

LENT & ASH WEDNESDAY

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and ends with the sunrise of Easter morning. Ash Wednesday is a day where we focus on the themes of sin and death in the light of God's redeeming love in Jesus Christ. This is a time for us to pray together for guidance and strength to change one or several things in your life in order to have a stronger walk with God. The Ashes are placed on one's forehead as a sign of remorse, repentance and mourning as we acknowledge our mortality as sinful people.

In our busy, secular world, we all need time for reflection and renewal. Lent is such a time. It is a time to remember Jesus, who he was and is, and what he sacrificed for us. It is a time of self-examination as we probe deeply and respond honestly to how we are getting on with the process of transformation into a new person in Jesus Christ. It is a time of inner penitence and reconciliation with God as we prepare once again to receive the gift of Easter. It is a time to engage in personal and communal prayer, fasting, reading Scripture, and worship.

During the Lenten season our regular worship service will be somewhat different. On Ash Wednesday, the "Alleluias" will be buried until Easter morning. The Sanctuary is stripped of all flowers and flags, as we focus on the cross. All to return on Easter Sunday.

There will be a cross in the Chancel area with candles in it. During Advent, we light a candle every Sunday signifying the light coming into the world with Jesus' birth. During Lent, every Sunday we extinguish a candle, signifying that the light that came into the world, leaves the world, even if for a short time. The Christ candle is extinguished on Good Friday. It will not be until Easter morning that the light re-enters the Sanctuary.

We are Easter people, but it is when we observe and participate in Lent, that we are able to experience the FULL joy of Easter.



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Sunday's Palms Are Wednesday's Ashes

Sunday's palms are Wednesday's ashes
as another Lent begins;
thus we kneel before our Maker
in contrition for our sins.

We have marred baptismal pledges,
in rebellion gone astray;
now, returning, seek forgiveness;
grant us pardon, God, this day!

We have failed to love our neighbors,
their offences to forgive,
have not listened to their troubles,
nor have cared just how they live,
we are jealous, proud, impatient,
loving over much our things;
may the yielding of our failings
be our Lenten offerings.

We are hasty to judge others,
blind to proof of human need;
and our lack of understanding
demonstrates our inner greed;
we have wasted earth's resources;
want and suffering we've ignored;
come and cleanse us, then restore us;
make new hearts within us, Lord!