

# Ash Wednesday



**March 6, 2019**

**6:00 p.m.**

Westminster Presbyterian Church  
Wilmington, Delaware

## *Choral Call to Worship*

“Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling”

### *Opening Sentences*

You who are weary and worn,  
who have traded joy for sorrow,  
who feel you have lost your way –

**Come home.**

You who are burdened and broken,  
who are pained by wrongs committed,  
who seek healing and wholeness –

**Come home.**

You who are disenchanted and despairing,  
who feel far from the heart of God,  
who hunger and thirst for good news –

**Come home.**

Softly, tenderly Jesus beckons us home.

**We are here.**

**Let us worship the Lord.**

### *Hymn #707*

“Take Thou Our Minds, Dear Lord”

### *Call to Confession*

#### *Prayer of Confession*

**In the blazing light of your love our failings are illuminated –  
our failure to give, our failure to love, our failure to follow,  
our failure to serve, our failure to be the people you would have us be.**

**Forgive us and renew us, O God.**

**You know our nature; you know our failings.**

**Enfold us in your arms that we might daily know  
your forgiveness and healing love.**

*At the asterisk (\*), please stand as you are able.*

*Song #695*

“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.**

*Assurance of God’s Forgiveness*

*Response #654*

“In the Lord I’ll Be Ever Thankful”

**In the Lord I’ll be ever thankful;  
in the Lord I will rejoice!**

**Look to God; do not be afraid.**

**Lift up your voices, the Lord is near.**

**Lift up your voices; the Lord is near.**

*Scripture*

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

*Psalm 51 (Hymn #423)*

“Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God”

*Scripture*

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

*Silence*

*Song #427*

“Jesus Knows the Inmost Heart”

**Jesus knows the inmost heart:  
nothing can be hidden.**

## *Litany of Ashes*

We bow our heads before you, O God,

**aware of our sinfulness and shortcomings.**

Remembering our baptism, the watermark of the cross upon us,

**we also receive this ashen cross upon our foreheads –**

**another sign that in life and death we belong to you.**

In the name of Jesus Christ – crucified, risen, coming again – we pray.

**Amen.**

## *Imposition of Ashes*

*Those who wish to receive the imposition of ashes should come forward by the center aisle and return by the side aisle. Please indicate to the pastor if you wish to receive the ashes on your hand rather than your forehead.*

### *Song #433*

### *“Sign Us With Ashes”*

**Sign us with ashes, merciful God,  
children of dust,  
as to dust we return.  
Sign us with ashes, merciful God.  
Mark us and make us your own.**

## *Prayer*

We are dust, and to dust we shall return.

But you, O God, work wonders with dust.

Long ago, you reached into Eden’s clay,

molded us in your likeness,

and breathed into us the breath of life.

**Draw near to us, as you did at the dawn of time.  
Fashion us anew, and enliven us with your Spirit,  
that we — creatures of dust —  
might reflect your image to all around us,  
and bear healing love to a broken world.**

May the ashes we wear upon our foreheads  
be outward signs of inward transformation.  
May the crosses that mark us as disciples,  
be reminders of our commitment to Christ,  
and signs of our readiness to embrace his life of service.

**As we begin this Lenten journey,  
turn our hearts and minds toward you,  
and help us live the faith of our baptism,  
that we might be like springs of water,  
refreshing lives that thirst for wholeness and hope. Amen.**

*Song #543*      “God, Be the Love to Search and Keep Me”

### *Sending*

The cross,  
    **We shall take it;**  
The pain,  
    **We shall bear it;**  
The joy  
    **We shall share it;**  
The Gospel,  
    **We shall live it;**  
The love,  
    **We shall give it;**  
The light,  
    **we shall cherish it;**  
The darkness,  
    **God shall perish it. Amen!**

*All are invited to join us for a soup supper, including vegetarian options,  
in Community Hall following Worship.*

Participants in tonight's service:

The Reverend Dr. Gregory Knox Jones  
The Reverend Sudie Niesen Thompson  
Westminster Solo Quartet  
Paul Fleckenstein, Organist/Director



O God,  
Help us to use this season of Lent  
to examine our attachments,  
and to sense where you invite us  
to live more simply and deeply.

Shine the light of your love  
into the private corners of our lives  
where we have acquired so much clutter  
that it has begun to restrict our freedom.

Grant us the strength to free ourselves  
from appetites and needs that drive us  
into taking, having and wanting  
more than we need or have time for.

Teach us that in letting go  
we become free rather than deprived,  
generous rather than covetous,  
and spacious rather than restricted.

We offer you our Lenten observance,  
and today we place our feet  
on the road to Easter  
and walk the way that you have walked before us.  
Amen.

By Ann Siddall