**Lent and Easter**

The Ascension community gathers for special worship services on Ash Wednesday, every Thursday noontime during Lent, and during Holy Week.

**Lent**
Lent is the 40-day period of repentance and renewal preceding Easter. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and ends with the Easter service. Lent is a special time for confession and prayer, a time to renew and strengthen our faith as we reflect on Jesus’ journey to the cross and victory over death.

**Ash Wednesday**
Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Lent season. We receive with ashes the sign of the cross on our foreheads and intentionally enter into Lent, the season of repentance and renewal.

**Ashes-to-Go**- “Ashes to Go” is about bringing spirit, belief, and belonging out from behind the church doors. It's a simple event with deep meaning, drawing on centuries of tradition and worship to provide a contemporary moment of grace. Ascension offers this as a drive-up opportunity on the service road, outside the front doors.

**Ash Wednesday Worship -** Marking our foreheads with dust, we acknowledge that we die and return to the earth. At the same time, the dust traces the life-giving cross indelibly marked on our foreheads at baptism. While we journey through Lent to return to God, we have already been made one with God through Christ. This reflective evening worship includes an extended time of confession, reading of scripture, holy communion, and receiving of ashes.

**Holy Week**
Holy Week is the time we remember Jesus’ last week on earth, beginning with Jesus’ entry to Jerusalem on Palm Sunday and ending with Jesus’ resurrection on Easter. This is the heart of Lent, the time of Jesus’ movement to the cross where he showed his love is stronger than death. And finally after 40 days we rejoice in the glorious new dawn of Easter. Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

**Palm/Passion Sunday**
On Palm/Passion Sunday we remember Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem, the city where five days later he was crucified. People lined the way, waving palm branches and shouting, “Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord!”

Oftentimes, to grasp the fullness of something significant, we have to look at both sides. So it is that to approach the meaning of Christ, we have to say two things: Jesus and Christ; human and divine; dead and alive; bread and body. This Sunday celebrates these two sides: we begin by praising Christ with “Hosanna,” and we go on to shout “Crucify him!” Come to join us as we fit both truths into one service. The service begins outside (weather-permitting), followed by a palm processional into the sanctuary, and the reading of the Passion story.

**Maundy Thursday**
On Maundy Thursday we remember Jesus’ last meal with his disciples. At this meal Jesus washed the feet of his dearest friends to show them that the life of his followers was one of humble service. Then he shared bread and wine, telling them this was his body and blood, given for forgiveness of sins.

**Good Friday**
On Good Friday we remember the day that Jesus was arrested, condemned to death, and died on the cross. We gather at the foot of the cross to wonder at the depth of Jesus’ love!

**Easter Day**
On Easter Day we celebrate the risen Jesus! Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia! The entire congregation comes together to celebrate all the glory of Easter with flowers, trumpets, choir music, and lots of “alleluias” to show the joy we feel in our hearts!

Please “click here” for our Lent and Easter schedule for this year.