



ADVENT HOUSTON

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Ash Wednesday

February 22, 2023

ASH WEDNESDAY

We begin the Lenten season, a season of fasting, repentance, and preparation, with the observance of Ash Wednesday. Ashes have been used throughout the scriptures, but particularly in the Old Testament, to signify mortality (Genesis 3:19), repentance (Job 42:6) and mourning (2 Samuel 13:19). And so, on Ash Wednesday, we too are called to remember our finitude, to mourn our sinful ways and to repent and turn toward Christ.

Ashes come from burning. And thus, the ashes that are placed on our foreheads are a sign and reminder of the burning that we go through - the refinement that we need. This is the reason that we impose ashes.

The Imposition of Ashes should begin with the two-fold biblical understanding of ashes: as a sign of our mortality and as a sign of our repentance. Likewise, the traditional formula, "You are dust, and to dust you shall return" is appropriate, since it paraphrases the words of God in the Garden of Eden. By receiving the ashes, the worshiper acknowledges that God's judgment against our sin is right and just. But the ashes are also made in the sign of the cross – the very instrument by which our Lord took upon himself the punishment for our sin, in our place. Thus, the cross of ashes serves to remind us that we are sinners, and that Christ died for us sinners.

So, as you enter this season of Lent, and even as you participate in the service of Ash Wednesday, we remember that we are dust and to dust we will return - but we do so in light of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. For this is the beginning of a journey that will take us toward the incredible news of Easter.

SERVICE OF THE WORD

*Call to Worship – From Psalm 51:1-2, 10-12

Leader: Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;

**People: According to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.**

Leader: Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin!

**People: Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.**

Leader: Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

**People: Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit.**

*Song – God Be Merciful

God, be merciful to me;
On Thy grace I rest my plea
Plenteous in compassion Thou,
Blot out my transgressions now;
Wash me, make me pure within;
Cleanse, O cleanse me from my sin.

My transgressions I confess;
Grief and guilt my soul oppress.
I have sinned against Thy grace,
And provoked Thee to Thy face.
I confess Thy judgement just;
Speechless, I Thy mercy trust.

Broken, humbled to the dust
By Thy wrath and judgment just,
Let my contrite heart rejoice,
And in gladness hear Thy voice;
From my sins O hide Thy face,
Blot them out in boundless grace.

Gracious God, my heart renew,
Make my spirit right and true.
Cast me not away from Thee,
Let Thy Spirit dwell in me;
Thy salvation's joy impart,
Steadfast make my willing heart.

Sinners then shall learn from me,
And return, O God, to Thee
Savior all my guilt remove,
And my tongue shall sing Thy love
Touch my silent lips, O Lord,
And my mouth shall praise accord

First Reading

2 Corinthians 5:20-6:10

[5:20] Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore 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] Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. [2] For he says,

“In a favorable time I listened to you,
and in a day of salvation I have helped you.”

Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation. [3] We put no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, [4] but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, [5] beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; [6] by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love; [7] by truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; [8] through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; [9] as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; [10] as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything. (ESV)

(TIME OF SILENCE)

[1] “Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

[2] “Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. [3] But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, [4] so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

[5] “And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. [6] But when 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 when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. [17] But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, [18] that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

[19] “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, [20] but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. [21] For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (ESV)

(TIME OF SILENCE)

***Song – Be Thou My Vision**

Be Thou my vision O Lord of my heart
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art
Thou my best thought, by day or by night
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.

Be Thou my wisdom, and Thou my true word
I ever with Thee, and Thou with me, Lord
Thou my great Father, and I Thy true son;
Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise
Thou mine inheritance now and always:
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart
High King of heaven, my treasure Thou art.

High King of heaven, my victory won,
May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

Collect: (By Leofric Missal)

Leader: Lord Jesus Christ,
because of your love for humanity
you took on yourself the form of a servant,
although you are our Lord.
You walk like a wounded man,
although you are our Physician.
Raise us from our falls,
enlighten our blindness,
and loosen the chains of sins that have bound us;
for you live and you reign with the Father and the Holy
Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

ALL: Amen.

- [1] "Cry aloud; do not hold back;
lift up your voice like a trumpet;
declare to my people their transgression,
to the house of Jacob their sins.
- [2] Yet they seek me daily
and delight to know my ways,
as if they were a nation that did righteousness
and did not forsake the judgment of their God;
they ask of me righteous judgments;
they delight to draw near to God.
- [3] 'Why have we fasted, and you see it not?
Why have we humbled ourselves, and you take no
knowledge of it?'
Behold, in the day of your fast you seek your own pleasure,
and oppress all your workers.
- [4] Behold, you fast only to quarrel and to fight
and to hit with a wicked fist.
Fasting like yours this day
will not make your voice to be heard on high.
- [5] Is such the fast that I choose,
a day for a person to humble himself?
Is it to bow down his head like a reed,
and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him?
Will you call this a fast,
and a day acceptable to the LORD?
- [6] "Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of wickedness,
to undo the straps of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
- [7] Is it not to share your bread with the hungry
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover him,
and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?
- [8] Then shall your light break forth like the dawn,
and your healing shall spring up speedily;
your righteousness shall go before you;
the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.

- [9] Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;
you shall cry, and he will say, 'Here I am.'
If you take away the yoke from your midst,
the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness,
[10] if you pour yourself out for the hungry
and satisfy the desire of the afflicted,
then shall your light rise in the darkness
and your gloom be as the noonday.
[11] And the LORD will guide you continually
and satisfy your desire in scorched places
and make your bones strong;
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water,
whose waters do not fail.
[12] And your 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 dwell in. (ESV)

Leader: The Word of the LORD

People: Thanks be to God.

Homily

Rev. Taylor Leachman

SERVICE OF PENITENCE

PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

(A Litany of Confession, Edited from the Church of England)

Leader: Let us now call to mind and confess our sin to our infinite and merciful God.

Leader: God the Father,

ALL: Have mercy on us.

Leader: God the Son,

ALL: Have mercy on us.

Leader: God the Holy Spirit,

ALL: Have mercy on us.

Leader: Our God, three in one, and one in three,

ALL: Have mercy on us.

**ALL: Most merciful God,
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
we confess that we have sinned
in thought, word, and deed.**

Leader: 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.

ALL: Lord, have mercy.

(Pause for silent prayer)

Leader: We have been deaf 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.

ALL: Lord, have mercy.

(Pause for silent prayer)

Leader: We confess to you, Lord

all our past unfaithfulness: the pride, hypocrisy, and impatience of our lives.

ALL: Lord, have mercy.

(Pause for silent prayer)

Leader: Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people.

ALL: Lord, have mercy.

(Pause for silent prayer)

Leader: Our dissatisfaction with what you have given to us and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves.

ALL: Lord, have mercy.

(Pause for silent prayer)

Leader: Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts and our dishonesty in daily life and work.

ALL: Lord, have mercy.

(Pause for silent prayer)

Leader: Our negligence in prayer and worship and our failure to commend the faith that is in us.

ALL: Lord, have mercy.

(Pause for silent prayer)

Leader: Accept our repentance, Lord ...
for the wrongs we have done,
for our blindness to human need and suffering,
and our indifference to injustice and cruelty.

ALL: Accept our repentance, Lord.

Leader: For all false judgements,
for uncharitable thoughts towards our neighbors
and for our prejudice and contempt towards those
who differ from us.

ALL: Accept our repentance, Lord.

Leader: For our waste and selfish treatment of your creation
and our lack of concern for your creatures.

ALL: Accept our repentance, Lord.

Leader: Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from us.

ALL: Favorably hear us, for your mercy is great.

Leader: Accomplish in us the work of your salvation,
ALL: That we may show your glory in the world.

Leader: By the cross and passion of your Son our Lord,
ALL: bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.

(Pause for silent prayer)

**ALL: In your mercy
forgive us, change us, and direct us,
that we may do justly,
love mercy,
and walk humbly with you, our God.
Amen.**

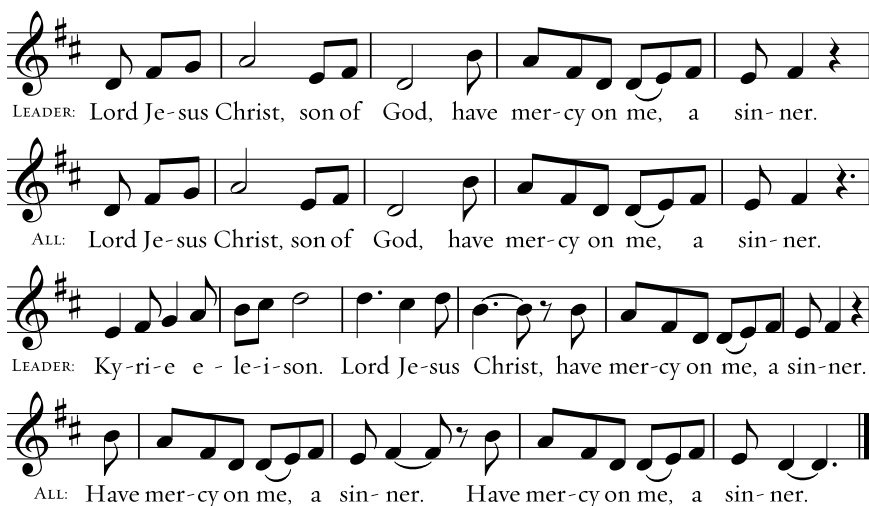
Assurance – Luke 15:8-10

Leader: Then Jesus told them this parable: ‘Suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Does she not light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says,

People: ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.’ In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.’

KYRIE ELEISON

Citation - Words: Ancient Text, Music: Phil Madeira



The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first two staves are for the Leader and All, respectively, with the lyrics 'Lord Je-sus Christ, son of God, have mer-cy on me, a sin-ner.' The third staff is for the Leader with the lyrics 'Ky-ri-e e - le-i-son. Lord Je-sus Christ, have mer-cy on me, a sin-ner.' The fourth staff is for All with the lyrics 'Have mer-cy on me, a sin-ner. Have mer-cy on me, a sin-ner.' The music features a mix of eighth and quarter notes, with some rests and a final double bar line at the end of the fourth staff.

LEADER: Lord Je-sus Christ, son of God, have mer-cy on me, a sin-ner.

ALL: Lord Je-sus Christ, son of God, have mer-cy on me, a sin-ner.

LEADER: Ky-ri-e e - le-i-son. Lord Je-sus Christ, have mer-cy on me, a sin-ner.

ALL: Have mer-cy on me, a sin-ner. Have mer-cy on me, a sin-ner.

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Leader: God our Father, you create us from the dust of the earth.
Grant that these ashes may be for us a sign of our penitence and a symbol of our mortality.
For it is by your grace alone that we receive eternal life in Jesus Christ our Savior.

People: **Amen.**

During this time, we invite you to come forward to receive ashes on your forehead in the sign of the cross. You may take time to pray and meditate, and whenever you are ready you can come to the front where the minister will impose the ashes on your forehead. If you are unable to come forward, motion to our usher that you would like for the minister to come to you to impose the ashes in your seat.

***Song – Psalm 130 (I Will Wait For You)**

Verse 1

Out of the depths I cry to You
In darkest places I will call
Incline your ear to me anew
And hear my cry for mercy Lord

Verse 2

Were You to count my sinful ways
How could I come before your throne?
Yet full forgiveness meets my gaze
I stand redeemed by grace alone

Chorus 1

I will wait for You, I will wait for You
On your Word I will rely
And I will wait for You, surely wait for You
'Til my soul is satisfied

Verse 3

So put your hope in God alone
Take courage in his power to save
Completely and forever won
By Christ emerging from the grave

Chorus 1

Verse 4

Now He has come to make a way
And God Himself has paid the price
That all who trust in Him today
Find healing in his sacrifice

Chorus 2

I will wait for You, I will wait for You
Through the storm and through the night
I will wait for You, surely wait for You
For your love is my delight

I will wait for You, I will wait for You
On your Word I will rely
And I will wait for You, surely wait for You
'Til my soul is satisfied

*Responsory

Leader: This is love, not that we loved God,
People: but that he loved us and sent his Son.

Leader: He is the sacrifice for our sins,
People: that we might live through him.

Leader: If God loves us so much
People: we ought to love one another.

Leader: If we love one another
People: God lives in us.

*Benediction

Leader: May God the Father,
who does not despise the broken spirit,
give to you a contrite heart.
People: Amen.

Leader: May Christ,
who bore our sins in his body on the tree,
heal you by his wounds.
People: Amen.

Leader: May the Holy Spirit,
who leads us into all truth,
speak to you words of pardon and peace.
People: Amen.

Leader: And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
People: AMEN!

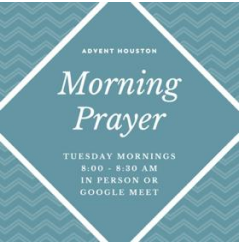
Giving

ALL GIVING IS A RESPONSE TO GOD'S GENEROSITY TO YOU IN ALL ASPECTS OF LIFE, BUT PARTICULARLY THROUGH THE PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS. IF YOU ARE NOT SURE WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT JESUS OR CHRISTIANITY, OR IF YOU ARE A GUEST, WE WOULD INVITE YOU TO REFRAIN FROM GIVING AT THIS TIME.

ONLINE GIVING IS AVAILABLE AT [ADVENTPRES.ORG/GIVE](https://adventpres.org/give). YOU CAN ALSO SCAN THIS QR CODE OR PLACE A GIFT IN THE OFFERING BASKET TOWARD THE ENTRANCE OF THE SANCTUARY.



Announcements



MORNING PRAYER

Tuesday mornings, 8:00 A.M.



Join us at the Local Office or via Google Meet where we will go through portions of the Daily Prayer Project together.



ALL ABOUT ADVENT HOUSTON

Next Membership Class Coming in May



Scan the QR code for more information about church membership and our next membership class.



QUESTION & DISCUSSION

Next Q&D coming THIS SUNDAY!



Scan the QR code for more info and to submit your questions.

Media Release

Advent Houston shares photos taken at our events in our monthly newsletters, on our website, or on social media for the purpose of promoting and highlighting the church's mission. By being present, you consent to being photographed and having these photos shared. For individuals who are not comfortable being visible in a shared photograph, please notify the church at admin@adventpres.org to opt out of the media release.

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ADVENT'S HOUSTON EXISTS TO **EMBRACE, EMBODY, AND EXTEND** THE GRACE OF JESUS TO THE TEXAS MEDICAL CENTER, RICE UNIVERSITY, AND THE GREATER WEST UNIVERSITY AREA.

