

*in view of*

G O D ' S  
M E R C Y



ASH WEDNESDAY:  
*Mercy in Ashes*

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# G O D ' S M E R C Y

A S H W E D N E S D A Y

## *Mercy in Ashes*

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*Mercy in Ashes*

ABOUT THIS SERVICE

Ash Wednesday is a day when we confess our sins in view of God's mercy toward us in the sacrifice of his Son for us on the cross. We, in turn, are called by God, especially during this time of repentance and reflection, to be living sacrifices for him, displaying our devotion to him in word and deed. Jesus helps us to see the richness of God's mercy in his life, death and resurrection. The services in this worship series for Lent by theology professor David Peter focus our eyes of faith on the meaning behind the ashes placed on our foreheads that represent our sinful nature and the love of God that washes our sins away.

This kit contains: order of service • sermon • children's sermon • prayers • music for the accompanist

The kit includes everything you need for each service as well as digital files with the text of the entire kit in .rtf (rich text format), newsletter/bulletin notices, hymns, visual media recommendations, contemporary music song suggestions and PowerPoint documents of all the services with images and text (along with a copyright release) for use on screens.

ORDERING INFORMATION

Additional resources are available from Creative Communications for the Parish. Contact us for current pricing and availability. Call us at 1-800-325-9414. Or visit our website:  
[www.creativecommunications.com](http://www.creativecommunications.com).

**Blank Bulletins for the Lent Series:**

Code **GMW2** • Blank bulletins • 8.5" x 11"

Code **GMWR** • Blank bulletins • 8.5" x 14"

### **Holy Week Services to Complete the Series:**

Those who desire may supplement this series with other services that continue the series format and theme. Each is ordered separately and includes all the Worship Kit features described above, except the digital files.

Or, order all four service kits together. As a bonus, orders for all four kits include digital files with text of services and of bulletins in .rtf (rich text format).

All four kits • Code **GMW9**

#### **Palm Sunday**

Mercy in Palms • John 12:13

*As people wave palm branches to welcome Jesus into Jerusalem, we witness Jesus beginning his mission of mercy for all people for the salvation of our souls.*

Code **GMWZ • Kit**

#### **Maundy Thursday**

Mercy in Bread and Wine • 1 Corinthians 11:26

*As the bread is broken and the cup is poured, Christ's body and blood serve as agents of mercy to us who are broken by sin and thirsting for righteousness.*

Code **GMW4 • Kit**

#### **Good Friday**

Mercy in the Cross • Colossians 2:4

*Jesus mercifully removed the sentence of sin against us by going to the cross to declare us not guilty.*

Code **GMW5 • Kit**

## **Easter Sunday**

Mercy in the Open Tomb • Hebrews 13:20-21

*Because Christ rose from the dead, we have a new beginning  
that mirrors the mercy of our Lord and Savior.*

Code **GMW6** • Kit

### **Blank Bulletins for the Holy Week Series:**

Code **GMWB** • Holy Week (Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday)  
Blank bulletins • 8.5" x 11"

Code **GMWD** • Holy Week (Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday)  
Blank bulletins • 8.5" x 14"

Code **GMWC** • Easter Sunday  
Blank bulletins • 8.5" x 11"

Code **GMWE** • Easter Sunday  
Blank bulletins • 8.5" x 14"

### **Other Resources:**

### **Other Resources:**

Code **GMW7** • Promotional Bulletin Insert

Code **GMWBK** • Bookmark

Code **GMW8** • Display Posters • 11" x 17"

Code **GM2** • Devotion Book

### **Bible Study Resources:**

Code **WGSG** • In View of God's Mercy Student Guide

Code **WGLG** • In View of God's Mercy Leader's Guide

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G O D ' S M E R C Y

A S H W E D N E S D A Y

*Mercy in Ashes*

COMPLETE SCRIPT FOR WORSHIP  
LEADERS

- If desired, an **Environmental Projection** is shown on a screen or on the walls of your worship space to set the tone for the service before the service begins or throughout the service at various points:

[shutterstock.com/image-photo/cross-made-ashes-ash-wednesday-lent-1046325139](https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/cross-made-ashes-ash-wednesday-lent-1046325139)

- This **Theme Verse** is read aloud by the pastor at the start of the service or is read silently by the congregation before the service begins:

*Return to the LORD, your God, for he is gracious and merciful,  
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. Joel 2:13*

- The **Invocation and Call to Worship** are spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation:

**P** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C** Amen.

**P** Return to the Lord your God.

**C** Christ crucified, I come.

**P** Behold his miracle of mercy.

**C Christ crucified, I come.**

**P** Receive his gift of grace.

**C Christ crucified, I come.**

**P** Abide in his steadfast love.

**C Christ crucified, I come.**

**P** Rest in his unfailing faithfulness.

**C Christ crucified, I come.**

- The **Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Dustan 888 6, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Drawn to the cross, which thou hast blessed with healing gifts for souls distressed,  
To find in thee my life, my rest, Christ crucified, I come.

Thou knowest all my griefs and fears, thy grace abused, my misspent years;  
Yet now to thee with contrite tears, Christ crucified, I come.

Wash me and take away each stain; let nothing of my sin remain.  
For cleansing, though it be through pain, Christ crucified, I come.

And then for work to do for thee, which shall so sweet a service be  
That angels well might envy me, Christ crucified, I come.

- The **Confession and Forgiveness** are spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation:

**P** “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” (Joel 2:12-13). As our Lord summons us to return to him with repentant hearts, we confess our sins and sorrow over them.

**C Almighty God, we are unclean before you. We are marred and marked by the filth of sin. We have turned away from you by disobeying your commandments. We have rebelled against you by seeking our own way rather than following your will. Forgive us.**

**P** We cry out to you for mercy!

**C Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.**

*(Please silently reflect on the fact that though our sin is great, God's mercy is greater.)*

**P** Hear the good news! God's Word declares that "he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love" (Joel 2:13). In the mercy of Almighty God, his Son Jesus was given to die for you to remove the stain of your sin. For Christ's sake God forgives you all your sin and renews a right spirit within you. His mercy endures forever because his love for you is steadfast.

**C Amen.**

- The **Imposition of Ashes** takes place at this time. The assembly may come forward to receive the imposition of ashes. Ashes are placed on the forehead in the shape of the cross, as the following words are spoken: "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." After the imposition is completed, the assembly may be seated for the Prayer of the Day.

- The **Prayer of the Day** is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

**P** Almighty and everlasting God, as we begin our Lenten pilgrimage, we do so in a spirit of repentance. We are sinful and depend completely upon your mercy. Strengthen us by your Holy Spirit so that we might follow you in paths of righteousness. We pray through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

- The **Children's Sermon** is delivered by the pastor or other worship leader:

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. 1 John 1:9*

**P** Have you ever done something bad? I don't want you to tell me about it, but I want you to think back during the last week on something bad that you did. Maybe you told a lie to your mother. Or maybe you disobeyed your father and refused to pick up your toys when he told you to. Perhaps you yelled at your brother or took a toy away from your sister. Maybe you pushed a friend down or made fun of someone else's mistake. These are all bad things, and each of us does bad things sometimes in our lives.

What are we to do after we do something bad? First, we are to admit to doing it. We tell the person we wronged what we did. But there is more to it than that. We also tell them that we are sorry for what we did. We apologize for being bad to them. We say that we were wrong to lie to them, or disobey them, or yell at them, or take their toys, or make fun of them. We ask them to forgive us for what we did.

You know something wonderful? When we tell someone we are sorry for the bad thing that we did to them and ask for forgiveness, if that person truly loves us, he or she will forgive us. They

will tell us that they will not do bad things to us in return. They will show mercy to us. Your mom will hug you. Your dad will help you. Your brother or sister will want to play with you. Your friend will hold your hand and smile at you. This is what can happen when we admit to doing wrong and are sorry for it.

It is like this with God also. When we do bad things like lying or disobeying or stealing or hurting someone, this also troubles God. We disobey God when we do bad things. But God loves us and wants to forgive us for the wrongs we have done. As we tell him our misdeeds and say that we are sorry for doing them, we can know that he hears us. And when we ask God to forgive us for the bad that we have done, he willingly does so—he forgives us.

Today begins a time period that we call Lent. For the next few weeks we will be thinking about the bad things that we have done and how they offend God. The Bible calls those bad things sins. We tell God our sins and ask him to forgive us.

Lent is also a time in which we think about how much God loves us. His love for us is so great that he sent Jesus to die on the cross for us. Because of Jesus, we can be sure that God forgives our sins. We know that he shows mercy to us. God will smile on you and help you to do good rather than bad.

So when we do bad things, we admit them, are sorry for them and ask God to forgive them. Because he loves us and has given Jesus to die for our sins, we are assured that God forgives us and will show mercy to us.

- **The Old Testament Reading**, Joel 2:12-18, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

Ⓟ “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?’” Then the Lord became jealous for his land and had pity on his people.

Tune.....Herr Jesu Christ, Meins LM

Measures 1-4 of the piano accompaniment. The music is in 3/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The right hand (treble clef) plays chords on the first, second, and third beats of each measure. The left hand (bass clef) plays chords on the first, second, and third beats of each measure. Measure numbers 1, 5, and 9 are indicated at the start of their respective systems.

Measures 5-8 of the piano accompaniment. The right hand (treble clef) plays chords on the first, second, and third beats of each measure. The left hand (bass clef) plays chords on the first, second, and third beats of each measure. Measure numbers 5, 9, and 13 are indicated at the start of their respective systems.

Measures 9-12 of the piano accompaniment. The right hand (treble clef) plays chords on the first, second, and third beats of each measure. The left hand (bass clef) plays chords on the first, second, and third beats of each measure. Measure numbers 9, 13, and 17 are indicated at the start of their respective systems.

Measures 13-16 of the piano accompaniment. The right hand (treble clef) plays chords on the first, second, and third beats of each measure. The left hand (bass clef) plays chords on the first, second, and third beats of each measure. Measure numbers 13, 17, and 21 are indicated at the start of their respective systems.

- The **Closing Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Herr Jesu Christ, Meins LM, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Renew me, O eternal Light, and let my heart and soul be bright,  
Illumined with the light of grace that issues from your holy face.

Remove the pow'r of sin from me and cleanse all my impurity  
That I may have the strength and will temptations of the flesh to still.

Create in me a new heart, Lord, that gladly I obey your Word.  
Let what you will be my desire, and with new life my soul inspire.

Grant that I only you may love and seek those things which are above  
Till I behold you face to face, O Light eternal, through your grace.