

Ash Wednesday Worship Service
February 17, 2021 7:00pm
Central Presbyterian Church Virtual Campus

Welcome to Central Presbyterian Church! Whether you are visiting with us or have been a part of this church family for many years, we who gather tonight do so as a community of faith across distance, seeking and serving the God we know in Jesus Christ. May this gathering offer you some sacred space; reminding you that you are God's own, and that together we are determined to love, invited to wonder, and inspired to serve in Christ's name. Whomever you are, wherever you are on this journey of faith, you are welcome here.

GATHERING MUSIC FOR REFLECTION

OPENING SENTENCES

The Breitmayer Family

We gather

in the dimness of the evening,
To be with the God who brightens the shadows of our lives.

We gather

in the quiet of this place,
To be with Jesus, knowing that nothing can separate us from Christ's love.

We gather

to be marked as disciples,
To be fed for the journey through Lent,
To be sealed by the Spirit as God's own.

Let us worship God!

EVENING PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Rev. Jenny Warren

INVITATION TO THE LENTEN LIFE

Rev. Emily Chudy

CALL TO RECONCILIATION

Natalie Lisk

On this night, we begin our journey to Easter.
Before we can take the first step, we must admit how we have not been faithful to our God.
Let us pray together saying:

**We must admit, O God of grace, how we have trouble being your people.
We may not trample the poor, but sometimes we walk right past them.
We may not think we have enough, but we are more privileged than many around us.
We trust more in ourselves than in you,
and spend far too much time patting ourselves on the back,
rather than holding out a hand to others.
Where can we go for forgiveness but to you, God of the ashes?
When we are greedy, you promise to be gracious.
When we have trouble confronting injustice, you stand at our side.
When we are afraid, you shine a light of hope in the darkness.
When we struggle to seek good, you point us to Jesus,
to our brother, our Savior, who shows us how to turn our back on evil to follow him. Amen.**

MUSIC FOR REFLECTION: Sign Us with Ashes

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Natalie Lisk

God refuses to stand far off,
but comes close to us –
to hear our prayers,
to touch our hearts with forgiveness,
and to walk with us during this holy season and beyond.

**We have no need to go anyplace else
but into the comforting and restoring heart
of the one who loves us.
In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Thanks be to God!**

PSALM 51:1-27

Chris Weikel

ENCOUNTERING THE ASHES

Introduction and Prayer

Rev. Chudy

Reading of Matthew 6 with Labyrinth

Emma Aucker

Place the labyrinth in the middle of the table or surface. Nearby place the ashes.

As you listen to the scripture, start by placing one finger at the beginning of the labyrinth. As the scripture is read, trace your finger slowly through.

***You are invited to pause at intervals with the reader and join on the refrain:
“from dust you came and to dust you will return.”***

When you reach the center of the labyrinth, dip your thumb into the container of ashes and make the sign of the cross in the middle of the labyrinth. If you reach the center before the scripture is finished, make the sign of the cross with the ash, and then trace your way back out of the labyrinth.



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*If you do not have ashes, consider using black or grey paint, crayons or pencils to make the cross in the labyrinth

SONG FOR REFLECTION: Beautiful Things

CONGREGATIONAL BENEDICTION

Smudged this night with the ashes of penitence,
**We will go out to share God's forgiveness
with those we have hurt, with those who are forgotten.**

Fed this night by the Host of the Feast of grace,
**We will go out to bring healing to the broken,
to offer grace to those trampled by the powerful.**

Called this night to journey through suffering to new life,
**We will go out to stand with those experiencing injustice,
to share the Spirit's peace and reconciliation with the world.**

*POSTLUDE

Tonight's service is adapted from "An Ash Wednesday Service" by Thom Shuman, Wild Goose Publications, Glawgow, UK.

Labyrinth activity from Illustrated Ministry

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Pastors: Rev. Emily Chudy and Rev. Jenny Warren



Determined to Love. Invited to Wonder. Inspired to Serve.