

Help of the helpless, O abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away.
Change and decay in all around I see.
O thou who changest not, abide with me.

I need thy presence every passing hour.
What but thy grace can foil the tempter's power?
Who like thyself my guide and strength can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, O abide with me.

*Charge and Benediction

Please exit the service in silence. Following the noon service, all are invited to attend a soup lunch in the Fellowship Hall.

The Worship Service

Bob Henderson, senior minister
Katherine Kerr, senior associate minister, congregational care
Courtney Shudak, pastoral resident, mission and outreach
Emily Floyd, director of traditional music
Mark Glaeser, organist
Covenant Choir (6:30 p.m.)
Chorister Choir, Jubilate (6:30 p.m.)

Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent, the 40 days in which we both remember the sacrificial death and resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ, for the sins of humankind and reflect upon our own lives in light of God's unmerited grace. The imposition of ashes in the form of a cross impresses upon us our own mortality and need as well as God's all-sufficient power and love. It carries with it a promise, "that if the earthly tent in which we live is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (II Corinthians 5:1). All thanks be to God.

Cover Image: Today's bulletin cover was created by Eliana Taylor, inspired by the question our children's choirs have been exploring: what does it mean to have a clean heart? As they prepared to sing at the 6:30 p.m. service, the children offered their own honest, thoughtful answers. They spoke about love that is true, forgiveness that is real, and hearts shaped by Jesus. Their reflections gave rise not only to this artwork, but also to the confession liturgy we will pray together this evening. Eliana's drawing carries a profound hope: that God is still at work within us, reshaping what we carry inside. The children invite you to wonder alongside them. What does it mean to ask God for a clean heart? As we journey through Lent, may we follow Jesus together curious, honest, and open to the transforming love that makes all things new.

Hearing devices are available from the ushers. Audio-induction hearing loops are installed for use with hearing aids.

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1 Text by Sylvia Dunstan, © 1991 GIA Publications, Inc.

2 Text is Psalm 51, © 2021 Choristers Guild



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ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP

February 18, 2026

Noon in the Morrison Chapel

6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Covenant Presbyterian is a dynamic Christian community that gladly invites all people into a transformational experience of faith; boldly proclaims the gospel, bravely works toward a whole and just world, and passionately nurtures discipleship.

ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP

February 18, 2026 | Noon and 6:30 p.m.

Prelude

Abide With Me arr. R. Hobby

Call to Worship Bob Henderson (noon), Katherine Kerr (6:30 p.m.)

*Opening Hymn 177 (verses - soloist; refrain - congregation)

I Will Come to You YOU ARE MINE

*Prayer of Adoration

Choral Call to Confession

Come to Me, O Weary Traveler W. Rowan (noon)¹

Come to me, O weary traveler; come to me with your distress;

Come to me, you heavy burdened; come to me and find your rest.

Rest in me, O weary traveler; rest in me and do not fear.

Rest in me, my heart is gentle; rest and cast away your care.

~ *Emily Floyd, soprano* ~

Create in Me a Clean Heart M.L. Lightfoot (6:30 p.m.)²

Create in me, create in me, create in me a clean heart, O God.

Create in me, create in me a clean heart, a clean heart, O God.

Renew a right spirit within me.

Create in me, create in me a clean heart, a clean heart, O God. Amen.

~ *The Chorister & Jubilate Choirs* ~

Prayer of Confession (noon)

Merciful God, we confess that our hearts are not always open. We make room for what benefits us and crowd out those who challenge us. We say everyone matters, yet we choose comfort over courage and leave people at the edges. We hold onto anger. We nurse frustration. We rehearse old grievances in the quiet of our minds. We are not always honest with others, with ourselves, with you. Our love runs thin when we are tired. Our patience falters when we are afraid. When we are hurt, we sometimes pass that hurt along. Create in us clean hearts, O God. Clear out what is tangled. Wash away what is false. Make room again for mercy, for truth, for brave and generous love. In this Lenten season, teach us the way of Jesus: a heart wide enough for enemies and friends, steady enough to rise again when it falls, and tender enough to choose kindness even when it costs us...

Prayer of Confession (6:30 p.m.)

One: Sometimes our hearts are not open. We forget to make room for everyone.

All: Create in us a clean heart, O Lord.

One: Sometimes we act like not everyone is important. We choose favorites. We leave people out.

All: Create in us a clean heart, O Lord.

One: A clean heart is full of mercy and kindness, but sometimes we hold onto anger instead.

All: Create in us a clean heart, O Lord.

One: A clean heart is honest. There are no lies hiding inside.

All: Create in us a clean heart, O Lord.

One: A clean heart has enough love for everyone, strangers, immigrants, even people who don't like the same things we like.

All: Create in us a clean heart, O Lord.

One: A clean heart lets go of hate.

All: Create in us a clean heart, O Lord.

One: When it's hard, a clean heart remembers Jesus' way.

All: Create in us a clean heart, O Lord.

One: When we feel sad, a clean heart does not hurt others.

All: Create in us a clean heart, O Lord.

One: God who sees what is hidden, cleanse what is tangled in us. Make our hearts spacious, merciful, honest, and brave enough to love again tomorrow. We ask this in the words you taught us, praying together...

The Lord's Prayer (unison) (noon and 6:30 p.m)

**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 debts,
as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever. Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon

*Congregational Response 698

Take, O Take Me as I Am TAKE ME AS I AM

Take, O take me as I am;

Summon out what I shall be;

Set your seal upon my heart and live in me.

Scripture Reading

Luke 5:15-16 New Testament, p. 59

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 New Testament, p. 6

Meditation

"Marked for the Road" Courtney Shudak

Imposition of Ashes

Those wishing to participate are invited forward to receive the imposition of ashes.

Musical Reflection

Aria Tranquillo A. Vivaldi (noon)

~ *Mark Glaeser, organ* ~

Ave Verum (Jesu, Word of God Incarnate) W. A. Mozart (6:30 p.m.)

~ *Covenant Choir* ~

Closing Prayer Bob Henderson

*Closing Hymn

Abide With Me (verses 1-3) EVENTIDE

Abide with me: fast falls the eventide;

the darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.

When other helpers fail and comforts flee,