

You are the Lord who does wonders:  
**You have declared your power among the peoples.**

With you, O Lord, is the well of life:  
**And in your light we see light.**

Hear us, O Lord of life:  
**Heal us, and make us whole.**

O Lord our God, accept the fervent prayers of your people; in the multitude of your mercies look with compassion upon us and all who turn to you for help; for you are gracious, O lover of souls, and to you we give glory, now and forever.  
**Amen.**

\*HYMN NO. 797                      *"We Cannot Measure How You Heal"*                      YE BANKS AND BRAES

\*BENEDICTION

LAYING ON OF HANDS AND PRAYERS FOR WHOLENESS

*Those desiring the laying on of hands and prayers for wholeness are invited to come forward to the space reserved for this purpose.*

*\*Please rise in body or in spirit.*



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# Ash Wednesday Imposition of Ashes and Service of Wholeness *February 10, 2016*

PRELUDE

INVITATION TO THE OBSERVANCE OF THE LENTEN DISCIPLINE

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season in the church year known as Lent. Lent comes from the Middle English word *lente*, meaning “springtime,” and from the Old English word meaning “to lengthen” in regard to daylight. It is thus associated with the lengthening of days in the spring of the year.

In the early church, *Lent* became the name for the period of 40 weekdays before Easter, beginning with Ash Wednesday. It was the time when those who were catechumens were being instructed in preparation for church membership to be marked by baptism. As the Christian church moved through history, this forty-day period before Easter became a special time for those who had been baptized as well. It became a time of penitence, a time when they examined their lives to see what God was saying and what they should be doing.

We begin our journey to Easter with the sign of ashes, a biblical symbol of mourning and repentance. This ancient sign speaks of the fragility of human life, and marks the penitence of the community of faith.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of Christ, to observe a holy Lent by self-examination and penitence, by prayer and fasting, by works of love, and by reading and meditating on the Word of God, beginning with this service tonight.

OPENING PRAYER

\*HYMN NO. 169                      *"Dear Lord and Father of Mankind"*  
*Lighting the candles this evening is Acolyte Henry Jones.*

Rest

The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit and a contrite heart. Let us confess our sins before God and before one another.

**God of Compassion,**

**We turn toward you now. We rend our hearts.**

**Forgive our pride and forgive our insecurities.**

**Forgive our self-absorption and forgive our self-destruction.**

**Forgive our doubts and forgive our confidence.**

**Forgive our longing for attention and forgive our desire to hide.**

**Forgive each step we take away from you.**

**“Create in me a clean heart, O God. And renew a right spirit within me.**

**Do not cast me away from your presence. Do not take your Holy Spirit from me.**

**Restore to me the joy of my salvation, and grant a willing spirit to sustain me.”**

**Amen.**

*Those who so desire may come forward to receive an imposition of ashes as a sign of penitence not only for our individual sin, but also in recognition of our complicity in the sin of the world.*

**We lift our voices; we lift our hands;**

**we lift our lives up to you: we are an offering.**

**Lord, use our voices; Lord, use our hands;**

**Lord, use our lives; they are yours:**

**we are an offering.**

**All that we have, all that we are, all that we hope to be,**

**we give to you, we give to you.**

God the Creator, your will for all people is health and salvation;

**We praise you and thank you, O Lord.**

God the Son, you came that we might have life, and might have it more abundantly;

**We praise you and thank you, O Lord.**

God the Holy Spirit, you make our bodies the temple of your presence;

**We praise you and thank you, O Lord.**

Holy Trinity, one God, in you we live and move and have our being;

**We praise you and thank you, O Lord.**

Lord, grant your healing grace to all who are sick, injured, or disabled, that they may be made whole;

**Hear us, O Lord of life.**

Grant to all who seek your guidance, and to all who are lonely, anxious, or despondent, a knowledge of your will and an awareness of your presence;

**Hear us, O Lord of life.**

Mend broken relationships, and restore those in emotional distress to soundness of mind and serenity of spirit;

**Hear us, O Lord of life.**

Bless physicians, nurses, and all others who minister to the suffering, granting them wisdom and skill, sympathy and patience;

**Hear us, O Lord of life.**

Grant to the dying peace and a holy death, and uphold by the grace and consolation of your Holy Spirit those who are bereaved;

**Hear us, O Lord of life.**

Restore to wholeness whatever is broken by human sin, in our lives, in our nation, and in the world;

**Hear us, O Lord of life.**

*(Here petitions for specific needs may be offered by the people)*