

## ASH WEDNESDAY

February 14, 2024

*“One of the most beautiful things to do is to paint darkness, which nevertheless has light in it.”  
— Vincent van Gogh*

### Prelude

“Come and Find the Quiet Center”

Beach Spring

### Greeting

**God of light and life, as this season begins, give us eyes to see and ears to hear. Help us to notice the changing light, and to sense your Spirit in all things, old and new, difficult and joyful. Help us put our hearts in the right place. In Jesus’ name. Amen.**

### Call to Centering

*In the softness of evening, in the solace of silence, we come to you, O Lord.*

**We come for acceptance.**

*We come for community.*

**We come for forgiveness and love..**

Sung response: “Take, O Take Me As I Am”

Green Book 3119

*In the serenity of day’s end, in the restfulness of worship, we come to you, O Lord.*

**We come to you for respite.**

*We come to you for completion.*

**We come to you for forgiveness and love.**

Sung response: “Take, O Take Me As I Am”

*In the quiet of the night, in the comfort of darkness, we come to you, O Lord.*

**We come for peace.**

*We come for comfort.*

**We come to you for forgiveness and love.**

Sung response: “Take, O Take Me As I Am”

*We come, O Lord of Light, seeking the illumination of your Word.*

**We come for the path we can’t find.**

*We come for the life we don’t have.*

**We come to you for our lives are death and you alone have breath and being.**

Sung response: “Take, O Take Me As I Am”

### Confession of Sin

*After each petition, when the leader’s hand is raised, you will be invited to respond with ‘Have mercy on us, O God.’*

### Words of Forgiveness

#### \*Hymn

“Depth of Mercy”

Green Book 3097

### The Gospel of Jesus Christ

Matthew 6:19-21 (CEV)

### Choral Response

“A Lenten Prayer”

Kurt Eisenmann, soloist, Chancel Choir  
Hal Hopson

### Contemporary Message “Reflect”

#### \*Hymn of Preparation

“Lamb of God” Black Book 2113

### Imposition of Ashes

*You are invited to come forward by way of the diagonal aisles and receive the mark of ashes on either your forehead or the top of your hand. This can be a powerful, experiential way of participating in the call of repentance and reconciliation. The ashes remind us of our mortality, and the mark of the cross reminds us that it is only by God’s gracious gift that we are given everlasting life. Return to your seat by way of the side aisles.*

### Ministry of Music

“Holy Darkness”

Chancel Choir

#### \*Blessing

### Postlude

“Thee We Adore”

by Robert Hebble

*Worship Leaders: Pastors Susan Bresser and Amy Celikay  
Organist: John Sheaffer  
Guitarist: Tom Ajack  
FUMC Chancel Choir under the direction of Greg Carpenter*



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**February 14, 2024  
7:00pm**

Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent. We will spend the coming days journeying with Jesus toward the cross; toward the death that ultimately brings resurrection life.

We come together to acknowledge our sin and our mortality. We come to glimpse the Christ who offers forgiveness and everlasting life.

As part of tonight's worship, the imposition of ashes will be offered. Ashes have been used in Christian churches to mark the beginning of Lent since at least the 10th Century, and ashes are mentioned in scripture as a symbol of purification and repentance.

We offer ashes as a physical reminder of our human brokenness and as an assurance of God's forgiveness and salvation. We gather in the darkness of our souls to be with the God who brightens the shadows of our lives.