

Celebration of Worship

Ash Wednesday

February 18, 2026

7:00 P.M.

*We are followers of Jesus Christ, living and sharing
the love of God through faith and action, welcoming all.*

Prelude

Words of Welcome

Reflection

Marcus Borg

"The Biblical meaning of 'repent' is not primarily contrition, but resolve. In the Hebrew Bible, to repent means primarily to return to God. Its metaphorical home is the exile. To repent means to return from exile, to reconnect with God, to walk the way in the wilderness that leads from Babylon to God."

Ringling of the Bell

Call to Worship

Leader: Have mercy on us, O God, according to your steadfast love;

People: according to your abundant mercy, wash away our sin.

Leader: God desires truth in the inward being,

People: so teach us your wisdom, O God.

Leader: Create in us clean hearts,

People: and put a new and right spirit within us.

Leader: Restore to us the joy of your salvation,

People: and sustain in us a spirit willing to serve you.

Leader: O Lord, open our lips,

People: and our mouths will declare your praise.

Hymn

Just As I Am, Without One Plea

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Prayer of Adoration

Leader: Holy One, Creator, Redeemer and Guide of our lives, from you comes peace, and we trust in your goodness and grace. In you we find wisdom and claim hope in your presence with us. By you we are redeemed and we learn to love. You are our beginning and our end, the first and the last, the forgiver and redeemer of all things. We worship you now, Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, ever Three and ever One, now and always.

Prayer of Confession

Leader: God of Life and Love, you hate nothing that you have created. You forgive the sins of all who turn to you in confession, and so we pray together:

People: Forgive the words we failed to speak and those we should not have spoken. Forgive the good we failed to do and the evil we have done. Forgive the love we have withheld and the grudges we have cherished. Forgive what we have been, amend who we are, and direct who you would have us be, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

Time of Reflection

Assurance of Pardon

Leader: Hear and believe the Good News: anyone who is in Christ is a new creation. The old life is gone; the new life has come. Know that you are forgiven and so, in Christ, forgive one another.

Gloria Patri

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen, Amen.

Prayer for Understanding

All: God of the ages and each new day, you call us to return to you, inviting us to find healing and hope in the path Jesus took. Send us your Spirit to open our minds and hearts to receive your Word and be changed by its wisdom. Amen.

1st Scripture Reading

Psalm 51:1-17

Passing of the Peace

2nd Scripture Reading

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Meditation

Rev. Russ Roth

Hymn

Change My Heart, O God

Change my heart, O God; make it ever true.

Change my heart, O God; may I be like you.

You are the Potter; I am the clay.

Mold me and make me; this is what I pray.

Change my heart, O God; make it ever true.

Change my heart, O God; may I be like you.

Imposition of Ashes

Leader: The early followers of Jesus observed the days of Jesus' passion and resurrection with various acts of devotion. It became their custom to prepare to celebrate the great mystery of Easter with a season of prayer, contemplation and fasting. Let us begin our observance of Lent with a time of self-examination and repentance. Then let us continue through the season with prayer and fasting, reading and meditating on God's holy word day by day.

We begin in silence as we listen to God's call on our lives for this season of Lent.

Almighty God, you have created us from the dust of the earth. Let these ashes be a sign of our mortality, penitence and humility. Remind us it is only by your grace and love that we receive everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

Lighting of the Candles

Prayers of Intercession and The Lord's Prayer

Screen

After the phrase "Lord in your mercy", please respond "**Hear our Prayer.**"

Hymn *Forty Days and Forty Nights* # 77

Benediction

Postlude



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