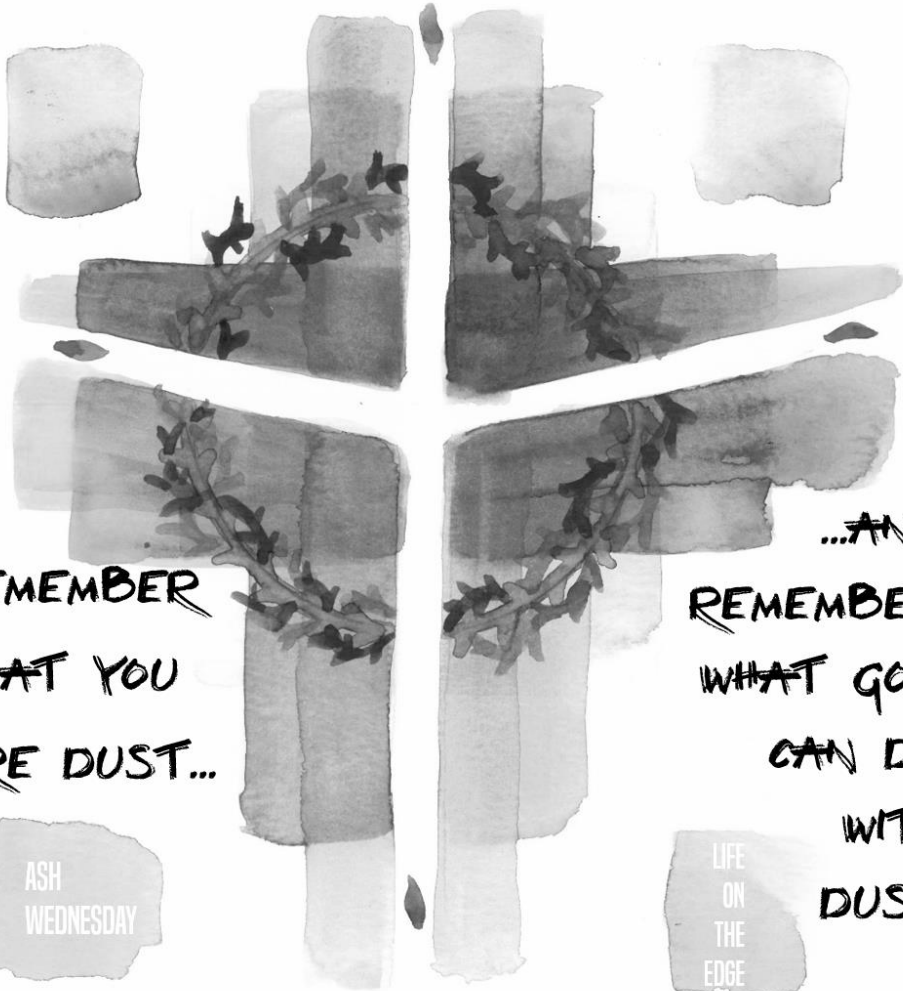


Ash Wednesday
Liturgy of Holy Communion and Imposition of Ashes
Community of Christ Lutheran Church + Whitehouse, Ohio
March 5, 2025, + 7:00 p.m.



REMEMBER
THAT YOU
ARE DUST...

ASH
WEDNESDAY

...AND
REMEMBER
WHAT GOD
CAN DO
WITH
DUST

LIFE
ON
THE
EDGE

Welcome

Prelude

INVITATION TO THE LENTEN JOURNEY

P Beloved in Christ, we were created to experience joy in communion with God, to love all humanity, and to live in harmony with all of God's creation. But sin separates us from God, our neighbors, and the world that God loves, and so we do not fully enjoy the life our Creator intended for us. Also, by our sin, we grieve God, who does not desire any to come under judgment, but that we might turn to God and live... I invite you therefore, to commit yourselves to this struggle of discipleship, to walking the way of Jesus, the way of the cross, and to confess your sins, calling on the living God for the strength to persevere in this Lenten discipline.

Most holy and merciful God,

C 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, 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.

P 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.

C Free us anew from being trapped in this sin and lead us out on your way.

P Sin has made our hearts bent in on themselves, O God. We have covered our ears to your call to serve as Christ served us. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

C Free us anew from being trapped in this sin and lead us out on your way.

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

C Free us anew from being trapped in this sin and lead us out on your way.

P Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, our longing to have what is not ours, and our crooked way of loving things and using people, we confess to you:

C Free us anew from being trapped in this sin and lead us out on your way.

P Our negligence in prayer and worship, our failure to share the faith that is in us, and our reluctance to share the abundance you have placed in our hands, we confess to you:

C Free us anew from being trapped in this sin and lead us out on your way.

P Our false judgments, our uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us, and our fearful love of walls rather than the freedom you intend for us, we confess to you:

C Free us anew from being trapped in this sin and lead us out on your way.

P Our waste, distortion, and lack of care for your creation, and for those who come after us, we confess to you:

C Free us anew from being trapped in this sin and lead us out on your way.

P Restore us, good Lord, let your anger turn from us, take our sin and nail it to the cross with Christ, that we might become your righteousness for the world.

C Hear us, Lord, for your mercy is endless, and your love moves beyond boundaries. Amen

Imposition of Ashes

All who wish to do so are invited to come forward through the center aisle to receive the mark of the cross in ashes as a sign of our mortality, our repentance, and our baptism into Christ's death. The pastor at each of the two stations at the front of the aisle will say, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

P Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,

C that we may show forth your glory in the world and reflect the face of Christ.

P By the cross and passion of your Son, our Lord,

C bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.

P Almighty God, have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life.

C Amen

Lenten Theme Hymn—O God, Whose Love Is Always Greater



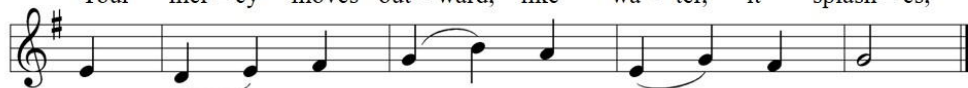
1. O God—, whose love— is al— ways great—er
2. You formed us from dust and breathed life in - to ash - es,



than all our minds— and hearts can hold,
your cross traced on us makes us your own.



our Sa— vior, Lord—, and our— Cre - a - tor,
Your mer - cy moves out - ward, like wa - ter, it splash - es,



re - veal— a - mong us your mer - cies un - told.
as - sur - ing us that we are nev - er a - lone.

Prayer of the Day

P Gracious God, out of your love and mercy you breathed into dust the breath of life, creating us to joyfully serve you and our neighbors. Strengthen us to face our fragility in this life and give us the grace to walk in the way of Jesus. Lead us to follow after him, on the journey from the wilderness to the cross and into life beyond the grip of death, for we ask it in his name, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **C Amen**

THE LESSONS

First Lesson Isaiah 58:1-12

¹Shout out, do not hold back!

Lift up your voice like a trumpet!

Announce to my people their rebellion,
to the house of Jacob their sins.

²Yet day after day they seek me
and delight to know my ways,
as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness
and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;
they ask of me righteous judgments,
they delight to draw near to God.

³“Why do we fast, but you do not see?
Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?”
Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day,
and oppress all your workers.

⁴Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight
and to strike with a wicked fist.
Such fasting as you do today
will not make your voice heard on high.

⁵Is such the fast that I choose,
a day to humble oneself?
Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush,
and to lie in sackcloth and ashes?

Will you call this a fast,
a day acceptable to the LORD?

⁶Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?

⁷Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

⁸Then your light shall break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up quickly;
your vindicator shall go before you,

the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.

⁹Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;
you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,

¹⁰if you offer your food to the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness
and your gloom be like the noonday.

¹¹The LORD will guide you continually,
and satisfy your needs in parched places,
and make your bones strong;
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters never fail.

¹²Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to live in.

L The Word of the Lord C Thanks be to God!

Second Lesson 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

^{6:1} As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. ² For he says,

“At an acceptable time I have listened to you,
and on a day of salvation I have helped you.”

See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! ³ We are putting no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, ⁴ but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, ⁵ beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; ⁶ by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, ⁷ truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; ⁸ in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; ⁹ as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as

punished, and yet not killed; ¹⁰ as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

L The Word of the Lord **C** Thanks be to God!

Gospel Acclamation "Return to the Lord"



Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and mer - ci - ful,



slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

The Holy Gospel Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

P The Holy Gospel according... **C** Glory to you, O Lord!

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹“Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

²“So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ³But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

⁵“And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ⁶But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

¹⁶“And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ¹⁷But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

¹⁹“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰but store up for yourselves

treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

P The Gospel of the Lord! **C Praise to you, O Christ!**

Sermon

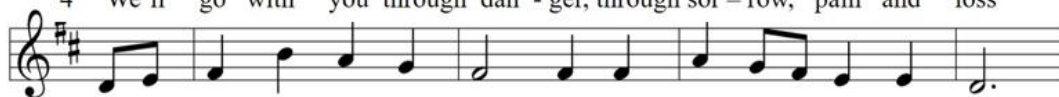
Pastor Steve Bond

Hymn

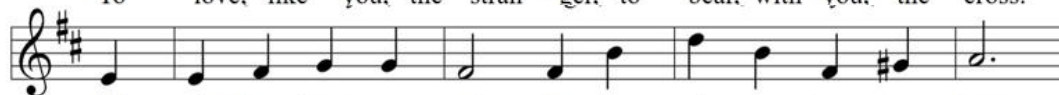
“O Love Beyond All Boundaries ”



1 O— Love be - yond all bound - 'ries, O Mer - cy with - out end,
2 When we're a - fraid and tim - id, your pres - ence makes us brave.
3 O— Truth who knows us tru - ly, who sees be - neath our schemes
4 We'll go with you through dan - ger, through sor - row, pain and loss



O— Grace that sought and found me, you claim me as your friend.
You lead us past our lim - its, your hand is strong to save.
O— Way who makes us ho - ly, O Life like flow - ing streams,
To love, like you, the stran - ger, to bear, with you, the cross.



Where sin has bent my spir - it, im - pris - on - ing my heart,
Your Ho - ly Spir - it frees us to fol - low where you guide,
Be with us in our la - bor, and make our lives more just
O God of all our pla - ces, be pres - ent in this room,



You tell me, “Do not fear it,” and free me to re - start.
So take these hands, Lord Je - sus, and draw us to your side.
To love and serve our neigh - bor as you have first loved us.
And take us where your grace is, from ash to emp - ty tomb.

Nicene Creed

C We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven; was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A Led by the Spirit, let us turn to God in prayer for the needs of the church, the world, and all in need:

A God of our journeys, we pray for the church as this journey to the cross begins. Guide your people in the practices that deepen our discipleship and lead us in Jesus' love beyond old boundaries that kept us from reaching out. Strengthen us here, and communities of faith in discipleship and witness for the sake of the gospel. God, in your mercy,

C receive our prayer.

A God of creation, we pray for the earth. As you once brought forth life from the dust, breathe healing and renewal into all places where ecosystems are stretched and strained. Nurture organic cycles of life, death, and rebirth. God, in your mercy,

C receive our prayer.

A God of the peoples, we pray for an end to wars and occupations that reduce communities to ash. Turn leaders away from fearful decision-making and lead all people into the justice and compassion of your reign, which encompasses all nations, transcends all borders, and fills all creation. God, in your mercy,

C receive our prayer.

A God of the suffering, we pray for all who live with any pain. Comfort people living with chronic or terminal illnesses, addictions, or anxiety. Grant that all who dwell in the dust of grief may know your presence there. God, in your mercy,

C receive our prayer.

A God of community, we pray for those who accompany the dying: for first responders, health care and hospice workers, chaplains, and those who facilitate burials of the dead. Sustain them as they serve their neighbors in life and death with dignity and care. God, in your mercy,

C receive our prayer.

A God of the cross, we give thanks for those who have completed their lives on earth and have returned to you. Strengthen us with the promise that within the ashes of death are the seeds of resurrection life. God, in your mercy,

C receive our prayer.

A Receive the prayers of your people and draw all things together in your love, in the name of Jesus, who leads us from death to life.

C Amen.

Sharing of the Peace

All are invited to share a sign of Christ's Peace with one another.

THE MEAL

This is Jesus' table, and the whole family of Jesus is welcome at it. At the time of Holy Communion, the congregation will be invited forward through the center aisle (with those sitting in the outside wings following the back aisle to join the center) to one of two stations to receive continuously. First, you'll receive the bread, from Pastor Steve or Vicar Natalie, and then take a cup from the tray held by an assistant at their side (the red is wine, and the white does not contain alcohol), before returning to your places by the outside aisle. Anyone who does not commune is still invited to come forward to receive a blessing.

Our Tithes and Offering

Those with offerings are invited to bring them forward to the plates at the front.

The Great Thanksgiving

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 the Lord our God.

C It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

Eucharistic Prayer

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 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.

Distribution of Communion

Communion Hymns

“For the Bread Which You Have Broken”

ELW 494



- 1 For the bread which you have bro - ken, for the wine which you have poured,
- 2 By this prom - ise that you love us, by your gift of peace re - stored,
- 3 With the saints who now a - dore you, seat - ed at the heav'n - ly board,
- 4 In your ser - vice, Lord, de - fend us; in our hearts keep watch and ward;



for the words which you have spo - ken, now we give you thanks, O Lord.
by your call to heav'n a - bove us, hal - low all our lives, O Lord.
may the church still wait - ing for you keep love's tie un - bro - ken, Lord.
in the world to which you send us let your king - dom come, O Lord.

“There Is A Longing In Our Hearts”

ACS 1078



There is a long - ing in our hearts, O Lord, for you to re -



veal your - self to us. There is a long - ing in our



hearts for love we on - ly find in you, our God.



- | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1 For jus - tice, | for free - dom, | for mer - cy: |
| 2 For wis - dom, | for cour - age, | for com - fort: |
| 3 For heal - ing, | for whole - ness, | for new life: |
| 4 Lord, save us, | take pit - y, | light in our |



hear our prayer. In sor - row, in grief:
hear our prayer. In weak - ness, in fear:
hear our prayer. In sick - ness, in death:
deep - est night. We call you; we wait:



be near; hear our prayer, O God.

Blessing after Communion

Prayer after Communion

A Merciful God, accompany us on our journey through these forty days. Fed at your table, now keep our eyes and hearts trained on Jesus Christ, so that we may follow him faithfully on the way and embody your expansive love for all the world.

C Amen

Benediction

P Beloved, we are God's own people, holy, washed, and renewed. We are God's handiwork, brought up from the dust and raised to new life. God bless you and keep you, shower you with mercy, fill you with courage, and + give you peace.

C Amen



1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;
 2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;
 3 Rich - es I heed not, nor vain, emp - ty praise,
 4 Light of my soul, af - ter vic - to - ry won,



naught be all else to me, save that thou art:
 I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord.
 thou mine in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways:
 may I reach heav - en's joys, O heav - en's Sun!



thou my best thought both by day and by night,
 Thou my soul's shel - ter, and thou my high tow'r,
 thou and thou on - ly, the first in my heart,
 Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,



wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.
 raise thou me heav'n - ward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.
 great God of heav - en, my trea - sure thou art.
 still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

Dismissal

A Go forth 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, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

C Thanks be to God.



About the Imposition of Ashes

Early in tonight's liturgy, you will be invited forward to receive **the imposition of ashes**. This practice, going back in some form more than a thousand years in Christian observance and with much older roots in ancient Judaism that connected ashes with public repentance, is meant to be a reminder of our mortality, a sign of our own turning from sin, and a symbol of hope in Christ as well, all at the same time. As you come forward, you'll receive the sign of the cross made in ashes on your forehead at one of two stations at the top of the center aisle, along with the words, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." Of course, we remember what God can do with dust since the storytelling of the Scriptures describes God making humanity out of the dust and breathing life into the clay shaped by God's own hand. We also remember how the cross of Christ was marked on our foreheads in our baptism, and how God's claim of love on us holds onto us through this life, through death, and into the promise of resurrection, much like our journey this Lent along with Jesus to the cross and eventually Easter's empty tomb. So even though it is a difficult reminder to hear that our lives are not permanent and to be reminded of our sin, we also receive the ashes tonight in the hope that the One who went to the cross for us has still claimed us as his own forever.

Lenten Schedule

Join us for each of the next five Wednesdays as our Lenten series for 2025 continues. Each week, join us for a simple meal in the fellowship hall from 6:00-7:00 p.m., and you'll be invited to help add your creativity to an interactive artistic project in the gathering space each week as well, and then to join us for a simple service in the sanctuary starting at 7:00 p.m. until about 7:45 p.m. each week.

March 12

March 19

March 26

April 2

April 9