



Ash Wednesday Service
February 18, 2026

PRELUDE	“Forty Days and Forty Nights”	arr. Linda Dover
WELCOME		Rev. Karen Wright
*CALL TO WORSHIP		Joel 2:1–2, 12–17
ONE: Blow the trumpet in Zion! Sound the alarm on God’s holy mountain. Call all the people together — young and old.		
ALL: For the day of the Lord is coming, a day unlike any other.		
ONE: Even now, God says, return to me with all your heart; change your life, not just your clothes.		
ALL: Let us return to our God, and to God’s ways. For our God is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and full of compassion and mercy.		
*HYMN 166	“Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days”	ST. FLAVIAN

Lord, Who throughout These 166 Forty Days

1 Lord, who through-out these for - ty days for us did fast and
 2 As you with Sa - tan did con-tend and did the vic-tory
 3 And through these days of pen - i - tence, and through this Pas-sion -
 4 A - bide with us, till when this life of suf - fering shall be

pray, teach us with you to mourn our sins and close by you to stay.
 win, O give us strength to per - se - vere, in you to con-quer sin.
 tide, yes, ev - er - more, in life and death, O Lord, with us a - bide.
 past, an Eas - ter of un - end - ing joy we may at - tain at last.

Like many of this author's hymns, this text was written primarily for children but works equally well in reminding adults how Lent connects us with Christ's temptation in the wilderness and prepares us for Easter. The 16th-century English psalm tune provides sturdy support.

TEXT: Claudia F. I. Hernaman, 1873, alt.
 MUSIC: Day's *Psalter*, 1562

ST. FLAVIAN
 CM

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 51

Have mercy on me, O God,
 according to your steadfast love;
 according to your abundant mercy,
 blot out my transgressions.
 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
 and cleanse me from my sin.
 For I know my transgressions,
 and my sin is ever before me.
 Against you, you alone, have I sinned
 and done what is evil in your sight,
 so that you are justified in your sentence
 and blameless when you pass judgment.

Indeed, I was born guilty,
a sinner when my mother conceived me.
You desire truth in the inward being;
therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.
Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.
Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.
Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and put a new and right spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from your presence,
and do not take your holy spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and sustain in me a willing spirit.
Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will return to you.
Deliver me from bloodshed, O God,
O God of my salvation,
and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance.
O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare your praise.
For you have no delight in sacrifice;
if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.
The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.
Do good to Zion in your good pleasure;
rebuild the walls of Jerusalem;
then you will delight in right sacrifices,
in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings;
then bulls will be offered on your altar.

MEDITATION

INVITATION TO OBSERVE A HOLY LENT

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

*HYMN 676

“Day Is Done”

AR HYDY NOS

Day Is Done

676

1 Day is done, but love un-fail-ing dwells ev-er here;
 2 Dark de-scends, but light un-end-ing shines through our night;
 3 Eyes will close, but you un-sleep-ing watch by our side.

shad-ows fall, but hope, pre-vail-ing, calms ev-ery fear.
 you are with us, ev-er lend-ing new strength to sight:
 Death may come; in love's safe-keep-ing still we a-bide.

God, our Mak-er, none for-sak-ing, take our hearts, of love's own
 one in love, your truth con-fess-ing, one in hope of heav-en's
 God of love, all e-vil quell-ing, sin for-giv-ing, fear dis-

mak-ing; watch our sleep-ing; guard our wak-ing; be al-ways near.
 bless-ing, may we see, in love's pos-sess-ing, love's end-less light!
 pel-ing, stay with us, our hearts in-dwell-ing, this e-ven-tide.

This 20th-century hymn by a Scottish Jesuit paraphrases several traditional evening prayers and takes its shape from the familiar Welsh tune to which it is set. Its rhyme pattern requires considerable poetic skill, as only three rhymes serve for the eight lines of text.

TEXT: James Quinn, SJ, 1969, alt.

MUSIC: Welsh melody, c. 1784

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AR HYD Y NOS

8.4.8.4.8.8.6.4

***BLESSING**

POSTLUDE

“Day Is Done”

arr. Hal Hopson

**Stand in body or spirit*

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The Season of Lent

Lent is a season of reflection, repentance, and renewal. It is a time to journey with Christ toward the cross, examining our hearts and drawing closer to God. This year our Lenten theme, *“At the Threshold: Conversations on the Way to the Cross”* invites us into a season of standing on the edge of something not yet fully known. We will meet Jesus through conversations that happen at thresholds – night and day, belief and doubt, grief and hope, fear and trust. Jesus meets people where they are and invites them through the moment and being transformed by the conversation. Let us stand at the thresholds of our lives and consider what has been and what is yet to come. View all of our Lenten resources at gcpc.org/lent.



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