

LENTEN SEASON

Lenten Observance Disciplines

February 18 is Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the season of Lent and ending on Holy Saturday. During Lent, Christians prepare to celebrate the miracle of Easter through prayer, fasting, reflection, and other Spiritual Disciplines. I am asking you to practice giving up something(s) and adding to your Spiritual Disciplines - see resources: Spiritual Disciplines can be used personally and for leading small groups, and coloring through Lent can be used for children, youth, and adults. You can fast by giving up something(s) during the entire time (continuously), throughout the day or week during Lent (foods, drinks, TV, smoking, social media, negativity, worrying, unforgiveness, etc.). I am also asking that you pray for your church and increase your biblical study by joining a Sunday School class and/or Bible Study.

Fasting and increasing our Spiritual disciplines prepare us to draw closer to embracing the Risen Christ.

Scripture Chapter Focus, Psalm 51:1-17

God's blessing and strength be upon you on this Lenten journey.

Earnestine

Connect with us on Social Media:

Facebook - EpworthUMC.com
Instagram - EpworthUMC.com
Youtube - epworthumccolumbus1430



Ash Wednesday Service

Epworth United Methodist Church
Rev. Earnestine Campbell, Pastor
2400 Devonshire Drive
Columbus, GA 31904
Church Office (706) 322-6973



Epworth connects and equips all kinds of People
to SEEK, SERVE, and SHARE Christ.

Rev. Dr. Adriane Burgess

Rev. Dr. Adriane Burgess is originally from Greenville, SC.

She completed her undergraduate study at the University of Virginia, on an Air Force ROTC scholarship, and was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate in political science with a minor in Spanish. She also earned a Master of Education in Counseling from the University of Maryland while on active duty. She attended Emory University as a Woodruff Scholar and earned both her Masters of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry from Candler School of Theology. She also completed a pastoral care residency at the Veterans Affairs hospital in Atlanta.

Dr. Burgess has served in ordained ministry for 17 years in both South Carolina and Georgia. Dr. Burgess is currently the senior pastor of St. Mary's Road United Methodist Church, Columbus, GA.

She also serves as a Lieutenant Colonel in the US Air Force Reserves.

She is married to Craig E. Burgess, Esq, General Counsel and Vice President of Legal Affairs at Morehouse College. They have two boys, Zach and Zander.

In her spare time, she writes devotionals and recipes for her blog at dessertdevotion.com, loves the outdoors, and traveling.

***INVITATION TO THE OBSERVANCE OF LENTEN DISCIPLINE**

Dear siblings in Christ:
the early Christians observed with great devotion
the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection,
and it became the custom of the Church that before the Easter celebration
there should be a forty-day season of spiritual preparation.
During this season, converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism.
It was also a time when persons who had committed serious sins
and had separated themselves from the community of faith
were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness,
and restored to participation in the life of the Church.
In this way, the whole congregation was reminded
of the grace and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ
and the need we all have to renew our faith,
to continually receive God's mercies anew.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church,
to observe a holy Lent:
by self-examination and repentance;
by prayer, fasting, and self-denial;
and by reading and meditating on God's Holy Word.
To make a right beginning of repentance,
and as a mark of our mortal nature,
let us now kneel (bow) before our Creator and Redeemer.

***THANKSGIVING OVER THE ASHES**

Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth.
Grant that these ashes may be to us a sign of our mortality and penitence,
so that we may remember that only by your gracious gift
are we given everlasting life;
only by your mercy are we made new;
only by your steadfast love can we live in the joy of your salvation now and forever;
through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

February 18, 2026 • 6:00 p.m.

Ash Wednesday

**Please stand as you are able.*

PRELUDE

St. Mary's Rd. UMC Choir

CALL TO WORSHIP

Deaconess Dr. Sandi Hortman
Epworth UMC

Children of God, we gather to prepare for our journey through Lent, a journey of repentance and mercy.

We gather to be renewed in God's mercy.

We gather to confess, to tell the truth about sin and our dependence on God's grace.

We gather to call upon God's mercy.

We gather to repent, to receive and cooperate with grace as we turn from sin and toward love of God and neighbor.

We gather to live in the promise of God's mercy.

People of God, we gather to worship God, whose steadfast mercy and love never fail!

We gather to worship, trusting in God's mercy as we follow Jesus on the road to new life.

MUSIC SELECTION

St. Mary's Rd. UMC Choir

PRAYER FOR THE DAY

Rev. Reggie Williams
South Columbus UMC

O God, who makes all things new,
new stars, new dust, new life;
take our hearts,
every hardened edge and measured beat,
and create something new in us.

We need your newness, God,
the rough parts of us made smooth;
the stagnant, stirred;
the stuck, freed;
the unkind, forgiven.

And then, by the power of your Spirit,
we need to be turned toward Love again. Amen.

MUSIC SELECTION

St. Mary's Rd. UMC Choir

OFFERTORY & PRAYER

Rev. Earnestine W. Campbell, Pastor

Merciful God, who meets us in our brokenness and leads us toward wholeness, as we offer these gifts, we also offer our hearts, seeking renewal and transformation. During this sacred Lenten journey, cleanse us from all that separates us from you and restore the joy of your salvation within us. May these offerings bring hope and healing to others, just as you continually renew us with your grace. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen. (Psalm 51:1-17)

***SCRIPTURE LESSON**

2 CORINTHIANS 6:1-10

Baron Conklin

Leader: This is the Word of God for the People of God.

People: Thanks be to God.

MUSIC SELECTION

St. Mary's Rd. UMC Choir

INTRODUCTION OF GUEST PREACHER

Pastor Campbell

SERMON

"Now Is the Time"

Rev. Dr. Adriane Burgess
St. Mary's Rd. UMC

INVITATION TO THE OBSERVANCE OF LENTEN DISCIPLINE

Rev. Michael Powell
Asbury UMC/M.L. Harris UMC

THANKSGIVING OVER THE ASHES

Pastor Campbell

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Participating Pastors & Laity

***CONFESSION & PARDON**

Pastor Campbell

Confession is an act of trust. When we honestly name our sins, individual and corporate, to God, we trust that God receives our confession, because it is God's grace that empowers us to recognize our sin and repent. So, let us join our voices in confessing our sin before God and one another: Merciful God, we confess that too often we make choices about what we should and should not do based on what others will think of us. We seek the validation of family, friends, groups and even strangers instead of resting in our sacred worth and identity in you. And so, we travel the path of least resistance when we know that path does not align with yours.

Forgive us, God, when we perform for one another instead of living with integrity in you.

***DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING**

Rev. Dr. Burgess

***POSTLUDE**

St. Mary's Rd. UMC Choir

Refreshments will be served immediately following service.