

## THE WORD

### Prelude

#### Meaning of This Service

Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent. It takes its name from the ceremonial imposition of ashes on the foreheads of worshipers as a sign of human sin and mortality. This ancient tradition, going back at least to the tenth century, communicates the human condition before God by solemn word and sign.

### Lenten Triad

#### The Call To Worship

Leader: Come from your separate ways and renew your covenant with God.

**People: We hear God's call to refreshing newness of life.**

Leader: Pause, listen, hear God's word gladly.

**People: We are ready to hear the judgment that confronts us when we are honest.**

Leader: Be joyful! As you turn to God this night a new self is born, with new meaning and new possibilities.

**People: We hunger for the fullness of life and know that it is made available to us in Christ Jesus.**

**Hymn**      *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*      #185 vs 1, 2

### The Invocation

#### Purpose of This Service

Friends in Christ, we begin today a forty-day journey toward Easter.

We enter the Lenten season to prepare ourselves to welcome the risen Christ with lives renewed by the breath of God's Spirit. We assume a discipline of self-examination, confession and penitence.

We dedicate ourselves to meditate upon the Scriptures and to converse with God in prayer. We seek to be more faithful disciples of Christ whose lives are shaped by the One whom we confess to be Lord and Savior of the world. To this end let us worship God.

### Readings from Scripture

Psalm 51:1-17

### Meditation

## CONFESSION OF SIN

### Invitation to Prayer

**Examination of Conscience**      (Based on Psalm 51)

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

**People: According to Your abundant mercy, blot our many transgressions.**

Leader: Create in me a clean heart, O God,

**People: And put a new and right spirit within me.**

Leader: Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.

**People: Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and sustain in me a willing spirit.**

### Silent Prayer

#### Call to Confession

The proof of God's amazing love is this: While we were sinners, Christ died for us. Because we have faith in Him, we dare to approach God with confidence. In faith and penitence, let us confess our sin before God and one another.

### Prayer of Confession

## SYMBOL OF ASHES

### The Sign of Ashes

From ancient times, Christians have on this day searched their hearts and sought to be cleansed from sin. They have sought reconciliation with God and with one another. They have received ashes marked on their foreheads as a sign of sin's disfigurement and of their own mortality.

### Prayer Over The Ashes

Almighty God, You have created us out of the dust of the earth. May these ashes 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; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

## IMPOSITION OF ASHES

### Invitation to Receive the Symbol of Ashes

**Hymn**      *Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days*

*Lord, Who throughout these forty days for us did fast and pray  
Teach us with You to mourn our sins and close by You to stay.  
Abide with us, that through this life of doubts and hope and pain,  
An Easter of unending joy we may at last attain.*

### The Mark of The Cross

Those who wish to receive ashes on their forehead are invited to come forward at this time. As each person who comes is marked with the cross, the minister will say: "Turn away from your sins and believe the Good News."

*After all who wish to receive ashes have returned to their seats, the congregation will read responsively:*

**Leader:** Accomplish in us the work of Your salvation,

**People:** That we may show forth Your glory.

**Leader:** By the cross and passion of our Savior,

**People:** Bring us with all Your saints to the joy of Christ's resurrection.

**Amen.**

### Assurance of Pardon

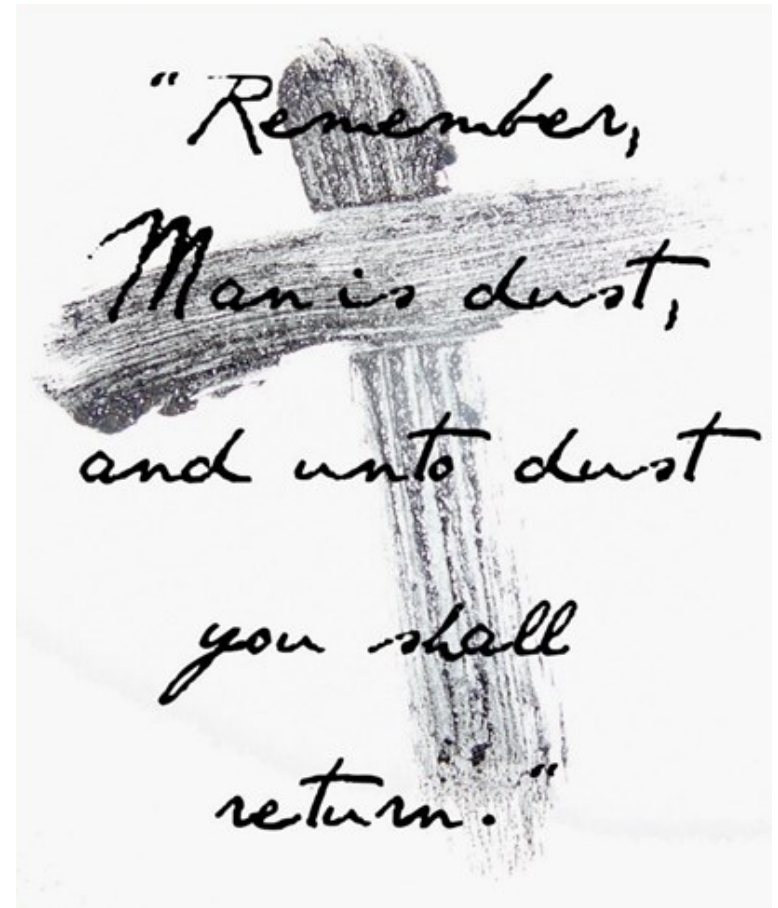
Friends, hear the Good News! God's eternal love is shown for us in this, that while we were yet sinners Christ offered forgiveness. Believe this and be comforted; You are forgiven.

### Hymn of Affirmation

*O God, Our Help in Ages Past*      # 52 vs. 1,2,6

### Benediction

### Postlude



## Ash Wednesday Service

**February 14, 2024**

**7:00 p.m.**

**First Christian Church  
(Disciples of Christ)**

60 Disciples Way  
Shelbyville, KY 40065  
(502) 633-3345