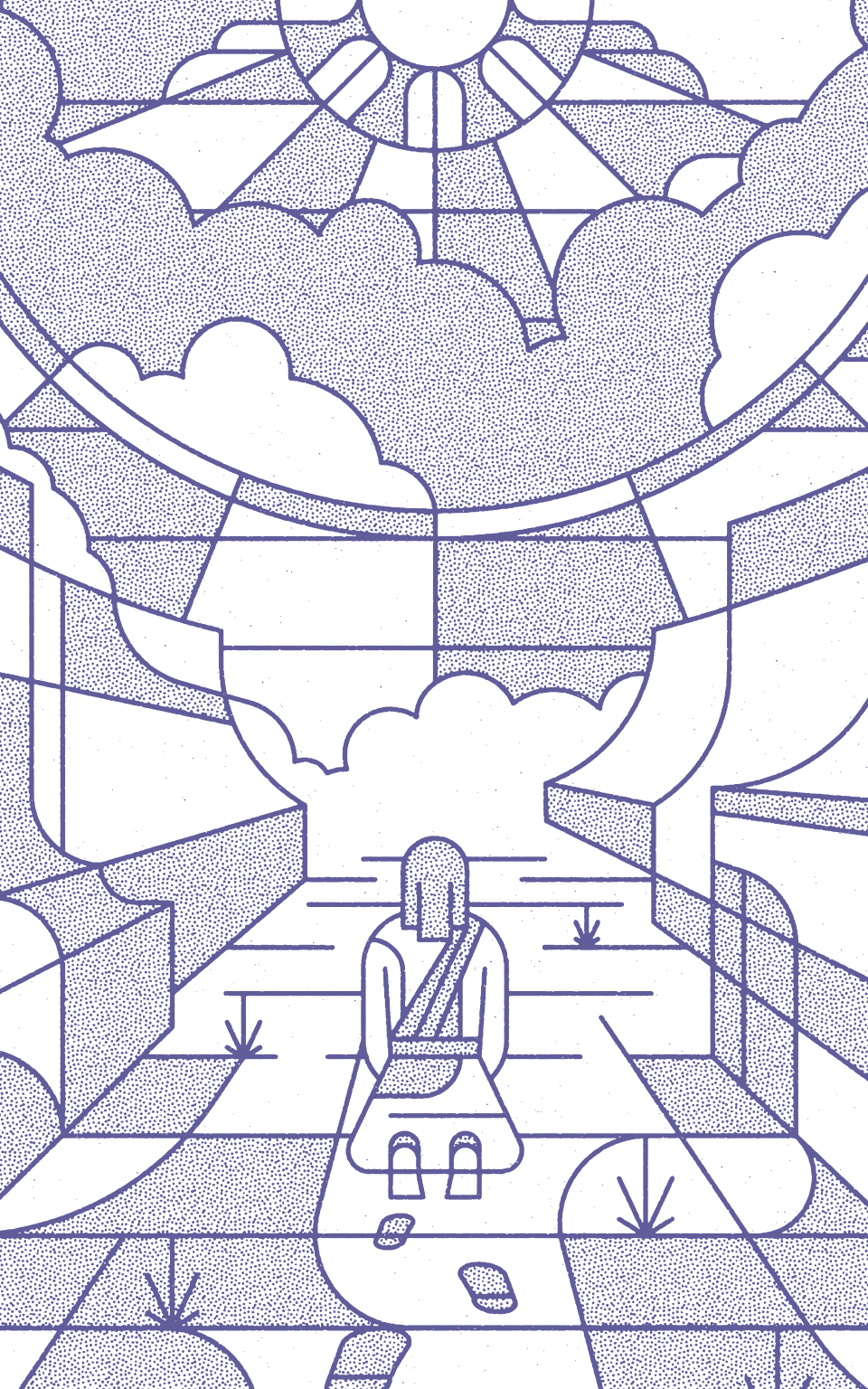




**ASH  
WEDNESDAY**  
— 2022 —







## – THE SEASON OF LENT –

The word “Lent” can invoke a number of thoughts, questions, and feelings, depending on your background with the Church. If you grew up in an evangelical church, you probably think of it as some strange Catholic tradition, where folks put ashes on their foreheads and give up different kinds of foods every year. If you grew up in a liturgical tradition, you may have had a good experience or, perhaps, you file it away in the junk drawer of legalism given some bad experiences. Whatever the case, Lent doesn’t have to be seen as either rote or mystifying. Like the rest of the seasons, it can be seen rightly and faithfully when understood through the lens of Jesus—the one true story of the Bible.

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, which kicks off 40 days of prayer and fasting—representing Jesus’ 40 days in the wilderness. The last week of Lent is called Holy Week, during which we remember Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday), the Last Supper with His disciples (Maundy Thursday), and His death on the cross (Good Friday). The season officially ends on Holy Saturday, the day before Easter.

A season to prepare for the joy and hope of Easter, Lent reminds us that the Resurrection only occurred after the crucifixion. It is a time for the Church to symbolically follow Christ into the wilderness. It is a time for fasting and self-denial, though not for denial itself. It is a period to empty ourselves of lesser things so that we might be filled with the greater things of the gospel.

In a culture inundated by individualism and hedonism, with rhythms and practices that turn our desires toward the things we think we need, Lent turns our desires toward Jesus, the only thing we truly need, helping us trade lesser loves for His greater love. When we enter into the story of Jesus, symbolically walking with Him through the desert and to the cross, we move from self-gratification to self-denial. As we embrace the pain and sorrow of Jesus, we turn away from our sin and toward the Savior.

## – ASH WEDNESDAY –

The first day of Lent, Ash Wednesday sets into motion a season of self-examination and self-denial, a time to examine sin, contemplate our mortality, and prepare for Easter. This day historically centers on the receiving of ashes, hence the name, as both a symbol of repentance and commitment to participate in the 40 days of Lent. This practice, putting ash on your forehead, may seem strange, but it's rooted in the Scriptures. Throughout the Bible, those in a state of mourning or repentance would often wear sackcloth and ash as a symbol of their grief. While ashes continued to be used in different Christian ceremonies in the Early Church, we know that around the 8th century Christians began using ashes to mark the beginning of Lent. In many traditions, ash is made of burnt palm branches from the previous Palm Sunday.

### **Ash Wednesday at The Village Church**

We know that the Church Calendar, in particular the season of Lent, is new to many. As we enter into this biblical tradition, we want to be sensitive to those who have never seen or taken part in these practices or who have had negative experiences with them in the past. We also want to make it clear that none of this is about salvation or a way to earn God's love. We are not bound to the seasons and want to be careful that they don't ever become legalistic. Our conviction to practice the Church Calendar is about worship and sanctification and a desire to be shaped and formed more into the image of the Son by the power of the Spirit.

With that said, despite the historical and biblical meaning of the ashes, we have chosen not to incorporate ashes during our services this year. It's something we will reconsider as we continue to walk through the seasons as a church, but we don't feel like it's wise or right for the formation of our people at this time. We believe we can still practice the "why" of Ash Wednesday without the "how" of receiving ashes.

### **A Note to Parents**

We are excited that you are entering into the season of Lent together as a family. This season provides endless opportunities for family discipleship through the framework of time, moments, and milestones. Our Seasons Guide ([tvcresources.net](http://tvcresources.net)) has ideas on how to practice Lent as a family.



## **SUGGESTED FASTING SCHEDULE**

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March 2–5

**Food**

March 6–12

**Television and Movies**

March 13–19

**Social Networking and Internet**

March 20–26

**Caffeine and Sweets**

March 27–April 2

**Radio, Podcasts, and Music**

April 3–9

**Shopping for Non-Essentials**

April 10–16

**Sleep**

# – ORDER *of* SERVICE –

## GREETING

## CALL TO WORSHIP

## SCRIPTURE READING – Joel 2:12–17

“Yet even now,” declares the LORD,  
“return to me with all your heart,  
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;  
and rend your hearts and not your garments.”

Return to the LORD your God,  
for he is gracious and merciful,  
slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love;  
and he relents over disaster.  
Who knows whether he will not turn and relent,  
and leave a blessing behind him,  
a grain offering and a drink offering  
for the LORD your God?

Blow the trumpet in Zion;  
consecrate a fast;  
call a solemn assembly;  
gather the people.  
Consecrate the congregation;  
assemble the elders;  
gather the children,  
even nursing infants.  
Let the bridegroom leave his room,  
and the bride her chamber.

Between the vestibule and the altar  
let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep  
and say, “Spare your people, O LORD,  
and make not your heritage a reproach,  
a byword among the nations.  
Why should they say among the peoples,  
‘Where is their God?’”

## CONGREGATIONAL SONG – “Lord I Need You”

Lord I come, I confess  
Bowing here, I find my rest  
Without You, I fall apart  
You're the one that guides my heart

Lord, I need You, oh I need You  
Every hour, I need You  
My one defense, my righteousness  
Oh God, how I need You

Where sin runs deep, Your grace is more  
Where grace is found is where You are  
And where You are, Lord I am free  
Holiness is Christ in me

Lord, I need You, oh I need You  
Every hour, I need You  
My one defense, my righteousness  
Oh God, how I need You

So teach my song to rise to You  
When temptation comes my way  
When I cannot stand, I'll fall on You  
Jesus, You're my hope and stay

When I cannot stand, I'll fall on You  
Jesus, You're my hope and stay

Lord, I need You, oh I need You  
Every hour, I need You  
My one defense, my righteousness  
Oh God, how I need You  
You're my one defense, my righteousness  
Oh God, how I need You

My one defense, my righteousness  
Oh God, how I need You



## SCRIPTURE READING – Matthew 5:1–17

Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

“You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet.

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.”

## CONGREGATIONAL SONG – “The Goodness of Jesus”

Come you weary heart now to Jesus  
Come you anxious soul now and see  
There is perfect love and comfort in your tears  
Rest here in His wondrous peace

Come find what this world cannot offer  
Come and find your joy here complete  
Taste the living water, never thirst again  
Rest here in His wondrous peace

Oh the goodness, the goodness of Jesus  
Satisfied, He is all that I need  
May it be, come what may, that I rest all my days  
In the goodness of Jesus

Come and find your hope now in Jesus  
He is all He said He would be  
Grace is overflowing from the Savior's heart  
Rest here in His wondrous peace

Oh the goodness, the goodness of Jesus  
Satisfied, He is all that I need  
May it be, come what may, that I rest all my days  
In the goodness of Jesus

May it be, come what may, that I rest all my days  
In the goodness of Jesus

## **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Father, forgive us.

We endlessly chase the things of this world.

We continue to buy into false promises time and time again,

Believing they will satisfy our deepest longings,

Only to find that they continue to leave us empty.

So we chase after another.

O God, help us.

Have mercy on us, according to Your steadfast love.

Help us to keep our eyes up, fixed on You,

And as we behold You in all of Your beauty,

Continue to mold us into the image of the Son,

From one degree of glory to the next.

Father, help our hearts to believe You are our greatest treasure.

Lord, we believe.

Help our unbelief!

**BOOK OF PRAYERS, VOLUME 2 (THE VILLAGE CHURCH)**



## RESPONSIVE READING – Psalm 51:1–15

Minister: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindness;

**People: in your great compassion blot out my offenses.**

Minister: Wash me through and through from my wickedness,

**People: and cleanse me from my sin.**

Minister: For I know my transgressions,

**People: and my sin is ever before me.**

Minister: Against you only have I sinned

**People: and done what is evil in your sight.**

Minister: And so you are justified when you speak

**People: and upright in your judgment.**

Minister: Indeed, I have been wicked from my birth,

**People: a sinner from my mother's womb.**

Minister: For behold, you look for truth deep within me,

**People: and will make me understand wisdom secretly.**

Minister: Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure;

**People: wash me, and I shall be clean indeed.**

Minister: Make me hear of joy and gladness,

**People: that the body you have broken may rejoice.**

Minister: Hide your face from my sins,

**People: and blot out all my iniquities.**

Minister: Create in me a clean heart, O God,

**People: and renew a right spirit within me.**

Minister: Cast me not away from your presence,

**People: and take not your Holy Spirit from me.**

Minister: Give me the joy of your saving help again,

**People: and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.**

Minister: I shall teach your ways to the wicked,

**People: and sinners shall return to you.**

Minister: Deliver me from death, O God,

**People: and my tongue shall sing of your righteousness,  
O God of my salvation.**

Minister: Open my lips, O Lord,

**People: and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

Minister: Had you desired it, I would have offered sacrifice;

**People: but you take no delight in burnt-offerings.**

Minister: The sacrifice of God is a troubled spirit;

**People: a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will  
not despise.**





**The Village Church**