



March 6, 2019
ASH WEDNESDAY
1st Day of Lent

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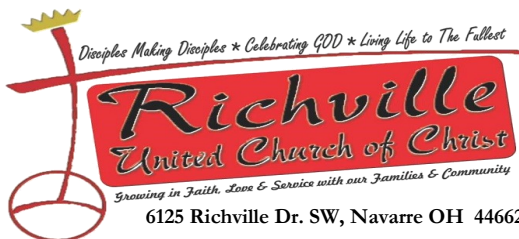
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Our accessible/family friendly restroom (equipped with changing table) is located at the back of the Fellowship Hall to the right of the kitchen.



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*No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey,
YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!*

ASH WEDNESDAY
1st Day of Lent

Something to Think and Pray About:

"The only way to deal with an unfree world is to become so absolutely free that your very existence is an act of rebellion." **-Albert Camus**

"As the ashes take away our sins, new growth happens. We start our life anew, just as a forest does after it, too, has been touched by the fire of sins." **-Anthony T. Hincks**

"Letting go gives us freedom, and freedom is the only condition for happiness. If, in our heart, we still cling to anything – anger, anxiety, or possessions – we cannot be free." **-Thich Nhat Hanh**

"Freedom is not the right to live as we please, but the right to find how we ought to live in order to fulfill our potential." **-Ralph Waldo Emerson**

"Life is all about perception. Positive versus negative. Whichever you choose will affect and more than likely reflect your outcomes." **-Sonya Teclai (musician)**

"Worry gives a small thing a big shadow." **-Swedish Proverb**

"Worry implies that we don't trust that God is big enough, powerful enough or loving enough to take care of what's happening in our lives." **-Francis Chan**

GATHERING OF THE FAITH COMMUNITY

+ **Designates all who are able please stand.**

7:00 pm - Ringing of the Church Bell

Prelude

WELCOME

+ Opening Hymn [vs. 1-4] **"Forty Days and Forty Nights"** [insert]

Call To Worship (A Litany of Preparation for Ash Wednesday & The Lenten Season) *(responsive)*

[informed by Psalm 51]

Leader: Beloved, let us gather in grateful confidence this night –knowing that The LORD is full of Mercy and unfailing Love.

PEOPLE: We will find freedom in facing our failings –for we know that GOD's great compassion can blot out all of our transgressions; wash away our iniquity; cleanse us from sin.

Leader: Help us, Holy One, to acknowledge our wrong doing –to admit that we are ever falling-short of YOUR desires for us.

PEOPLE: To be human is to sin –to be fallible and shortsighted, self-righteous and less-than-faithful.

Leader: YOU conceived us in and with liberty, but we have abused it. Still, YOU call-forth more from us and offer us deliverance from the bondage we subject ourselves and others to.

PEOPLE: May we be empowered to honor YOU anew with transformed lives –walking assured of YOUR Grace. Let the ears which have listened to too many lies and believed misrepresentations of true emancipation be cleared of falsehood and hear once more the sounds of joy and gladness.

Leader: And when we are crushed by the weight of our troubles, weighed-down by error and guilt, remind us once more of YOUR abiding power to purify us.

PEOPLE: Then the Hope YOU offer will allow us to walk, unfettered, in YOUR Truth. Then we will praise YOU all the more. We will embrace the clean hearts YOU afford us and allow our spirits to be renewed.

Leader: Bless us afresh, we humbly pray, to continually traverse this world, unencumbered, because we do so in YOUR Presence. Help us to open ourselves more and more to the gift of YOUR Holy Spirit.

PEOPLE: Restore us to Joy; renew our belief in YOUR Salvation –and we will be sustained. We will continually grow in our willingness to learn YOUR Way, to share it with others and return all people to YOUR Embrace and Purposes.

Leader: Deliver us from the shame of shackling ourselves and others to those things which aren't consistent with YOUR life-giving character, O GOD, our Savior.

PEOPLE: And our tongues will sing of YOUR Righteousness. Open our mouths, LORD, and we will declare YOUR praise.

Leader: YOU take no pleasure in vain sacrifices, we know; so enable us to bring before YOU our offerings of broken and contrite hearts –hearts which YOU alone can mend.

ALL: And YOU have assured us that such offerings will not be looked-down-upon. So may our renewed dedication bring YOU pleasure, and in that pleasure, may YOU bring about the health and prosperity of YOUR Holy People. For all of this we ask and pray in The Name and Power of The One who allowed himself to be held captive so that we all might be delivered and fully, truly live; AMEN!

Sung Response #9 “Glory Be to the Father” (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.*

SUBMITTING OURSELVES TO THE LIVING WORD OF GOD

The Christian Scriptures (New Testament)

The Gospel According to Matthew 6

Meditation on Ash Wednesday and Our Lenten Theme (with Consecration of The Ashes)

+ Hymn of Preparation #245 [vs. 1,2,4] **“What Wondrous Love Is This”**

rites and rituals of Ash Wednesday

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession (based on an Ash Wednesday prayer by Rev. Mary Nelson Abbott) (responsive)

Leader: Come, all you who are toiling, you who are bound-up;

PEOPLE: Come, Liberating GOD, hear our cries for mercy!

(silent meditation about those things where we need mercy in our lives)

Leader: Come, you who are lost, you who are hopeless;

PEOPLE: Come, Redeeming Christ, turn us to Your Light!

(silent meditation about those things where we need illumination, wisdom, understanding & hope)

Leader: Come, you who are angry, you who are hurting;

PEOPLE: Come, Cleansing Spirit, enter into our hearts!

(silent confession about those things where we are bitter, resentful, self-loathing, etc.)

Leader: Come, for forgiveness, for restoration!

ALL: Come, O Holy One, free us, heal us, bless us, recreate us in YOUR Image and into our callings. In Jesus' Name; AMEN!

Hymn of Response **“Lord Have Mercy Upon Us (Kyrie)”**

*Lord, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us.*

Ritual of Imposition of Ashes and Assurance of Pardon

NOTE: As you come forward to receive the ashes, you are invited to place any Offerings you may have brought in the **collection plate** and then place your Lenten Commitment Cards in the **basket**.

Collection of Lenten Commitment Cards & Offerings

Offertory/Meditative Music

+ Offertory Response **“Holy God”** [insert]

*Holy God, Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One, have mercy upon us.*

Pastoral Prayer of Dedication and The Lord's Prayer

*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. Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen.*

Wrestling With and Proclaiming The Freedom GOD Offers to a World in Bondage

+ Charge and Benediction (Challenge & Blessing)

+ Sending Hymn #507 [vs. 1,2,4] **“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”**

+ Postlude