

Attendance — text “HERE” to 443-234-0806.
Visiting?—text “WELCOME” to 443-234-0806.

Ash Wednesday



February 14, 2024
Ash Wednesday

WESTMINSTER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

162/165 East Main Street • Westminster, MD 21157

www.wumcmd.org • 410-848-8325 • 410-876-2124



WELCOME

Ronnie Bohn

PRELUDE *“O Mensch, Bewin’ Dei’ Sunde Gross (O Man, Bewail Thy Grievous Fall)”* J.S.Bach

* CALL TO WORSHIP—Written by Joseph W. Daniels, Jr., in *The Africana Worship Book*

I invite you to stand, in heart or posture, and join me in the Call to Worship.

One: Even now, return to me, says God. Let the sirens in the streets rage; let the trumpet from the church house blow. Let those consumed with darkness, gloomy from bad fortunes, know that:

Many: Even now, God says, return to me.

One: Let the abused and abusing hear, the defiant and disobedient revere. Let the sinner and the scornful draw near. Return from your ignorance, return from your injustice. Return from your apathy, return from your agony.

Many: Even now, God says, return to me.

One: Return from your selfishness, return from your greed. Return from your neglect, return out of your need.

Many: Even now, God says, return to me.

One: Return to me, with a clean heart. Return to me with fasting, weeping and mourning.

ALL: Return to me, God says, for I am gracious and merciful; I am slow to anger and full of steadfast love. Return to me, God says, for I am your God.

* HYMN *“Sing, My Tongue, the Glorious Battle”* UMH 296

* GATHERING PRAYER—Written by Ruth C. Duck, in *Touch Holiness: Resources for Worship*
Creating God, still Center of the world you have made, we come to you in this season of turning and returning. We do not know how to seek you with our whole hearts, but we know you are our source and our destiny. In the midst of life, we return to you, we turn toward you. We thank you that you receive even the broken heart, the troubled conscience, the conflicted spirit. Seeking you in secret, may we honor you in public, through Jesus Christ, our path homeward to you. Amen.

* PASSING THE PEACE

The Peace of the risen Christ be with you; **And also with you.**

PSALTER UMH 51:1-9 (UMH 785, sung response 1) Rev. Ken Humbert

ANTHEM *“Create in Me”* (Psalm 51:10-12) Michael Larkin

GOD’S WORD IS READ Matthew 6:1-6,16-21

PASTORAL PRAYER/LORD’S PRAYER (UMH 895)

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

GOD'S WORD IS READ

2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

MESSAGE

God's Love Letters to the World

INVITATION TO THE OBSERVANCE OF LENTEN DISCIPLINE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND THANKSGIVING OVER THE ASHES—Written by Dr. Lisa Hancock
Confession is an act of trust. When we honestly name our sins, individual and corporate, to God, we trust that God receives our confession, because it is God's grace that empowers us to recognize our sin and repent. So, let us join our voices in confessing our sin before God and one another:

Merciful God, we confess that too often we make choices about what we should and should not do based on what others will think of us. We seek the validation of family, friends, and even strangers instead of resting in our sacred worth and identity in you. And so, we travel the path of least resistance when we know that path does not align with yours.

Forgive us, God, when we perform for one another instead of living with integrity in you.

Merciful God, we confess that we place too much value on money, prestige, and influence. We live in a society that tells us we need more and more and more in order to live secure and satisfied lives, and we choose to live according to this lie to the detriment of ourselves and our neighbors.

Forgive us, God, when we treasure wealth, status, possessions, and power over and above contrition, humility, generosity, and mutuality.

Merciful God, we confess that we do not love you rightly. While we may love you with part of our lives, we do not love you as God with our whole lives. We resist your call to surrender our lives into your hands and to trust that you will care for us as individuals and as a community better than we could ever do on our own.

Forgive us, God, when we point our hearts toward selfish gain instead of the lasting worth of life with you.

Offer prayers of silent confession.

Receive this good news:

We love because God first loved us.

In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.

In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.

Repent and believe, for God's grace empowers us to live in the humility of the beautiful and freeing truth that God is God, and we are not.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

THANKSGIVING OVER THE ASHES

Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth. Grant that these ashes may be to us a sign of our mortality and penitence, so that we may remember that only by your gracious gift are we given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

* IMPOSITION OF THE ASHES

Music during imposition of the ashes *"Mercy"* Telemann

* HYMN

"Sunday's Palms Are Wednesday's Ashes" FWS 2138

POSTLUDE (please be seated) *"Andante"* Botttazz

If you are moved to give offering, please use the collection basket(s) as you depart this evening's service.

LENTEN JOURNEY

WEEKLY GATHERING TO OBSERVE A HOLY LENT

Thursdays, 6pm, beginning Feb 15, led by Pastor Malcolm Stranathan

Register by email—m.stranathan@wumcmd.org

Register by phone—410-848,8325, x14

Workshops to gather and consider spiritual practices of fasting, prayer, study of Scripture, service/almsgiving, rest/renewing, and worship.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES DURING LENT

New Life in Christ Class—“Remember: God’s Covenants and the Cross,” led by Rev. Lou Peil and Woodie Wood, thru Mar 31.

Adult Discussion Class—Methodism Series (Martha Manahan Room), led by Rev. Ken Humbert and Pastor Malcolm Stranathan, thru Mar 3.

HOLY WEEK AT WESTMINSTER

SUNDAY, MARCH 24

8:15am Chapel, 10:30am worship

Palm Sunday service, onsite and online

THURSDAY, MARCH 28, 7pm

Maundy Thursday service, onsite and online

FRIDAY, MARCH 29, 7pm

Good Friday service, onsite and online

SUNDAY, MARCH 31

8:15am Chapel, 10:30am worship

Easter Sunday service, onsite and online



SERVICE NOTES INFORMATION BOX

Masking is optional; we respect your personal health choice.

Music: Peggy Brengle, CAGO-Organist Chancel Choir: Kyler Brengle, Director

Slides: Kyler Brengle AV Techs: tbd ASL Interpreter: Bill Pond

Liturgist: Ronnie Bohn Leading Worship: Rev. Dr. Malcolm Stranathan, Rev. Ken Humbert

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Our Mission at WUMC: "Changing lives through Jesus Christ to make a difference."