



**Joint United Methodist
Greensburg Community
Ash Wednesday Service**

March 5, 2025

7:00pm

Greensburg First UMC
15 E. 2nd Street ~ Greensburg, PA 15601

† *Indicates standing, as able*

WELCOME & WORDS OF DIRECTION

THE PRELUDE

“Lamentation” ~ *Henry Purcell*

† **GREETING & CALL TO CONFESSION** *From Joel 2:12-13*

L: Liturgist **P: People**

L: Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart,

**P: With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;
rend your hearts and not your clothing.**

L: Return to the Lord your God; for He is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love,

P: And relenting from punishment.

† **OPENING PRAYER** *[In unison]* **268 UMH**

[MOMENTS OF SILENT PERSONAL CONFESSION...AMEN]

† **HYMN** “Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days” **269**

INVITATION TO THE OBSERVANCE OF LENTEN DISCIPLINE

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 that 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, by forgiveness, and restored to participation in the life of the Church.

In this way the whole congregation was reminded of the need we all have to renew our faith, and of the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Therefore, we come to observe this holy Lent by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting and self-denial; by hearing, reading and meditating on God's Holy Word and by invitation to the Table of the Lord.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Psalm 51:1-17

ANTHEM

“When You Break the Bread”

Ruth Elaine Schram

Joint Choir

EPISTLE LESSON

II Corinthians 5:20b-6:2

MEDITATION

“Ashes, Ashes, We All Fall Down”

CHORAL OFFERING

“Your Heart, O God, Is Grieved” *Tranousky/Vajda*

Chancel Chanters

THANKSGIVING PRAYER OVER THE ASHES: *[Let us pray...]*

Almighty God, You have created us out of the dust of the earth. Grant that the ashes tonight 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 Savior. Amen

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING: Pastor and **People**, responsively:

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Life up your hearts

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to You, Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth, bringing all things into being and calling them good. From the dust of the earth You formed us into Your image and breathed into us the breath of life.

**And when we turned away, and our love failed,
You remained steadfast.**

When for forty days and forty nights rain fell upon the earth, You bore up the ark, saved Noah and his family, and made covenant with all living creatures on the earth.

**When for forty days and forty nights You led Your people
to Mount Sinai, You gave us Your Commandments to
make us Your covenant people.**

And when Your people forsook Your covenant, Your prophet Elijah fasted for forty days and forty nights, and on Your holy mountain heard Your still, small voice.

And so, with Your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise Your Name, joining their unending hymn...

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord,

God of power and might,

Heaven and earth are full of Your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are You, and blessed is Your Son Jesus Christ.

When You gave Him to save us from our sin,

Your Spirit led Him into the wilderness, where He fasted forty days and forty nights to prepare for His ministry.

When He suffered and died on a cross for our sin,

You raised Him to life, presented Him alive to the apostles during forty days, and exalted Him at Your right hand.

By the baptism of His suffering, death, and resurrection, You gave birth to Your Church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit. Now, as we prepare for the yearly feast of Easter, You lead us to repentance for sin and the cleansing of our hearts, that in these forty days we may be gifted and graced to reaffirm the covenant You made with us through Christ.

On the night in which He gave Himself up for us, Jesus took bread, gave thanks to You, broke the bread, gave it to His disciples, and said: “Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

When the supper was over He took the cup, gave thanks to You, gave it to His disciples, and said: “Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

And so, in remembrance of these Your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving, as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ’s offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out Your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body and blood of Christ, redeemed by His blood.

By Your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at His heavenly banquet.

Through Your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in Your holy Church, all honor and glory is Yours, Almighty Father, now and forever.

Amen.

THE PRAYER OF BLESSING OVER THE OIL

O Father God of all mercy, we offer this oil for Your blessing so that, by the power of Your gracious Holy Spirit, those who receive it may acquire all the goodness You intend, bringing them the healing, protection, peace, and wisdom only You can impart, according to Your Son our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

◆◆ IMPOSITION OF ASHES ◆◆ ELEMENTS OF COMMUNION ◆◆ ◆◆ OIL OF ANOINTING ◆◆

We will come forward at the direction of the ushers.

As we sing the hymns listed below, come forward down the **center aisle as the ushers direct** to receive **one or all** of the following...

First, you may receive ashes upon your forehead or back of the hand at the aisle end of the two front pews...

“Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return”

Then, receive communion at the altar rails, pausing to stand or kneel prayerfully as you wish...

“The Body of Christ...the Blood of Christ”

Finally, receive the anointing oil of gladness and prayer as you return to your seat...

“Receive the Oil of Gladness in the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit”
[Praying together as is desired.]

HYMNS TO SING AS NEEDED: 358...355...382...375...377

THE PRAYER FOR THE CLOSE OF DAY *[In unison]* **689 UMH**

† **HYMN** “The Day Thou Gavest, Lord, Is Ended” **690**

THE BENEDICTION

THE POSTLUDE

“Jesus, Still Lead On” ~ arr. Paul Manz



We are grateful to God to gather as United Methodists for Joint Community Worship Services during this Lenten Season. This Ash Wednesday service begins that Lenten journey. We welcome those from S. Greensburg UMC, Pastor Don Poole, [previously committed to another service tonight,] and those from Otterbein UMC, Pastor Debra Mason.



PARTICIPANTS IN TONIGHT’S SERVICE

HOST CLERGY: Pastors Richard Markle, August & Aimée Twigg

GUEST CLERGY: Pastor Debra Mason

LITURGICAL MINISTER: Jim Caffrey, OSL, Assoc. Dir. of Music

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS: Jim Swank & Judy Molter

ORGANIST: Ruth Hughes

JOINT CHOIR & DIRECTOR: Fred Pershing, Director of Music

COMMUNION STEWARDS & USHERS



**OUR NEXT TWO JOINT UNITED METHODIST
COMMUNITY SERVICES
WILL BE DURING HOLY WEEK:**

MAUNDY THURSDAY EVENING

April 17th S. Greensburg UMC

GOOD FRIDAY EVENING

April 18th Otterbein UMC



**The Ecumenical Community Good Friday
“Way of the Cross”**

begins at 11:30am on the steps of the County Courthouse.



Lenten Thursday Worship & Luncheon

at Zion’s Evangelical Lutheran Church

140 S. Pennsylvania Avenue ~ Greensburg, PA 15601

Services begin at 12:05pm **Lunch** following the service at 12:30pm

<i>March 6</i>	<i>The Rev. Paul Gruesu</i>	<i>Stuffed Shells, Italian Bread, Tossed Salad and Dessert</i>
<i>March 13</i>	<i>The Rev. Robert C. Hawk</i>	<i>Sloppy Joe Sandwich, Coleslaw, Chips and Dessert</i>
<i>March 20</i>	<i>The Rev. Kara Propst</i>	<i>Chicken Casserole, Rolls, Fruit Salad and Dessert</i>
<i>March 27</i>	<i>The Rev. Peter Nordby</i>	<i>Broccoli Cheese Soup, Ham and Cheese Sliders, Chips and Dessert</i>
<i>April 3</i>	<i>The Rev. Allen Riethmiller</i>	<i>Chili, Tossed Salad, Corn Bread and Dessert</i>
<i>April 10</i>	<i>The Rev. Chris Combs</i>	<i>Ham Barbeque Sandwich, Pasta Salad, Chips and Dessert</i>
<i>April 17</i>	<i>The Rev. Brian B. Chaffee</i>	<i>Soup and Salad Bar</i>

Suggested donation for lunch is \$5.00

If Greensburg Schools are closed, we are cancelled.