

*BECOMING THE BELOVED COMMUNITY*  
**CARTER - WESTMINSTER UNITED  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**



## **Ash Wednesday**

March 2, 2022 - 7:00 PM

*No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here*

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**PRELUDE "It is Well With My Soul"**

**LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES OF GOD'S PRESENCE**

**WORDS OF WELCOME**

**GATHERING SONG "Spirit of the Living God" (On Screen)**

**CALL TO WORSHIP (Genesis 2:7; 3:19; Psalm 104:29-30; John 1:18)**

**One:** Friends and neighbors, in the middle of our busy week, we pause to observe Ash Wednesday together as a faith community.

**All:** We come to remember that God made us from fragile, blessed dust and breathes through us the breath of life and love.

**One:** From dust we are created in God's image, and to God's good dust we shall return.

**All:** With dust and oil we claim the mark of God's beloved creature.

**One:** Today we begin our 40-day Lenten journey to discover who we are created to be as God's beloved.

**All:** In daily practices of prayer and service we will embark upon this Lenten journey.

**One:** We follow Jesus, God's Beloved Child, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh in whom we see God's image most clearly.

**All:** So come, let us pray for strength and imagination to follow Jesus wherever he will lead us this Lent.

## MEDITATION ON THE BREATH OF LIFE (Psalm 46:10a)

**Song of Reflection:** "Be Still and Know that I am God"

### *Quiet Reflection*

**Song of Reflection:** "Be Still and Know that I am God"

## MEDITATION ON LETTING GO

You may use the paper provided to draw or write what it is that you hope to put aside this season: a habit, an attitude, a fear, a belief - something that breaks God's heart. Fold it and hold onto it, offer it up to God. No one will read it, and it will be burned outside on your way out at the end of the service tonight.

**ANTHEM** "Prelude in E minor"

Frédéric Chopin

George Radosavljevic, Piano

## MEDITATION ON FRAILTY AND FORGIVENESS - Psalm 51

**One:** Have mercy, tender God, forget that I defied you.

Wash away my sin, cleanse me from my guilt.

**All:** I know my evil well, it stares me in the face,  
evil done to you alone before your very eyes.

**One:** How right your condemnation! Your verdict is clearly just.

You see me for what I am: frail, a sinner.

**All:** You love those centered in the truth; teach me your hidden  
wisdom. Wash me with fresh water, wash me bright and clean.

**One:** Fill me with happy songs! Let the bones you bruised now dance,  
shut your eyes to my sin, make my guilt disappear.

**All:** Creator, reshape my heart; God, steady my spirit.

Do not cast me aside stripped of your Holy Spirit.

**One:** Save me, bring back my joy, support me, strengthen my will.

Then I will teach your way and sinners will turn to you.

**All:** Help me, stop my tears, and I will sing your goodness.

Lord, give me words and I will shout your praise.

*(Adapted from The Psalter, translated by the International Committee on English in the Liturgy ©1995 Archdiocese of Chicago)*

## Hymn of Confession: "Out of the Depths"

Out of the depths,  
O God, we call to you.  
Wounds of the past remain,  
affecting all we do.  
Facing our lives,  
we need your love so much.  
Here in this community,  
heal us by your touch.

Out of the depths of fear,  
O God, we speak.  
Breaking the silences,  
the searing truth we seek.  
Safe among friends, our grief and  
rage we share.  
Here in this community,  
hold us in your care.

God of the loving heart,  
we praise your name.  
Dance through our lives and loves;  
Anoint with Spirit flame.  
Your light illumines  
each familiar face.  
Here in this community,

## Words of Assurance of Blessing

One: Know that God loves you,  
forgives you,  
welcomes you and  
rejoices in you.  
You are God's beloved child, whom God made from fragile,  
blessed dust, and through whom God breathes the breath of  
life and love.

## MEDITATION ON THE MEANING OF ASH WEDNESDAY AND LENT

## MEDITATION ON THE POSSIBILITIES OF DUST

## Marking with Ashes

As you are so moved, you may come forward to the table to make the Sign of the Cross on your own hand or forehead, or have the Pastor make the Sign of the Cross on your forehead, if you are masked.

## ASH WEDNESDAY PRAYER

Sharing of joys

Sharing of concerns

Lord's Prayer

### PARTING HYMN: "Just A Closer Walk with Thee"

I am weak but Thou art strong  
Jesus keep me from all wrong  
I'll be satisfied as long  
As I walk, let me walk close to Thee

Just a closer walk with Thee  
Grant it, Jesus, is my plea  
Daily walking close to Thee  
Let it be, dear Lord, let it be

Just a closer walk with Thee  
Grant it, Jesus, is my plea  
Daily walking close to Thee  
Let it be, dear Lord, let it be

When my feeble life is o'er  
Time for me will be no more  
Guide me gently, safely o'er  
To Thy kingdom's shore, to  
Thy shore

Thro' this world of toil and snares,  
If I falter, Lord, who cares?  
I'll be satisfied as long  
As I walk, let me walk close  
to Thee.

Just a closer walk with Thee  
Grant it, Jesus, is my plea  
Daily walking close to Thee  
Let it be, dear Lord, let it be

### BENEDICTION

You are invited to leave quietly, as you are ready. You are invited to deposit your slip of paper to be burned just outside the church.

This service was adapted from: *Beloved Dust to Dust: Service Prayers for Ash Wednesday*, written by the Rev. Dr. Ginny Brown Daniel, pastor of Plymouth United Church, UCC, in Spring, Texas. Copyright 2012 Local Church Ministries, Congregational Vitality and Discipleship Ministry Team, United Church of Christ, 700 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, OH, 44115

**Our ancestors in the faith used ashes as a sign of our repentance, a symbol of the uncertainty and fragility of human life.**



Like them, we have tasted the ashes of hopelessness; we have walked through the ashes of our loss and pain; we have stood knee-deep in the ashes of our brokenness.

May these ashes not only be a sign of our repentance and death, but reminders that by God's gift of grace in Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, we are granted life forever with you, O God.

- Thom Shuman