



# ASH WEDNESDAY

Greencastle Presbyterian Church

WORSHIP SERVICE

March 5, 2025 - 7:00 PM

*\* Please stand as able*

## **Centering Thoughts**

*Prayer, self-control, and giving to the needy...  
each of these brings us in touch with God*

The Prelude

*Jesus, Bread of Life, I Pray Thee*

Douglas Wagner

Patti Divelbiss, organ

Welcome

*\*The Call to Worship*

Pastor: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**All: And also, with you.**

*Liturgist: Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.*

*God's mercy endures forever.*

**All: We come to humble ourselves before God and to seek God's grace.**

\*The Opening Prayer (Unison)

**Gracious God, you created us out of the dust of the earth and breathed into us the breath of life. By your hand we live and to your hands we return when all our days are done. Grant that the awareness of our mortality may lead us not to fear, but to faith. In our weakness teach us to look to you for strength, in our failures to turn to you and find forgiveness, and in our dying to await the gift of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

\*Hymn: #166 *Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days*

The First Scripture Reading

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

Unison Reading of Psalm 51

\*The Gospel Reading

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

The Pastoral Word

—Pastor Robert Cook

The Invitation to the Disciplines of Lent

Liturgist: Dear brothers and sisters in Christ: the early Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church that before the Easter celebration there should be a forty-day season of spiritual preparation.

During this season converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism.

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. So, we also follow this pattern that we might draw nearer to God and our Lord. Jesus Christ in this holy season of Lent.

Pastor: I invite you, therefore, by the mercies of God, 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. (*A brief silence is kept*)

The Prayer of Confession (Unison)

**Have mercy on us according to your loving kindness. Breathe new life into us once more, so we might be the people you created us to be. Restore unto us the joy of your salvation that we might do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with the Lord Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray, Amen.**

The Assurance of Pardon and Peace

Pastor: Hear the promise of God: *“I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you will be clean from all your uncleanness, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my spirit within you, and make you follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances.”* Friends, the promises of God are true. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven. Live now as new people, free to love God and neighbor.

**All: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross that we might be dead to sin and alive to all that is good. Amen!**

The Imposition of the Ashes

*(Ashes are a biblical reminder of our mortality: **“You are dust, and to dust you shall return”** (Gen 3:19). The sign of ashes on foreheads is a visible reminder of this. The ashes also represent sorrow and repentance for sin. You are invited to come forward where the pastor will impose the ashes of repentance on your forehead)*

Anthem (sung during the imposition of ashes)

*Dust, Remember You Are Splendor*

Anna Krentz Organ

Alicia Shemon, *flute*

\*The Closing Hymn #544 *Bless the Lord*

\*The Charge to Live as Faithful Disciples of Jesus

\*The Blessing

The Postlude

*Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley*

Anna Laura Page

Patti Divelbiss, *organ*



Minister.....Rev. Dr. Robert Cook

Liturgist.....Anne Larew

Musicians .....Dr. J. Frederick Davison,  
Patti Divelbiss, Alicia Shemon