

Ash Wednesday



CALVARY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

ORDER OF SERVICE

February 22, 2023

Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent with a public act of confession. Acknowledging that we have all sinned and fallen short, we repent and return to our loving Creator. 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. The imposition of ashes on the forehead or hand is part of this worship service.

PRELUDE – The Old Rugged Cross

arr. Dale Wood

OPENING SENTENCES

EVENING PRAYER

HYMN 433, *sing verses 1-3 all together* – Sign Us with Ashes

Refrain:

Sign us with ashes, merciful God,
children of dust, as to dust we return.

Sign us with ashes, merciful God.

Mark us and make us your own.

1 Surely, you alone can save us.

You pay our price with precious blood.

Reaching through your great compassion,
you lift up your people with love. (Refrain)

2 Surely, you alone uphold us.

You give us strength for all our needs.

Shielding with a father's favor,
you bless us with pardon and peace. (Refrain)

3 Surely, you alone can heal us.

Yours is the will to make us whole.

Soothing with a mother's kindness,
the contrite of heart, you console. (Refrain)

RESPONSIVE PSALM 51, *selected verses*

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

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

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

**All: 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.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Leader: O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.
For you have no delight in sacrifice;

if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.

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

(Silent confession.)

Leader: Restore us, O God of our salvation,
give us eyes that see your image in our neighbors,
ears that hear your call to justice,
and hearts that break for the lost and the suffering,
that we may encounter your grace and steadfast love
and become instruments of your peace and hope.

All: Amen.

AGNUS DEI – Agnus Dei

Edna Cogswell

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. 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! We are putting no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM – O Lamb of God Most Holy Nicholas Decius, arr. Robert Leaf

SERMON – Metanoia

HYMN 442, *sing all together* – Just as I am, without One Plea

- 1 Just as I am, without one plea
but that thy blood was shed for me,
and that thou biddest me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come; I come!
- 2 Just as I am, though tossed about
with many a conflict, many a doubt,
fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come; I come!

3 Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
because thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come; I come!

4 Just as I am, thy love unknown
has broken every barrier down;
now to be thine, yea, thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come; I come!

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Leader: We begin our journey to Easter with the sign of ashes.

This ancient sign speaks of the frailty and uncertainty of human life,
and marks the repentance of this community. Let us pray:

**All: Almighty God, you have created us
out of the dust of the earth.
May these ashes be for us
a sign of our mortality and repentance,
for it is only by your gracious gift
that we are given everlasting life;
through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

*(Worshipers are invited to come forward to receive the imposition of ashes
on the hand or forehead.)*

PRAYER

Hymn 433, *sing verses 4-6 all together* – Sign Us with Ashes

Refrain:

Sign us with ashes, merciful God,
children of dust, as to dust we return.

Sign us with ashes, merciful God.

Mark us and make us your own.

4 Surely, you alone can free us.
You break the bonds of guilt and sin.
Bracing, till we walk uprightly,
you bolster our hope once again. (Refrain)

5 Surely, you alone refine us.
You give us grace for lives made new,
forging, through your fire and radiance,
a sacrifice worthy for you. (Refrain)

6 Surely, you alone redeem us.
You fill our dust with holy breath.
Bursting from the grave in glory,
you rise from the ashes of death! (Refrain)

BLESSINGS AND CHARGE, *responsively*

Leader: May the God of peace make you holy in every way
and keep your whole being - soul, and body -
free from every sin at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All: Amen.

POSTLUDE – Postlude in D Minor

A.E. Muller

THE AGNUS DEI being sung by the choir during Lent was written by Edna Cogswell (1884-1959), who taught organ and piano at Indiana Normal School from 1906 to 1915, together with her parents, Hamlin and Dorothy Cogswell, after whom IUP's music building is named. During her time in Indiana, she served as organist of this church. After leaving Indiana, she married Clarence Otis and lived in Fairfield, Connecticut, where she flourished as a composer, organist at the Congregational Church, and member of the executive board of the American Guild of Organists.

THE SEASON OF LENT is a time of prayer, fasting and self-examination in preparation for the celebration of the resurrection of the Lord at Easter. It is a period of 40 days — like the flood of Genesis, Moses' sojourn at Mount Sinai, Elijah's journey to Mount Horeb, Jonah's call to Ninevah to repent and Jesus' time of testing in the wilderness.

-from the PCUSA website

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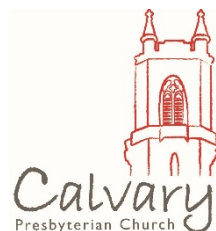
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