



First Presbyterian Church OF OKLAHOMA CITY

Ash Wednesday Service

February 18, 2026 | 7:00 p.m.

Grounding Ourselves in the Good News this Lent

The good news is... all are invited

A special welcome to those visiting with us this evening!

We are grateful for your presence with us and hope you find this time of worship to be meaningful.

When you see an asterisk *, please rise in body or spirit, however you are comfortable.

We Gather to Worship

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Ash Wednesday commences the season of Lent, which lasts for 40 days (excluding Sundays) and leads up to Easter Sunday. It is traditionally a fast day and a day of mourning for our sin and the sin of all humanity before God. The name “Ash Wednesday” comes from the practice of placing ashes on believers’ foreheads in the shape of a cross. During the imposition of ashes, the words are spoken: “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return,” emphasizing mortality and the need for repentance. On Ash Wednesday, we request that the Lord remember our creation and breathe new life into our burned-out, dusty lives once more.

PRELUDE

Beloved Jesu, How Hast Thou Offended

Johann Christoph Oley

WELCOME

Rev. John C. McKinnon

INTROIT

Restore in Us, O God

Hal H. Hopson

Sanctuary Singers

*CALL TO WORSHIP – *Both, Please* (poem by Rev. Sarah Speed)

Leader: It's one thing to speak of love. It's another

to hold a newborn in your arms,
to sing someone to sleep,
to lean down and listen for their breathing.

All: It's one thing to speak of faith. It's another
to press your forehead to the floor,
to cry out in prayer,
to ask the hard questions and still
thank God for the meal.

Leader: It's one thing to speak of the divine. It's another
to walk under a tunnel of wisteria,
to stand barefoot at the edge of the sea,
to hear the birds sing as the sun returns
and whisper, thank you, thank you, thank you.

It's one thing and another, so I pray,
Give us both, please. Show us both, please.

All: Let us worship God.

*CALL TO PRAYER

Ashes were used in ancient times to express grief. The gesture was also used to express sorrow for sins and faults. The prophet Daniel recounted pleading to God: "I turned to the Lord God, pleading in earnest prayer, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes" (Daniel 9:3). We continue the practice of using ashes tonight as an external sign of repentance. Let us now offer our own pleading in earnest prayer to the Lord God for our own sins and faults and those of the world. Let us pray together.

*PRAYER OF THE DAY (Unison)

Erica Taylor

Holy God, treasure of faithful hearts, through Jesus Christ you taught us how to pray, to give, to serve, to live. Reshape, restore, and renew us by the hidden power of your Spirit, so that we may receive the way of life that is the true reward of the faithful; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

*HYMN 286

Breath on Me, Breath of God

TRENTHAM

We Hear God's Word

PRAYER OF CONFESSION - *Psalm 51*

Leader: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving kindness; in your great compassion, blot out my offenses.

People: Wash me through and through from my wickedness and cleanse me from my sin.

Leader: For I know my transgressions and my sin is ever before me.

People: Against you only I have sinned and done what is evil in your sight.

And so you are justified when you speak and upright in your judgment.

Breathe on Me, Breath of God 286

1 Breathe on me, Breath of God; fill me with life a - new,
2 Breathe on me, Breath of God, un - til my heart is pure,
3 Breathe on me, Breath of God, till I am whol - ly thine,
4 Breathe on me, Breath of God, so shall I nev - er die,

that I may love what thou dost love, and do what thou wouldst do.
un - til with thee I will one will, to do and to en - dure.
un - til this earth - ly part of me glows with thy fire di - vine.
but live with thee the per - fect life of thine e - ter - ni - ty.

In both Hebrew and Greek, the words for “spirit” can equally well be translated as “breath” or “wind,” so it is very appropriate to address the Holy Spirit as the “Breath of God.” This tune by an English organist has become the customary one in North American hymnals.

Leader: Indeed, I have been wicked from birth, a sinner from my mother's womb.

People: For behold, you look for truth deep within me, and will make me understand wisdom secretly.

Leader: Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure; wash me and I shall be clean indeed.

People: 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.

Leader: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

People: Cast me not away from your presence and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

Leader: Give me the joy of your saving help again and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.

People: I shall teach your ways to the wicked and sinners shall return to you.

Leader: Deliver me from death, O God, and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness,
O God of my salvation.

People: Open my lips, O Lord, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Leader: Had you desired it, I would have offered sacrifice, but you take no delight in burnt offerings.

People: The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. Amen.

Leader: Before God, with the people of God, I confess to my brokenness:

To the ways I wound my life, the lives of others and the life of the world.

People: May God forgive you, Christ renew you, and the Spirit enable you to grow in love.

Leader: Amen.

People: Before God, with the people of God, I confess to my brokenness:

To the ways I wound my life, the lives of others and the life of the world.

Leader: May God forgive you, Christ renew you, and the Spirit enable you to grow in love.

People: Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

John 13:1-35 (pg.107)

POEM

The Gospel According to Mrs. Farnell's Pre-K Class

Rev. Sara Speed

REFLECTION

All Are Invited

PRAYER | YOUR THOUGHTS ARE NOT OUR THOUGHTS

Leader: Glorious God, your thoughts are not our thoughts, neither are your ways our ways.
You look at the ugliest soul and see, still unstirred, the wings of an angel.

People: We scan the finest of our neighbors, anxious to find the flaw.

Leader: You view time in the context of eternity, and so find a place for waiting, for yearning,
even for suffering, even for dying.

People: We demand instant results and look for tomorrow before savoring today.

Leader: You know that only one who suffers can ultimately save; that is why you walk the way
of the cross.

People: We fear the vulnerability which defies our power; that is why we allow for crucifixion.

Leader: Your thoughts are not our thoughts,

People: neither are your ways our ways.

Leader: And yet we know that your way is the ladder to heaven, while, left to our own devices, our ways slope downward to hell. But we are here, not to have our worst confirmed, but to have our best liberated. So we pray,

People: forgive in us what has gone wrong, repair in us what is wasted, reveal in us what is good.

Leader: And nourish us with better food than we could ever purchase: your word, your love, your inspiration, your daily bread for our life's journey, in the company of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

All: Amen.

ANTHEM

I Want Jesus to Walk with Me

Sanctuary Singers

African American Spiritual

arr. Ronald A. Nelson

I want Jesus to walk with me; all along my pilgrim journey, Lord, I want Jesus to walk me. In my trials, Lord, walk with me; when my heart is almost breaking, Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me. When I'm in trouble, Lord, walk with me; when my head is bowed in sorrow, Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.

We Respond to God's Word

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

PRAYER OF GREAT THANKSGIVING

Leader: All glory and blessings are yours, Saving God, for in your mercy you gave your only Son, Jesus Christ. Born a child like us, he grew up to be your servant. Jesus taught your truth. He welcomed, healed, forgave, and loved people.

In the end, he suffered and died to save us from our sin. And God raised him up to give us a new life. We praise you that before he died, our Savior gave us this holy meal to eat together until he comes again. Why do we eat bread at this table?

People: On the night before he died, Jesus took bread. After giving thanks, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take, eat. This is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

Leader: Why do we drink from the cup at this table?

People: The same night, Jesus took the cup, saying: This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood, shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me.

Leader: What do we remember at this table?

People: **We remember God's gracious love for us, Christ's death and resurrection for us, and the Spirit's tender care for us. And remembering, we offer ourselves as gifts for the world.**

Leader: According to our Lord's commandment:

People: **We remember his death, we proclaim his resurrection, we await his coming in glory.**

Leader: What do we ask at this table?

People: **Merciful God, pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine, that in eating and drinking together we may be made one with Christ and with one another. At this table we ask for unity in Christ our Lord, and we ask for strength to serve the world in his name until the day you make all things new.**

Leader: Through Christ, all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, with the Holy Spirit in the holy church, now and forever. Amen.

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

COMMUNION VOLUNTARY *Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether* (hymn 529)

John L. Edwards

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

INVITATION TO THE OBSERVANCE OF THE LENTEN DISCIPLINE

Friends in Christ, every year at the time of the Christian Passover we celebrate our redemption through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Lent is a time to prepare for this celebration and to renew our life in the paschal mystery.

We begin this holy season by acknowledging our need for repentance and for the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ. We begin our journey to Easter with the sign of ashes. This ancient sign speaks of the frailty and uncertainty of human life and marks the penitence of this community.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of Christ, to observe a holy Lent by self-examination and penitence, by prayer and fasting, by works of love, and by reading and meditating on the Word of God.

Let us now come before God, our Creator and Redeemer, and confess our sin.

SOLO

Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy

RESTORATION

Puffer Jones, baritone; John L. Edwards, whistle

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, O 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. Let not conscience make you linger, nor of fitness fondly dream;
all the fitness he requireth is to feel your need of him.*

CALL TO PENITENCE | *Ashes, ashes...*

Wild Goose big book of worship resources, Iona Community

Burning your covenant behind me,
I race on ahead to jump on this weary-go-round called life,
sin spinning me faster and faster,
until I fall off,
dizzily dancing with death.

Getting ready for bed,
I bank the embers of my ever faithful fears,
hoping they might smolder into cold cinders I can scatter to the Spirit;
in the morning, I hurriedly splash my face with a few handfuls of the leftover ashes from
yesterday's feast on foolishness;
ashes, ashes, we all fall down...
into the embrace of your grace.

LITANY OF PENITENCE

Leader: Let us pray.

People: Holy and merciful God, we confess to you and to one another, and to the whole communion of saints in heaven and on earth, that we have sinned by our own fault in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone.

Leader: 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.

People: Have mercy on us, O God.

Leader: We have not listened 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.

People: Have mercy on us, O God.

Leader: We confess to you, O God, all our past unfaithfulness: the pride, hypocrisy, and impatience in our lives,

People: we confess to you, O God.

Leader: Our self-indulgent appetites and ways and our exploitation of other people,

People: we confess to you, O God.

Leader: Our anger at our own frustration and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,

People: we confess to you, O God.

Leader: Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonesty in daily life and work,

People: we confess to you, O God.

Leader: Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,

People: we confess to you, O God.

Leader: Accept our repentance, O God, for the wrongs we have done. For our neglect of human need and suffering and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,

People: accept our repentance, O God.

Leader: For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us,

People: accept our repentance, O God.

Leader: For our waste and pollution of your creation and our lack of concern for those who come after us,

People: accept our repentance, O God. Restore us and let your anger depart from us for your mercy is great.

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

Leader: Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth. May these ashes be to us a sign of our mortality that we may remember that it is only by your gracious gift that we are given everlasting life. Amen.

People: We remember that we are dust, and to dust we shall return.

Leader: Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,

People: that we may show forth your glory in the world.

Leader: By the cross of passion of our Savior,

People: bring us with all your saints to the joy of Christ's resurrection.

As the music begins, the congregation may come forward to receive ashes.

VOLUNTARY

Sarabande from Partita in A Minor, BWV 1013

J. S. Bach

John L. Edwards, baroque flute

*HYMN 166

Lord, Who throughout These Forty Days

ST. FLAVIAN

We Go in God's Name

*BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

**All: May the God of Peace inspire us,
may the God of Justice empower us,
may the God of Hope encourage us
to live the good news.**

Leader: Go, in the power of the Spirit.

Go, and do not try to separate politics and prayer.

Go, not to escape, but to engage with God's world.

Go, to live hopefully, as people of resurrection.

All: Amen.

*POSTLUDE

Quiet Prelude

Dom Benoit

Lord, Who throughout These 166 Forty Days



1 Lord, who through-out these for - ty days for us did fast and
 2 As you with Sa - tan did con-tend and did the vic-tory
 3 And through these days of pen - i - tence, and through this Pas-sion-
 4 A - bide with us, till when this life of suf - fering shall be



pray, teach us with you to mourn our sins and close by you to stay.
 win, O give us strength to per - se - vere, in you to con-quer sin.
 tide, yes, ev - er - more, in life and death, O Lord, with us a - bide.
 past, an Eas - ter of un - end - ing joy we may at - tain at last.



Like many of this author's hymns, this text was written primarily for children but works equally well in reminding adults how Lent connects us with Christ's temptation in the wilderness and prepares us for Easter. The 16th-century English psalm tune provides sturdy support.

First Presbyterian Church

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