

ash

WEDNESDAY



**FEBRUARY 18, 2026
7:30PM**

***REMEMBER THAT
YOU ARE DUST...***

***...AND TO DUST
YOU SHALL RETURN***



**First United
Methodist Church
A U S T I N**

Transformation Happens Here

www.fumcaustin.org

TODAY WE BEGIN IN SILENCE.

Asterisks (*) indicate stand as you are able.

ENTERING THE HOLY

* CALL TO WORSHIP

Have mercy upon us, O Holy One,
according to your unfailing love.

Refresh and renew us in your righteousness.

Have mercy upon us, O Holy One,
according to your unfailing love.

Rend our hearts to the brokenness around us.

Have mercy upon us, O Holy One,
according to your unfailing love.

Revive us again with a new and right spirit.

* HYMN

Sunday's Palms Are Wednesday's Ashes



1. Sun - day's palms are Wednes-day's ash - es as an - oth - er Lent be - gins;
2. We have failed to love our neigh - bors, their of - fenc - es to for - give,
3. We are hast - y to judge oth - ers, blind to proof of hu - man need;



thus we kneel be - fore our Mak - er in con - tri - tion for our sins.
have not lis - tened to their trou - bles, nor have cared just how they live,
and our lack of un - der - stand - ing dem - on - strates our in - ner greed;



We have marred bap - tis - mal pledg - es, in re - bel - lion gone a - stray;
we are jeal - ous, proud, im - pa - tient, lov - ing o - ver - much our things;
we have wast - ed earth's re - sourc - es; want and suf - fering we've ig - nored;



now, re - turn - ing, seek for - give - ness; grant us par - don, God, this day!
may the yield - ing of our fail - ings be our Len - ten of - fer - ings.
come and cleanse us, then re - store us; make new hearts with - in us Lord!

Words: Rae E. Whitney © 1991 Selah Publishing Company, Inc.

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Music: *Beach Spring*, attr. to B. F. White

HEARING GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Guide us, O God, by your Word and Holy Spirit,
that in your light we may see light,
in your truth find freedom,
and in your will discover peace;
through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

SCRIPTURES

Isaiah 58:1-12 and Mark 1:9-15

SERMON

RESPONDING IN FAITH

INVITATION TO LENTEN DISCIPLINES

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 mercy and forgiveness
proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ
and the need we all have to renew our faith.

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 confess before our Creator and Redeemer.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of creation,

you have long called us to walk with you on the difficult path of true repentance
leading to wholeness and abundant life for all.

**Instead we have too often chosen the path of least resistance,
doing what our broken world expects,
striving for what it values.**

Forgive us, O God.

God of unlimited grace,

you have offered us eternal life now, in this world,
waiting for responses of introspection and action
leading to changed hearts and changed lives.

**To your endless love and generosity
we have responded with easy choices and half-hearted measures
requiring little if any pain or sacrifice.**

Forgive us, O God.

God of mercy and justice,

your prophets of old and of late have repeatedly told us what you demand of us:
loose the bonds of injustice and undo the yokes of oppression.

**Yet we have continued to turn blind eyes towards the injustice of non-livable wages
coupled with ever-increasing income inequality;
the oppression of systemic racism by individuals and institutions, by intention or complicity,
has continued unabated throughout generations.**

Forgive us, O God.

God of peace and non-violence,

even as we hear your Word to love our neighbors as ourselves,
**we perpetuate the trauma of violence by governments against immigrants and citizens alike;
by one intimate partner against another;
and by caregivers' abuse and neglect of children and the elderly.**

Forgive us, O God.

God of constant unending love,

we have failed to love you with all our heart and soul and mind and strength.

Forgive us, O God, forgive us.

And as we begin the journey of these forty Lenten days,

wash us, O Lord, and we shall be clean;

cleanse us, and we shall be made whole.

Amen.

SILENT PRAYER

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Hear the Good News.

The Lord, our God, is gracious and merciful,

slow to anger,

and abounding in steadfast love.

God hears the earnest cries of the repentant

and forgives our sins.

ANTHEM

Create In Me a Clean Heart, O God

Create in me a clean heart, O God,

and renew a right spirit within me.

O cast me not away from thy presence,

and take not thy holy spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of thy salvation

and uphold me with thy free spirit.

Words: Psalm 51: 10-12

Music: Michael Bedford © 2001 St. James Music Press

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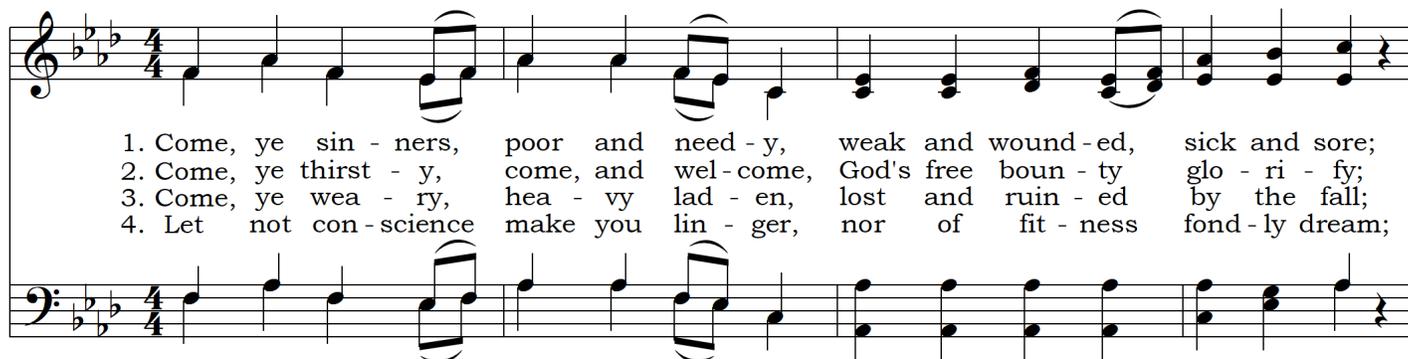
PRAYER OVER THE ASHES

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Those who desire to be marked with ashes in the form of a cross may come forward. You may leave an offering of money on the communion rail for the church's ministry.

Hymn

I Will Arise and Go to Jesus



1. Come, ye sin - ners, poor and need - y, weak and wound - ed, sick and sore;
2. Come, ye thirst - y, come, and wel - come, God's free boun - ty glo - ri - fy;
3. Come, ye wea - ry, hea - vy lad - en, lost and ruin - ed by the fall;
4. Let not con - science make you lin - ger, nor of fit - ness fond - ly dream;



Je - sus read - y stands to save you, full of pit - y, love, and power.
true be - lief and true re - pen - tance, ev - ery grace that brings you nigh.
if you tar - ry till you're bet - ter, you will nev - er come at all.
all the fit - ness he re - quir - eth, is to feel your need of him.

Refrain



I will a - rise and go to Je - sus, he will em - brace me with his arms;



in the arms of my dear Sav - ior, O there are ten thou - sand charms.

Words: Joseph Hart, alt.

Music: *Arise*, Southern Folk Melody; Arr. George Mims © 1979 Celebration

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PRAYER AFTER THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES

The good in us, O Lord, comes from you.

Out of the ashes of our lives and our world,
you are able to form something holy and new.

We give ourselves to you for this Lenten journey.

Give us grace for the commitments we make.

Bear fruit within us, that we may be holy,
and make our lives the seeds of justice in this world.

Amen.

GOING OUT TO SERVE

* HYMN 269

Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days

* BENEDICTION

TODAY WE LEAVE IN SILENCE.

WORSHIP LEADERS

Preacher

Reverend John Hathaway

Liturgists

Reverend Taylor Fuerst and Reverend Cathy Stone

Music

Scott Davis