

Ash Wednesday

THE SEASON OF LENT





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Lent

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, which kicks off 40 days of prayer and fasting—representing Jesus’ 40 days in the wilderness. The last week of Lent is called Holy Week, during which we remember Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday), the Last Supper with His disciples (Maundy Thursday) and His death on the cross (Good Friday). The season officially ends on Holy Saturday, the day before Easter. A season to prepare for the joy and hope of Easter, Lent reminds us that the Resurrection only occurred after the crucifixion. It is a time for the Church to symbolically follow Christ into the wilderness. It is a time for fasting and self-denial, though not for denial itself. It is a period to empty ourselves of lesser things so that we might be filled with the greater things of the gospel. Lent turns our desires toward Jesus, the only thing we truly need, helping us trade lesser loves for His greater love. When we enter into the story of Jesus, symbolically walking with Him through the desert and to the cross, we move from self-gratification to self-denial. As we embrace the pain and sorrow of Jesus, we turn away from our sin and toward the Savior.

LITURGY

SCRIPTURE READING

SONG OF REFLECTION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

RESPONSIVE READING

CLOSING SONG

GENESIS 3:14–19

The Lord God said to the serpent,

“Because you have done this,
cursed are you above all livestock
and above all beasts of the field;
on your belly you shall go,
and dust you shall eat
all the days of your life.
I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and her offspring;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel.”

To the woman he said,

“I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing;
in pain you shall bring forth children.
Your desire shall be contrary to your husband,
but he shall rule over you.”

And to Adam he said,

“Because you have listened to the voice of your wife
and have eaten of the tree
of which I commanded you,
‘You shall not eat of it,’
cursed is the ground because of you;
in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life;
thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you;
and you shall eat the plants of the field.
By the sweat of your face
you shall eat bread,
till you return to the ground,
for out of it you were taken;
for you are dust,
and to dust you shall return.”

JOEL 2:12–17

“Yet even now,” declares the Lord,
 “return to me with all your heart,
 with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
 and rend your hearts and not your garments.”
 Return to the Lord your God,
 for he is gracious and merciful,
 slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love;
 and he relents over disaster.
 Who knows whether he will not turn and relent,
 and leave a blessing behind him,
 a grain offering and a drink offering
 for the Lord your God?

Blow the trumpet in Zion;
 consecrate a fast;
 call a solemn assembly;
 gather the people.
 Consecrate the congregation;
 assemble the elders;
 gather the children,
 even nursing infants.
 Let the bridegroom leave his room,
 and the bride her chamber.

Between the vestibule and the altar
 let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep
 and say, “Spare your people, O Lord,
 and make not your heritage a reproach,
 a byword among the nations.
 Why should they say among the peoples,
 ‘Where is their God?’”

COME YE SINNERS

Come ye sinners poor and needy
Weak and wounded, sick and sore
Jesus ready stands to save you
Full of pity, love and power
I will arise and go to Jesus
He will embrace me in His arms
In the arms of my dear Savior
Oh there are ten thousand charms
Come ye thirsty come and welcome
God's free bounty glorify
True belief and true repentance
Every grace that brings you nigh
Come ye weary heavy-laden
Lost and ruined by the Fall
If you tarry 'til you're better
You will never come at all
I will arise and go to Jesus
He will embrace me in His arms
In the arms of my dear Savior
Oh there are ten thousand charms

KINGDOM OF GOD

Oh that I could see your face
How I'm longing for the day
Brighter sun of holy grace
Make my heart a holy place

Blessed are the poor who have nothing to own
Blessed are the mourners who are crying alone
Blessed are the guilty who have nowhere to go
For their hearts have a road to the kingdom of God
And their souls are the songs of the kingdom of God
And they will find a refuge for theirs in the kingdom of God

Beauty shining from your face
Always longed to see this place
Is there somewhere I can stay?
Even just a couple days?

The Lord is our shepherd, we shall not want
In valley or pasture, we shall not want
Our cup runneth over and over
For now and forever
For now and forever

Oh that I could see your face
How I'm longing for the day

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Father, forgive us
We endlessly chase the things of this world
We continue to buy into false promises
time and time again
believing they will satisfy our deepest longings,
only to find
that they continue to leave us empty
so we chase after another
O God, help us
Have mercy on us, according to Your steadfast love
Help us to keep our eyes up, fixed on You
and as we behold You in all of Your beauty
continue to mold us into the image of the Son
from one degree of glory to the next
Father, help our hearts to believe
You are our greatest treasure
Lord, we believe. Help our unbelief!

PSALM 51:1-7

Leader: Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your Loving-kindness;

**People: in your great compassion
blot out my offenses.**

Leader: Wash me through and
through from my wickedness

People: and cleanse me from my sin.

Leader: For I know my transgressions,

People: and my sin is ever before me.

Leader: Against you only have I sinned

People: and done what is evil in your sight.

Leader: And so you are justified
when you speak

People: and upright in your judgment.

Leader: Indeed, I have been wicked
from my birth

People: a sinner from my mother's womb.

Leader: For behold, you look
for truth deep within me,

People: and will make me understand

I NEED THEE

I need Thee every hour
Most gracious Lord
No tender voice like
Thine can peace afford

I need Thee O I need Thee
Every hour I need Thee
O bless me now my Savior
I come to Thee

I need Thee every hour
Stay Thou near by
Temptations lose their pow'r
When Thou art nigh
I need Thee every hour
In joy or pain
Come quickly and abide
Or life is vain
I need Thee every hour
Most Holy One
O make me Thine indeed
Thou blessed Son





CITIZENS CHURCH