

# ASH WEDNESDAY

## Preparation and Resources

**Handouts:** The handout “What is Lent/Ash Wednesday” (page 6) can be distributed prior to, or during the Ash Wednesday service.

**In Person Service:** As people enter the Ash Wednesday service, they are given two slips of paper – “Put Off” and “Put On”, along with the sheet containing the responsive prayer and “Just as I Am”, and a pen/pencil. (Print and prepare pages 4-6)

**Virtual Service:** Email the handouts for virtual engagement or post in a chat feature. (Pages 5-7) For virtual service skip the burning process – replace with tearing or shredding.

**Preparation:** Before the Service experiment with burning pieces of paper to ensure it will be done safely and for you to know how long it will take.

If possible, set lights to dim, but there needs to be enough light for people to read and write.

Although the prevailing tone of the Ash Wednesday service is serious, it is still appropriate for a warm welcome. Remember that we are still a resurrection people. Along with the welcome there should be a very brief explanation of what people can expect in the service. That being said, don’t over explain. Encountering the unexpected can be powerful.

This Ash Wednesday service does not include a sermon, however brief thoughts can be included as the leader sees fit. For example, the leader might say something like “As we enter into the period of Lent, leading to Easter, we acknowledge how brief our mortal lives are. We are indeed dust, and to dust we will return. This realisation prepares us to see Jesus as the one in whom we have eternal life. Lent is a journey of dying to self and living in Christ”. When the bowl of burned paper is brought back into the sanctuary, the leader could say “Christ liberates us from all that enslaves. Remember these ashes as a symbol of your freedom”

Because of Covid uncertainty the actual imposition of ashes will not occur.

You and the congregation might welcome a season of less technological dependency. This could be a refreshing time of fewer distractions related to projection, amplification and broadcasting. The Ash Wednesday service can be as simple as you choose. Optional elements relying on technology are in parentheses. You are free to use Salvation Army resources without restrictions. Others will need to be purchased or copyright licensing secured. The links, including an optional Spotify playlist is included.

### **Video and Music resources:**

Video: Dust [https://youtu.be/sB\\_OflgtJwg](https://youtu.be/sB_OflgtJwg)

Video: A fast for Justice (Joel 2:1-2,12-17) <https://youtu.be/EZceDqBS4yY>

Video: Psalm 51 – Skit Guys <https://skitguys.com/videos/psalms-for-lent-ash-wednesday>

Audio (or video) “I surrender all”  
<https://salvationist.ca/files/salvationarmy/maga/onlineserviceresources/lyricvideodownloads/I%20surrender%20all.mp4>

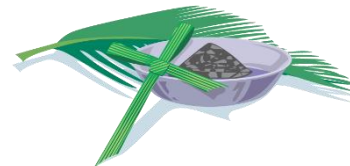
Audio (or video) “Let the Beauty of Jesus”  
<https://salvationist.ca/files/salvationarmy/maga/Salvation%20Worship/Let%20the%20Beauty%20of%20Jesus/Media/Let%20the%20Beauty%20of%20Jesus.mp3>

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Spotify Playlist:

[https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0V4N0QN2W3zvMFPmxOrGP4?si=6DWRm66gRH-z76Qrpt5dGw&utm\\_source=copy-link](https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0V4N0QN2W3zvMFPmxOrGP4?si=6DWRm66gRH-z76Qrpt5dGw&utm_source=copy-link)

***This resource was provided by Major Norman Garcia.***



# Ash Wednesday (Lux Aeterna)

Service Outline

*“Let today be the day you give up who you’ve been for who you can become.” (Hal Elrod)*

## **Welcome/ Explanation**

(Video “Dust” or “Psalm 51)

**Responsive Prayer:** (congregation reads bold print)

Come, you who are toiling, you who are bound-up;

**Come, Liberating God, hear our cries for mercy!**

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

**Come, Redeeming Christ, turn us to your light!**

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

**Come, Cleansing Spirit, enter into our hearts!**

Come, for confession, for forgiveness, for restoration!

**Come, O Holy One, free us, heal us, bless us!**

## **Song “Just as I am”**

*Just as I am, without one plea,  
But that Thy blood was shed for me,  
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

*Just as I am, though tossed about,  
With many a conflict, many a doubt,  
Fightings within and fears without,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

*Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,  
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,  
Because Thy promise I believe,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

*Just as I am – Thy love unknown  
Has broken every barrier down!  
Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

## **Scripture**

Joel 2:1-2,12-17 (“A Prayer for Justice” video or invite someone to read)

## **Put Off**

(write on slip of paper one thing that is in the way of you following Jesus, fold paper and place in plain heat resistant container - someone takes container outside (not inside!) and burns them. Once papers are burned and no longer are smoking, container with burnt papers are brought back into the sanctuary.)

(audio while people consider and write: “All to Jesus, I surrender” can be played)

## **Scripture:**

Someone read: 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

Someone read: Matthew 6:1-6,16-21

## **Put On**

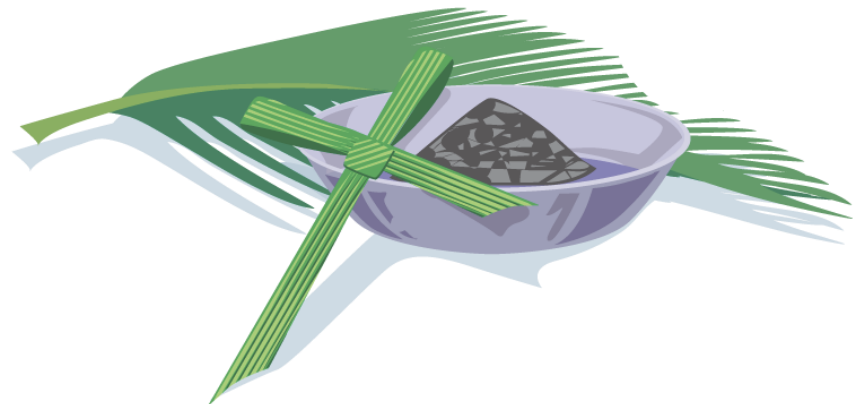
(write on second slip of paper some area of growth, something you would like to ‘put on’ during this season of Lent. (people keep this paper))

(“Let the Beauty of Jesus be seen in me” can be played during this time.)

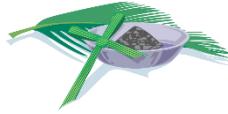
## **Benediction**

Now is the acceptable time:  
put no obstacle in anyone's way;  
work together to accept God's grace;  
and be reconciled to God.  
Loose the bonds of injustice,  
break every yoke, and  
let the oppressed go free.  
Repair the breaches,  
restore the streets, and  
let your light rise in the shadows of these Forty Days.

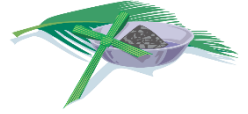
## **Prayer of Blessing**



## PUT OFF



## PUT ON



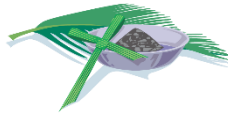
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You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to **put off your old self**, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; <sup>23</sup> to be made new in the attitude of your minds; <sup>24</sup> and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. (Eph 4:22-24 NIV)

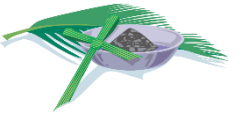
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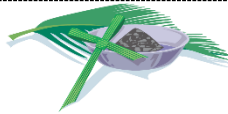
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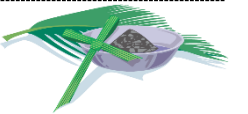
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## Ash Wednesday Service

*“Let today be the day you give up who you’ve been for who you can become.” (Hal Elrod)*

### **Responsive Prayer** (Please read bold print):

Come, you who are toiling, you who are bound-up;  
**Come, Liberating God, hear our cries for mercy!**  
Come, you who are lost, you who are hopeless;  
**Come, Redeeming Christ, turn us to your light!**  
Come, you who are angry, you who are hurting;  
**Come, Cleansing Spirit, enter into our hearts!**  
Come, for confession, for forgiveness, for restoration!  
**Come, O Holy One, free us, heal us, bless us!**

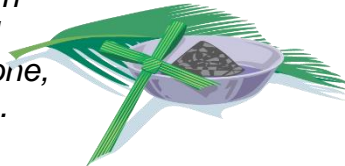
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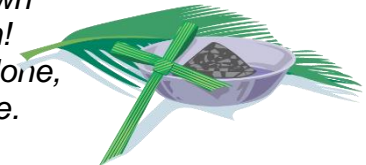
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### **What is Lent? (Dennis Bratcher. Crivoice.org)**

Lent is marked by a time of prayer and preparation to celebrate Easter. Since Sundays celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, the six Sundays that occur during Lent are not counted as part of the 40 days of Lent, and are referred to as the Sundays **in** Lent. The number 40 is connected with many biblical events, but especially with the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness preparing for His ministry by facing the temptations that could lead him to abandon his mission and calling. Christians today use this period of time for introspection, self examination, and repentance...

Lent has traditionally been marked by penitential prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Some churches today still observe a rigid schedule of fasting on certain days during Lent, especially the giving up of meat, alcohol, sweets, and other types of food. Other traditions do not place as great an emphasis on fasting, but focus on charitable deeds, especially helping those in physical need with food and clothing, or simply the giving of money to charities. Most Christian churches that observe Lent at all focus on it as a time of prayer, especially penance, repenting for failures and sin as a way to focus on the need for God's grace. It is really a preparation to celebrate God's marvelous redemption at Easter, and the resurrected life that we live, and hope for, as Christians.

### **What is Ash Wednesday?**

Ash Wednesday is an ancient holy day in the Christian church calendar. It marks the beginning of the season of Lent—a time of penitence, discipline, and renewal. In the Ash Wednesday service we are reminded of our mortality, we confess our sins, and we experience forgiveness through Christ's death and resurrection...

In Scripture, ashes serve both as a symbol of mortality and as a sign of mourning and repentance. But neither sin nor death are the final word. We leave the service in confidence and gratitude: Christ has conquered death, and nothing can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

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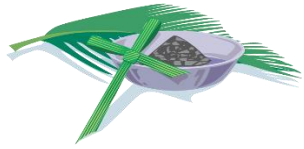
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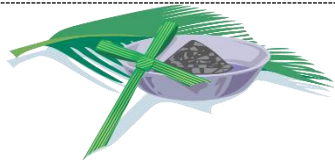
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