

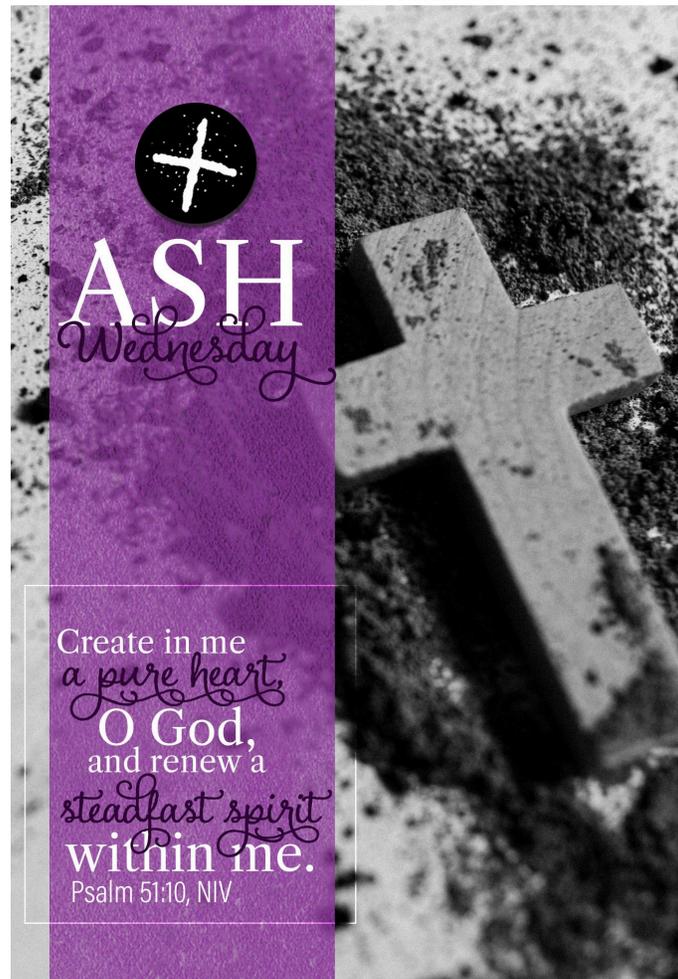
2.18.2026

12:00pm & 6:30pm



Ash Wednesday

Sharing God's love so that all are served and supported.



Today's Worship Theme

On Ash Wednesday, we begin our forty-day journey toward Easter with a day of fasting and repentance. Marking our foreheads with dust, we acknowledge that we die and return to the earth. At the same time, the dust traces the life-giving cross indelibly marked on our foreheads at baptism. While we journey through Lent to return to God, we have already been reconciled to God through Christ. We humbly pray for God to make our hearts clean while we rejoice that “now is the day of salvation.” Returning to our baptismal call, we more intentionally bear the fruits of mercy and justice in the world.

If you are visiting, please review the Welcome Pew Card in the hymnal holder.

✠ **GATHER** ✠

PRELUDE *"Aberystwyth" ("Savior, When in Dust to You")* Gerald Near

We rise.

GATHERING HYMN *"Chief of Sinners Though I Be"* ELW 609

GREETING & OPENING PRAYER

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray. Almighty and ever-living God, you hate nothing you have made, and you forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and honest hearts, so that, truly repenting of our sins, we may receive from you, the God of all mercy, full pardon and forgiveness through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

✠ **WORD** ✠

Be seated.

A READING FROM Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

¹Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming, it is near — ²a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness spread upon the mountains a great and powerful army comes; their like has never been from of old, nor will be again after them in ages to come.

¹²Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; ¹³rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the LORD, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing. ¹⁴Who 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? ¹⁵Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; ¹⁶gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her canopy. ¹⁷Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep. Let them say, "Spare your people, O LORD, and do not make your heritage a mockery, a byword among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'"

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

To you all hearts are o - pen, to
 you all de - sires known. To you there are no
 se - crets, al - might - y God; we come to you.

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your lovingkindness; in your great compassion blot out my offenses. Wash me through and through from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. *Refrain*

Against you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight. And so you are justified when you speak and upright in your judgment. Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth, a sinner from my mother’s womb. For behold, you look for truth deep within me, and will make me understand wisdom secretly. *Refrain*

Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure; wash me, and I shall be clean indeed. Make me hear of joy and gladness, that the body you have broken may rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Give me the joy of your saving help again, and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit. *Refrain*

I shall teach your ways to the wicked, and sinners shall return to you. Deliver me from death, O God, and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness, O God of my salvation. Open my lips, O Lord, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise. Had you desired it, I would have offered sacrifice, but you take no delight in burnt-offerings. The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. *Refrain*

We rise.

GOSPEL READING: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord!**

¹"Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. ²So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ³But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. ⁵And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ⁶But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

¹⁶And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ¹⁷But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. ¹⁹Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Be seated.

SERMON

Pastor Steve Troisi

We rise.

HYMN OF THE DAY

"Be Thou My Vision"

ELW 793

INVITATION TO LENT

Friends in Christ, today with the whole Church we enter the time of remembering Jesus' Passover from death to life, and our life in Christ is renewed. We begin this holy season by acknowledging our need for repentance and for God's mercy. We are created to experience joy in communion with God, to love one another, and to live in harmony with creation. But our sinful rebellion separates us from God, our neighbors, and creation, so that we do not enjoy the life our creator intended. As disciples of Jesus, we are called to a discipline that contends against evil and resists whatever leads us away from love of God and neighbor. I invite you, therefore, to the discipline of Lent – self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love – strengthened by the gifts of word and sacrament. Let us continue our journey through these forty days to the great Three Days of Jesus' death and resurrection.

CONFESSIONS AND FORGIVENESS

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another, as we kneel. Most holy and merciful God, **we confess to you and to one another, and before the whole company of heaven, we have sinned in thought, word and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone.**

We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

We have shut our ears to your call to serve as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our past unfaithfulness, the pride, envy, hypocrisy, and apathy that have infected our lives, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to share the faith that is in us, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our neglect of human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our false judgments, our uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us, we confess to you. **Have mercy on us, O God.**

Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us. **Hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.**

Be seated.

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

For those who desire to participate in the ancient tradition of imposition of ashes, please come forward after the confession. The ashes are applied with the minister's thumb in the form of a small cross on the forehead of each person with the words: "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

We kneel.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Each portion of the prayer ends with these words:
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

✠ MEAL ✠

Be seated.

OFFERING SONG

“Call to Lent”

J. Jerome Williams

What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul;
 What wondrous love is this, O my soul!
 What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss
 to bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul,
 to bear the dreadful curse for my soul.
 When I survey the wondrous cross
 on which the Prince of Glory died,
 My richest gain I count but loss,
 and pour contempt on all my pride.

Please visit www.graceboone.org/donate or place your gift in the offering plate in the Narthex or mail it to 115 E. King St, Boone, NC 28607.



We rise.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. O God, maker of heaven and earth, your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

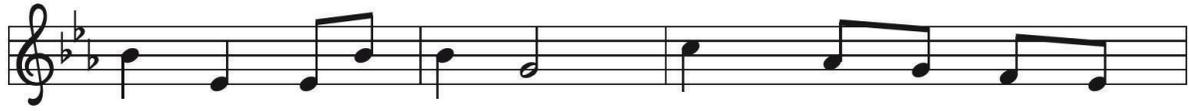
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy ... and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and



God of might, heav - en and earth are full of your



glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.



Bless - ed is the one who comes in the name of the



Lord. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.



Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: "Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me."

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us: **Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to the table. Feast on God's goodness and mercy. **Thanks be to God!**

Please be seated. This is the Lord's Table, so all who seek Christ's true presence promised through this bread and wine are welcome and invited. Communion will be served at the head of the aisle. You will receive bread first (it is gluten-, nut-, soy- & dairy-free) and then wine (grape juice is available). Please alert an usher if you require the sacrament to be brought to you.

COMMUNION SONG



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the



world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMNS

"Eat This Bread"
"Lord Jesus, Think on Me"

ELW 472
ELW 599

We rise.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

✠ **SENDING** ✠

BLESSING

Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity: God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation, ✠ bless you now and always. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Believe the good news. **Thanks be to God.**

We depart in silence and begin our Lenten observance.