

TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH



ASH WEDNESDAY

*Create in me a clean heart, O God; and put
a new and right spirit within me. Psalm 51:10*

Ash Wednesday marks the first day of Lent. It is so called from the custom in the ancient church marking the foreheads of worshippers with ashes. The appointment of Ash Wednesday as the first day of Lent occurred sometime in the seventh century and the custom of imposing ashes upon the congregation probably from sometime in the eighth century. In the early church, Christians who had fallen into grave sin were admitted to the "order of penitents" to do their penance so that they could be reconciled to the church during Holy Week, ready for their Easter Communion.

The widespread use of this form of public penance decreased in the early Middle Ages, but the ceremonies associated with it ~ notably the ashes ~ were extended to the whole congregation. The ashes are placed on the foreheads of the worshippers with the words, "**Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.**"



TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH

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Tel: 62824443, Fax: 6282 0094

6 March 2019

ASH WEDNESDAY

8.00 pm

Lighting of the Lenten Candle

Time of Silence (*as organist plays softly*)

Mr Nicholas Leow

*Call to Worship

Mrs Claire Lowe

Leader: This Lenten journey is a process, a commitment, a labour of love.

People: **We must be prepared for resurrection.
We must wait for it with penitent hearts.**

Leader: With ashes we are marked to remind us of our mortality,

People: **to remind us of our desperate need of God's eternal life.**

Leader: With dust we are sealed into the ground from which we came.

People: **But from that same ground, that empty tomb, comes new life.**

Leader: But not yet.
We must wait in prayer,
We must wait in penitence.

People: **We must wait in patience.
Resurrection is coming.**

Leader: But not yet.
We must prepare.
We must wait.

People: **First comes the journey to which Christ calls us.**

Leader: Come, let us begin this Lenten journey.

*Prayer of Confession

Most Holy God, Your Son came to save sinners. So we come to this season of repentance, confessing our unworthiness, asking for new and honest hearts, and the healing power of Your forgiveness. Create in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins, and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of You, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

*Hymn of Praise "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind"

UMH 358

Psalter "Psalm 51:1-17"

UMH 785

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 bow before our Creator and Redeemer.

Silent Prayer

Thanksgiving Over the Ashes

Almighty God, You have created us out of the dust of the earth. Grant that these ashes may 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 Saviour. **Amen.**

Imposition of Ashes

Pastor: Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.
Turn away from sin, and be faithful to CHRIST. Amen.

(The congregation to sing during imposition of ashes: UMH 351, 382, 397)

***Reconciliation**

The Almighty and Merciful God, Source of our salvation in Christ, who desires not the death of a sinner but rather that we turn from wickedness and live; accept your repentance, forgive your sins, and restore you by the Holy Spirit to newness of life. **Amen.**

***Hymn of Dedication**

“Depth of Mercy”

UMH 355

***Benediction**

Organ Postlude

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*indicates congregation to stand