



Ash Wednesday and the Forty Days of Lent
begin this Week:
Liturgy of Holy Communion,
Extended Confession, and Imposition of Ashes at
7:15 p.m.

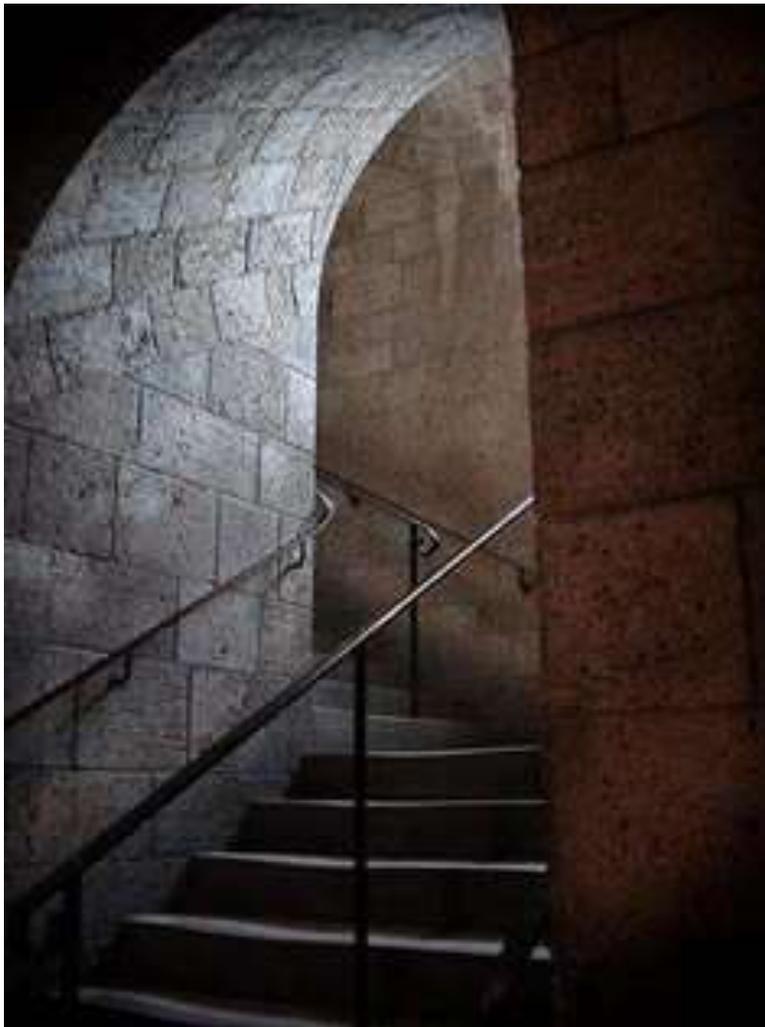


O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

You may access the worship folder for Ash Wednesday by clicking on the file below:

 [Ash Wednesday Liturgy.pdf](#)

The service will be live-streamed [HERE](#).



Lent is much like the act of sitting down while riding a bus. Though you are moving forward and going toward a destination; ultimately, you are stationary. The sitting down is what allows you to reflect, remember, and be, even though you are still going somewhere.

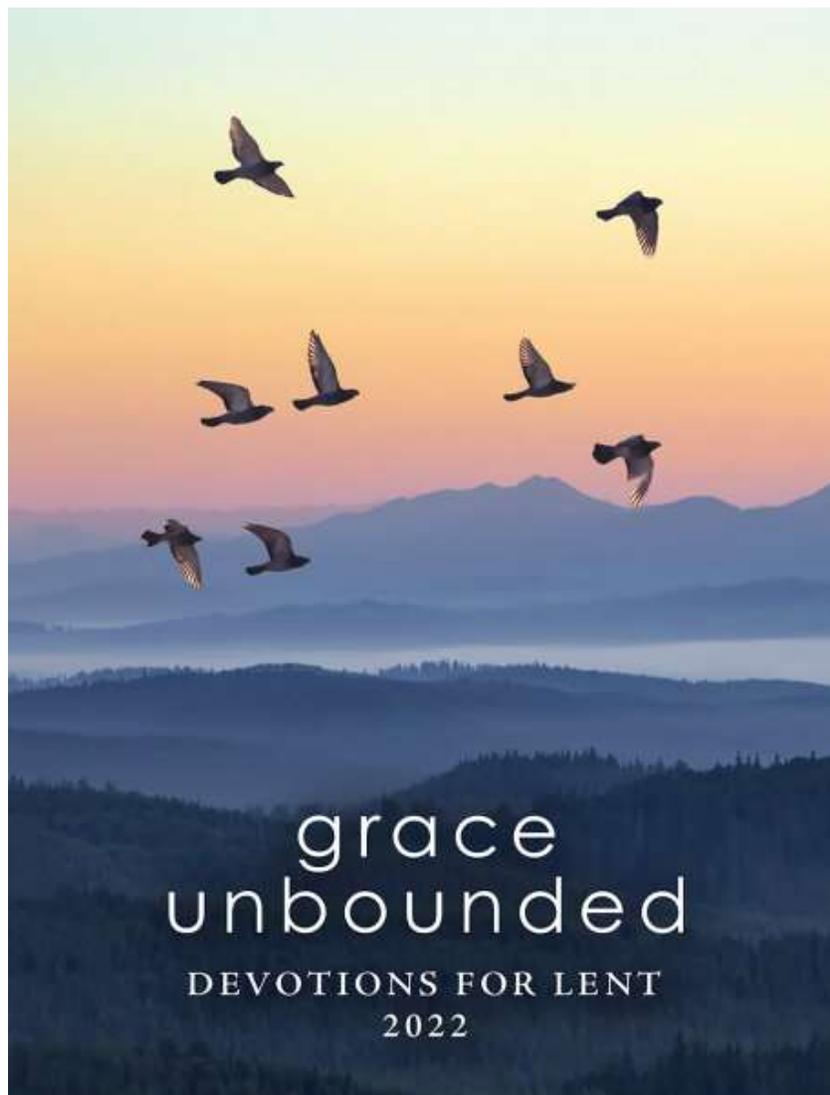
Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, is our permission to sit back and go with the ebbs and flows of the bus ride. There is an element of mystery because it is most likely a new route of prayer, repentance, fasting, and reflection. Receiving the ashes, made with palms from the previous year's Easter celebration, reminds us where we have been and where we are to go.



“But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also”

(Matthew 6:20-21). The forty day journey to Easter requires our greatest humility.

The spiritual acts of denying ourselves simple luxuries allow us to find renewed focus. Lent, these intense forty days of focus, prepare us for the emotional events of Christ's death and resurrection. Ash Wednesday is when we find any seat (because they are equally challenging) on the bus, sit down, and prepare for the long ride toward Easter's hallelujah.---*Blair Tolbert*



Copies are available at the entrances to the sanctuary or by contacting the church office.



With the long awaited easing of the burden of pandemic and the lifting of some virus restrictions, the coming Lenten season may be a time for you to renew your devotion to in-person worship practices and refresh your lives in "the community of the beloved" around the Word and Sacraments. Wearing a face covering is still highly recommended when entering and exiting the worship space and when singing and receiving the Lord's Supper but can be eased when you are seated. Hand sanitizing and other safety measures continue to be highly encouraged. Please prayerfully consider returning to worship during this holy season and the Easter days ahead of us.



"Prayer"

A poem by Dana Gioia

**Echo of the clocktower, footstep
in the alleyway, sweep
of the wind sifting the leaves.**

**Jeweller of the spiderweb, connoisseur
of autumn's opulence, blade of lightning
harvesting the sky.**

**Keeper of the small gate, choreographer
of entrances and exits, midnight
whisper travelling the wires.**

Seducer, healer, deity, or thief,

**I will see you soon enough---
in the shadow of the rainfall,**

**in the brief violet darkening a sunset---
but until then I pray watch over him
as a mountain guards its covert ore**

and the harsh falcon its flightless young.

Dana Gioia is the Poet Laureate of California. For six years he served the nation as Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. His book, 99 Poems: New & Selected, has been published by Graywolf Press. This beautiful poem remembers his first son, Michael Jasper, whom Gioia and his wife Mary lost in infancy to sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). The poem is offered in the spirit of the Psalms of Lament and may speak to the recent losses which so many of us grieve.

You may listen to the choral composition of this poem by clicking below or [HERE](#).

["Prayer"](#)

Poem by Dana Gioia

Choral composition by Morten Lauridsen

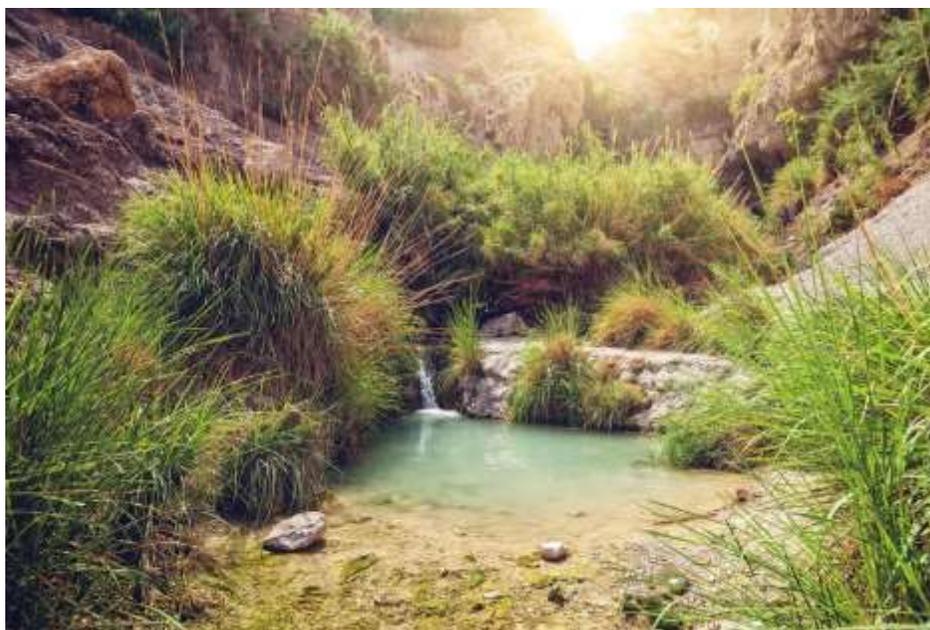
Performed by the Wartburg Choir, Lee Nelson, conductor



Photo taken this morning on the Soldier River Valley near Moorhead, Iowa by Daryle Lauritsen.



God of infinite mercy and goodness, with grateful hearts we pray to you today for peace. You offer us your peace continually, and you constantly remind us that peacemakers are blessed “for they shall be called children of God.” May your voice resound in the hearts of all, as you call us to follow the path of reconciliation and peace, and to be merciful as you are merciful. We pray to you for the people of the Ukraine who are experiencing conflicts, violence and deaths. Bless the leaders with wisdom, vision and perseverance needed to build together a world of justice and solidarity, and to break down walls of hostility and division. Let us walk: in the light of the Lord. Amen.



*For waters break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;
the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water...
(Isaiah 35:6b-7a).*

**Join us every Sunday at 10:15 a.m.
in person or for continuing live
streaming of the liturgy
accessed through the website by
clicking
[HERE.](#)**

Recordings of the services are uploaded to the same site for viewing at a later date.



www.stspeterandpaulriverside.org