

What is Ash Wednesday?

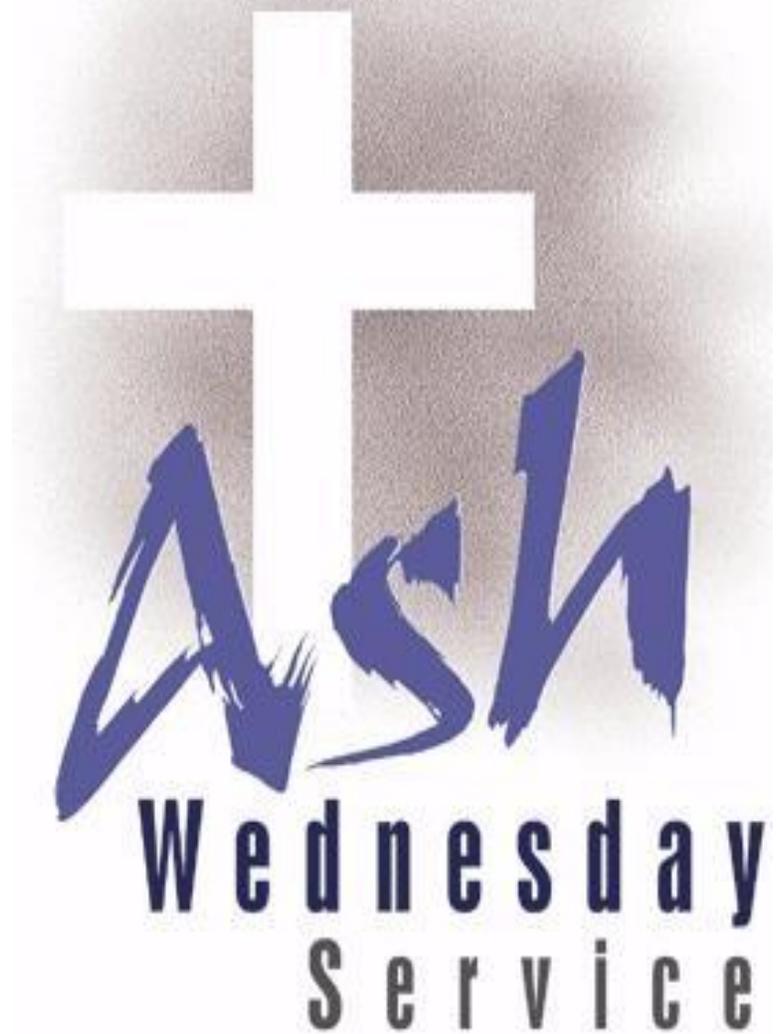
Early in the history of the Church, Christians began setting apart the days before Easter as a special season of devotion and commitment. It was a time of preparation for those who were to be baptized and a time for those who had been separated by their sins from the body of the faithful to be reconciled. It became a time of reflection, self-denial, confession and dedication as the Church sought to walk in the steps of Jesus and share in the fellowship of His suffering. ***“I want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.”*** *Philippians 3:10-11* Remembering the 40 days Jesus spent in the desert and other 40 day periods of preparation mentioned throughout the Scriptures - by the second century, 40 days (not counting the Sundays) were set aside. Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of this 40 day period.

What do the Ashes Represent?

Throughout the Scriptures ashes are used as a symbol of sorrow, repentance, and turning to the Lord. ***“I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with Him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes.”*** *Daniel 9:3* They remind us of our humble beginnings and of our sinfulness. ***“Though I am nothing but dust and ashes.”*** *Genesis 18:27* They remind us of the brevity of life and of our mortality. ***“For dust you are and to dust you will return.”*** *Genesis 3:19*

What does it mean to receive the Ashes?

Receiving the ashes in the shape of a cross is a sign of our repentance, self-denial and our commitment to follow Christ. ***“If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me.”*** *Luke 9:23* It symbolizes that we have been bought with a price and belong to Christ. ***“For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ.”*** *1 Peter 1:18-19* It is a sign of our identity in Christ. ***“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”*** *Galatians 2:20.* It is a mark that symbolizes our love and devotion for Christ.



Churchland Baptist
Lexington, North Carolina



We Gather for Worship

Ash Wednesday Service

March 02, 2022 at Six Thirty O'clock

“Those who declare publicly that they belong to Me,
I will do the same for them before My Father in Heaven.” Matthew 10:32

Prelude Roy Hicks

Welcome Dr. Huckaby

Invocation Dr. Huckaby

Responsive Reading and Prayer
Ezra 9:6; Isaiah 64:6; Psalm 51:17; Luke 18:13; Job 42:6;
Psalm 51:10; Romans 3:23-24; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 John 1:9; 4:16

Pastor: Our sins are higher than our heads and our guilt has reached the Heavens.

Congregation: We are unfit to worship You; Each of our good deeds is merely a filthy rag. We dry up like leaves; Our sins are storm winds sweeping us away.

Pastor: The sacrifice that God wants is a humble spirit. God, You will not turn away someone who comes with a humble heart and is willing to obey You.

Congregation: Have mercy on me, O God, a sinner. I am ashamed of myself. I am so sorry. As I sit in the dust and ashes, I promise to change my heart and my life. Create a pure heart in me. Grant me a new spirit that is faithful to You.

Pastor: We all fall short of God’s glorious standard. Yet with undeserved kindness, He declares that we are righteous. He did this through Christ Jesus when He freed us from the penalty for our sins.

Congregation: Christ carried the burden of our sins. He was nailed to the cross, so that we would stop sinning and start living right.

Pastor: If we confess our sins to Him, He is faithful and we can depend on Him to forgive us of our sins. He will make our lives clean from all sin.

Congregation: We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in, rely on, depend on, and cling to His love.

Hymn #295 Revive Us Again

Special Music Adult Choir
The Cross Medley

Hymn #340 I Lay My Sins On Jesus

The Scripture Reading Pastor Huckaby
Joel 2:12-19

The Sermon Pastor Huckaby
Lent: A Time for Housecleaning
Joel 1-3

Hymn 144 When I Survey the Wondrous Cross
Verses 1 & 2

The Imposition of Ashes

Hymn 144 When I Survey the Wondrous Cross
Verses 3 & 4

Benediction

Postlude Roy Hicks, Organist



Lent: A Time for Housecleaning
Joel 2:12-19

Introduction – we might think of Lent as a spiritual spring cleaning. In our text tonight, Joel is challenging the people to come clean. It's a great reminder for us tonight.

The D _____ **(1:2-2:17).**

“Even now,” declares the LORD, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.” ¹³ Rend your heart and not your garments.

Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.

¹⁴ Who knows? He may turn and relent and leave behind a blessing— grain offerings and drink offerings for the LORD your God. ¹⁵ Blow the trumpet in Zion, declare a holy fast, call a sacred assembly. ¹⁶ Gather the people, consecrate the assembly; bring together the elders, gather the children, those nursing at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room and the bride her chamber. ¹⁷ Let the priests, who minister before the LORD, weep between the portico and the altar. Let them say, “Spare your people, LORD. Do not make your inheritance an object of scorn, a byword among the nations Why should they say among the peoples, Where is their God?”

The D _____ **(2:18-3:27).**

¹⁸ Then the LORD was jealous for his land and took pity on his people.

¹⁹ The LORD replied to them: “I am sending you grain, new wine and olive oil, enough to satisfy you fully; never again will I make you an object of scorn to the nations. ²⁰ “I will drive the northern horde far from you, pushing it into a parched and barren land; its eastern ranks will drown in the Dead Sea and its western ranks in the Mediterranean Sea. And its stench will go up; its smell will rise.”

Conclusion - so tonight, let's get rid of the clutter. Your Christian life resembles a building that needs some upkeep, and Lent is the time to get to work. The Lord wants you to turn to him. He will give you the power to do just that. He will point you to his Son Jesus, and remind you that though this life is a struggle, Jesus won the ultimate struggle for you. He has fixed you up, and made you that glistening, beautiful building in which will dwell forever. God has made you into a building like that, and now with the Spirit's help, strive to keep that building kept us! Don't be satisfied with mere cosmetic improvements, but beg the Lord to use the Word to change your heart to make you a more repentant, more useful servant in God's kingdom. Amen.



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