be to God for that invitational Spirit.

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to God.

C: **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Words of Institution

The Lord's Prayer (*spoken*)

**C: 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 trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass 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 and ever. Amen.**

The Post-Communion Blessing

L: May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the gifts of his body and blood strengthen, keep and unite us now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

Benediction & Dismissal

L: Go now into the world to serve God with gladness; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor all people; love and serve God, and rejoice in the power of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Sending Song (12:00pm) “Bless the Lord” Carol Riddel

Sending Song (6:30pm) Leah Woehr (soloist)