

Ash Wednesday

WORSHIP SERVICE



March 5, 2025

7:00 pm • Sanctuary



**East Liberty
Presbyterian Church**

www.ELPC.church

116 South Highland Ave
Pittsburgh, PA 15206

412.441.3800

ASH WEDNESDAY

Ash Wednesday is a holy day that marks the beginning of Lent, a 40-day period of penance and fasting leading up to Easter.

Christians observe Ash Wednesday by receiving ashes on their foreheads in the shape of a cross. Ashes are a biblical symbol of mourning and repentance. In ancient times, the custom was to fast, wear sackcloth, and put dust and ashes on one's head. The customs of fasting and putting ashes on one's forehead as a sign of mourning and repentance have survived to this day.



During Lent, some people give something up (e.g., chocolate, caffeine, negative self-talk) and others take something on (e.g., scripture reading, meditation, book study, weekly community action) in order to deepen one's faith and relationship with God.

This Lent, as we focus on the idea of a Loving God, you are invited to reflect on what living the value of love looks like for you. What keeps you from Living Love in your daily life? Maybe Living Love means letting go of unhealthy views of self and unhelpful perspectives of others. Maybe Living Love means acknowledging our broken hearts, unhealed wounds, and opportunities for growth. Maybe Living Love means repairing our souls and developing stronger interpersonal relationships, so God can truly transform us to do the work of justice.

Whether you have journeyed the Lenten path for years or this is your first intentional Lenten practice, you are invited to journey with us—with all your questions, your wounds, and your hopes.

Prelude

Dr. Edward Alan Moore

“Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ, BWV 639”

Johann Sebastian Bach

I call to thee, Lord Jesus Christ.

“Audi, benigne conditor”

Gerald Near

*O Kind Creator, bow thine ear to mark the cry, to know the tear
Before thy throne of mercy spent in this thy holy fast of Lent.*

Welcome

Rev. Dr. Michael Diaz

Opening Centering Prayer

Rev. BJ Woodworth

Processional Song: * Come And Fill Our Hearts

Text, alt. and Music: Jacques Berthier, 1982

The image shows a musical score for a processional song. It consists of two systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are: "Come and fill our hearts with your peace. You a-lone, O Lord, are ho-ly." and "Come and fill our hearts with your peace. You a-lone, O Lord, are love." The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line and chords that support the vocal melody.

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First Reading

Rev. Woodworth

A Reading from “Love Big” by Rozella Haydee White

We are experiencing a crisis of faith—not just in others, but in ourselves. Our pessimism is at an all-time high, and honestly, why wouldn't it be? People are struggling to make ends meet, working hard and not seeing a return on their efforts. Communities are being broken apart, and everyone seems to be out for themselves. Our political discourse is more fragmented and divisive than ever. Our religious communities are floundering. Joy is hard to come by, as we never seem to get relief from our struggles and heartbreaks. All of this, along with a lack of faith that things can be any different, contributes to our brokenness. We are in need of healing.

Psalm 51:1-17 (from "Psalms for Praying" by Nancy C. Merrill)

Sung Response: CLM38 All My Heart Lies Open To You (refrain only)

The image shows a musical score for a song. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a time signature of 4/4. The bass staff has a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a time signature of 4/4. The lyrics are: "Vieš - pa - tie, tu vis - ka ži - nai. Tu ži - All my heart lies o - pen to you, and you". The second system also has a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a time signature of 4/4. The bass staff has a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a time signature of 4/4. The lyrics are: "nai, kad ta - ve my liu. know, Lord, that I love you." There are repeat signs at the end of both systems, with the instruction "(Last time)" above the repeat sign in the treble staff and "(Last time)" below the repeat sign in the bass staff. The copyright notice "OneLicense.net #A-700877" is located at the bottom right of the score.

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Have mercy on me, O Gracious One,
According to your steadfast love;
According to your abundant kindness,
Forgive me where my thoughts
And deeds have hurt others.

Lead me in the paths of justice,
Guide my steps on paths of peace!
ALL MY HEART ...

Teach me, that I may know my weaknesses,
The shortcomings that bind me,
The unloving ways that separate me,
That keep me from recognizing
Your Life in me.

ALL MY HEART ...

For I keep company with fear,
And dwell in the house of ignorance.
Yet, I was brought forth in love,
And love is my birthright.

ALL MY HEART ...

You have placed your truth in the inner being;
Therefore, teach me the wisdom of the heart.
Forgive all that binds me in fear,
That I might radiate love;
Cleanse me that your light might shine in me.

ALL MY HEART ...

Fill me with gladness;
Help me to transform weakness into strength.
Look not on my past mistakes,
But on the aspirations of my heart.

ALL MY HEART ...

Create in me a clean heart, O Gracious One,
And put a new and right spirit within me.
Enfold me in the arms of Love,
And fill me with your Holy Spirit.
Restore in me the joy of your saving grace,
And encourage me with a new spirit.

ALL MY HEART ...

O Gracious One, open my lips
And my mouth shall sing forth your praise.
For you do not want sacrifice;
You delight in our friendship with you.
A sacrifice most appropriate is a humble spirit;
A repentant and contrite heart;
O Merciful One, receive our gratitude and love.

ALL MY HEART ...

Let the nations turn from war,
And encourage one another as good neighbors.
O Blessed and Compassionate Friend,
Melt our hearts of stone, break through the fears
That lead us into darkness
And guide our steps toward the way of peace.

ALL MY HEART ...

Second Reading

Rev. Woodworth

A Reading from “Love Big” by Rozella Haydée White

The first step toward healing is to reclaim our faith. To love big is to have faith in yourself, in others, and in God—a faith that is creative, liberating, and sustaining, without condition. To love big is to have faith, even when you don’t understand how faith works and especially when you don’t believe that faith even matters. To love big is to trust that another way of being is possible and that this new way has the power to heal us all.

CLM9 God Is Forgiveness



Bóg jest mi - łoś - cią miej - cie od - wa - gę żyć dla mi - łoś - ci.
God is for - give - ness. Dare to for - give and God will be with you.



Bóg — jest mi - łoś - cią. Nie lę - kaj - cie się.
God — is for - give - ness. Love, and do not fear.

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Gospel Reading

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 (*Inclusive Bible*)

Rev. Woodworth

Beware of practicing your piety before others to attract their attention; if you do this, you will have no reward from your Abba God in heaven.

When you do acts of charity, for example, don't have it trumpeted before you; that is what hypocrites do in the synagogues and the streets, that they may be praised by others. The truth is, they've already received their reward in full. But when you do acts of charity, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing; your good deeds must be done in secret, and your Abba God — who sees all that is done in secret — will repay you.

And when you pray, don't behave like the hypocrites; they love to pray standing up in the synagogues and on the street corners for people to see them. The truth is, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go to your room, shut the door, and pray to God who is in that secret place, and your Abba God — who sees all that is done in secret — will reward you.

And when you fast, don't look depressed like the hypocrites. They deliberately neglect their appearance to let everyone know that they are fasting. The truth is, they have already received their reward. But when you fast, brush your hair and wash your face. Don't let anyone know you're fasting except your Abba God, who sees all that is done in secret. And Abba God — who sees everything that is done in secret — will reward you.

Don't store up earthly treasures for yourselves, which moths and rust destroy and thieves can break in and steal. But store up treasures for yourselves in heaven, where neither moth nor rust can destroy them and thieves cannot break in and steal them. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be as well.

20 O Lord, Hear My Prayer

♩ = 72

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of two systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The first system has a tempo marking of ♩ = 72. The second system ends with a 'fine' marking. The lyrics are: 'O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer. When I call an - swer me. O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer. Come and lis - ten to me. O'.

Chords: Em, C⁶, D, G, C, Am⁶, B, Em, C⁶, D, G⁶, Am, B, Em

fine

Moment of Silence

9 Bless The Lord

♩ = 76

p Dm G Dm B \flat C F A

Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's ho - ly name. _____

p Dm G Dm B \flat C Dm

Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me in - to life.

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Sung Response: * To You I Pray, O Lord *(please see the facing page for music)*

We pray for the church, that in this Lenten season of fasting and repentance the people of God, with sincere hearts, may amend their lives and follow in the way of Jesus.

TO YOU I PRAY, O LORD

We pray for peace among the nations and integrity within governments especially our own United States government.

TO YOU I PRAY, O LORD

We pray for the city of Pittsburgh and all who live here, that neighborhoods may be places of hospitality and care.

TO YOU I PRAY, O LORD

We pray for the poor and the oppressed, that they may find deliverance from their distress, and for all who seek to alleviate human suffering in this world.

TO YOU I PRAY, O LORD

We pray for any who suffer illness of mind or body and for those who care for them, that they may be healed of disease and know the joy of abundant life.

TO YOU I PRAY, O LORD



To You I Pray, O Lord

Brendan Dowd
Harm. by Helena O'Kane
Acc. by Ciaran McLoughlin

♩=120

Refrain

Capo 2: (D)

(G)

(C)

E

A

D

To you I pray, O Lord;

Melody

Harmony

To you I pray, O Lord; I

(Am)
Bm

(Am/G)
Bm/A

(D)
E

(G)
A

lift up my hands. My body pines for

Last time to Coda ♯

(C)
D

(C/B)
D/C#

(Am7)
Bm7

(D)
E

(G)
A

To Verses

you like a dry and weary land.

NB53 The Lord's Prayer

Our Fa - ther who art in heav - en, hal - lowed be thy name; thy king - dom come;
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heav - en. Give us this day our dai - ly bread;
for - give us our tres - pass - es as we for - give those who tres - pass a - gainst us;
lead us not in - to temp - ta - tion, but de - liv - er us from e - vil. For thine is the King - dom,
and the pow - er, and the glo - ry, for - ev - er and ev - er. A - men.

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Prayer Over The Ashes (in unison)

Rev. Dr. Diaz and Rev. Woodworth

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 penitence,

and a reminder that only by your gracious gift

are we given abundant life,

through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

Imposition of Ashes

At this time, you are invited to come forward in silence for the imposition of ashes.



NB18 Our Darkness

Our dark - ness is nev - er dark - ness in your sight: the
La té - nè - bre n'est point té - nè - bre de - vant toi: la

deep - est night is clear as the day light. Our
nuit com - me le jour est lu - miè re. La té -

Last time

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NB11 Jesus, Remember Me

Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.

Je - sus, re - mem - ber me when you come in - to your king - dom.

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* Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley

LONESOME VALLEY 8.8.10.8

American spiritual American spiritual

1. Je - sus walked this lone - some val - ley, He had to
 2. We must walk this lone - some val - ley, We have to
 3. You must go and stand your tri - al, You have to

walk it by Him - self; O, no - bod - y else could walk it
 walk it by our - selves; O, no - bod - y else can walk it
 stand it by your - self, O, no - bod - y else can stand it

for Him, He had to walk it by Him - self.
 for us, We have to walk it by our - selves.
 for you, You have to stand it by your - self.

Please depart in silence when you are so inclined.

PARTICIPANTS:

- Rev. Dr. Michael Diaz*pastor*
- Rev. BJ Woodworth..... *covenant pastor*
- Dr. Edward Moore *director music & arts*
- Adrianna Cleveland.....*chancel choir section leader*
- David Jennings-Smith.....*chancel choir section leader*
- Tessa Morris*chancel choir section leader*
- Logan Williams.....*chancel choir section leader*
- Mario Seneca..... *crucifer*

TAIZÉ MUSICIANS:

- Charlie Anderson.....*flute*
- James Avant.....*vocalist*
- David Bennett..... *cello*
- Alyssa Creasy *pianist*
- Chris Markwell*vocalist*
- Gerard Rohlf.....*guitar*