

Ash Wednesday



February 22, 2023
6:30pm Sanctuary
First Presbyterian Church,
Spartanburg

✦ Please rise in
body or spirit.

The Lenten
journey from the
ashes of death
to resurrected
life begins on
the first day
of Lent, Ash
Wednesday,
which signifies
a time to
turn around,
to change
directions, to
repent. This
first day of Lent
reminds us that
unless we are
willing to die to
our old selves,
we cannot be
raised to new life
with Christ.

*Please write your requests for prayer on the card found in your bulletin.
When you come forward to receive the ashes,
bring your prayer requests with you and place them in the basket.
The staff will pray for these requests during this Season of Lent.*

Hymn 227

Jesus, Remember Me

REMEMBER ME

Call to Worship

O God, have mercy on us, we pray.

In your mercy, make us clean from our sins.

Wipe away every failing and make us new in your sight.

Restore us, deliver us, and re-create us, O Lord.

Prayer of Confession

Almighty God,

we bring our burdens and our sins to You,
who bears the heavy load for us.

We place upon You our excuses, our shortcomings,
our anger and our desire,
knowing that You can remove these sins from us
and restore us to life.

We confess that we have gone astray.

We confess that we have not loved You fully
and have not loved our neighbor as ourselves.

We confess that we have not fully loved
even our very selves.

Forgive us of our sins.

Help us to turn back to You.

Restore what has been broken,
transform what has been twisted,
find what has been lost,
so we may be the living, loving image of You in creation.

Assurance of Pardon

Hymn 437

You Are the Lord, Giver of Mercy! WAYFARING STRANGER

First Reading

Psalm 51:1-17

Second Reading

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Homily

Rev. Alan F. Dyer

Imposition of Ashes

(instructions below)

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:

For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.

Amen.

✠ **Hymn 177**

I Will Come to You

YOU ARE MINE

✠ **Benediction**

*As the music plays, you are invited to come forward
- down the Center Aisle -
to receive ashes on your forehead in the sign of a cross.*

*If you prefer, you may hold out your hand
and one of our pastors will impose the ashes
on the back of your hand.*

*Please bring your prayer cards with you
and place it in one of the baskets.*

*After receiving the ashes,
we ask that you return to your seats via the Side Aisle.*

*Following the Benediction, please leave the Sanctuary in silence
to begin observing the forty days of Lent
as a time of repentance and reflection.*

Placing ashes on our foreheads in the sign of the cross is one of the most counter-cultural acts of the Christian faith. In a world that promises us health and prosperity no matter the cost, the ashes remind us that we are in fact finite creatures. Using the burnt palm fronds from last year's Palm Sunday worship service, the ashes also remind us that Lent is a journey of renewal from death to new life on Easter morning. As such, Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of a joyful season when we are invited to make sacrifices in order to allow our generous and life-giving God to form us anew.

Ponder Prayerfully

*“In laying upon us the light cross of ashes,
the Church desires to take off our shoulders all other heavy burdens —
the crushing load of worry and obsessive guilt,
the dead weight of our own self-love.
We should not take upon ourselves a ‘burden’ of penance
and stagger into Lent as if we were Atlas,
carrying the whole world on his shoulders.”*

- Thomas Merton

Participating in Tonight's Service

Rev. Alan F. Dyer

Rev. John Daniel DeBevoise

Rev. L. Craig Foster

Rev. Leslie A. Lang

Holt Andrews

Marcia Andrews

Lisa Cunningham, Paul MacPhail, Janet Kuntz



FIRST
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First Presbyterian Church is a community of
believers committed to
“Glorifying God and Sharing Christ Together
through Word and Deed.”