

THE HOME PAGE

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Issue No. 6

ASH WEDNESDAY PREPARATIONS

As we approach Ash Wednesday here in 2021, there are several ways you can prepare for this special day.

Prepare for Worship - Virtual Ash Wednesday Service

This year we are unable to gather together and observe Ash Wednesday in our traditional manner here at ESBC. However, we will have a virtual recorded Ash Wednesday service that will allow us to gather in our homes and worship together. The recorded service will be available on our YouTube channel and our website on Wednesday, February 17.

Prepare to Participate

The imposition of ashes is a meaningful part of an Ash Wednesday service. If you wish to participate in this symbolic practice, plan now to gather some ashes before the service. If you find it difficult to find ashes, consider using olive oil instead or simply make the sign of the cross on your hand or forehead. Remember that the ash cross is simply symbolic and the true focus is on our penitence, mourning and desire to turn from our sin.

Prepare Your Heart

The most important preparation to make for Ash Wednesday is to prepare your heart and mind. Ash Wednesday, as the start of the season of Lent, reminds us to search our hearts and lives, acknowledge our sinfulness and allow God to lead us into a resurrected life. It's a time for reflection and introspection, a time to allow God to enter us and change us deep inside.



FROM THE PASTOR Stephen Clyborne

It is hard to believe that Ash Wednesday is just around the corner. It seems like we just celebrated Christmas, and here we are about to enter the Season of Lent. This year, our Ash Wednesday service will be different; we will not gather in person, but will worship together by video. But the meaning will be the same as it has always been.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Season of Lent, a period of forty days and six Sundays prior to Easter. This is the time when the church prepares to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus by focusing on His journey to the cross. Lent provides the church an opportunity to separate ourselves anew from the world by practicing spiritual disciplines, and to renew our vows of devotion to Christ. During this season of the Christian year, as disciples of Jesus, we deny ourselves, take up our own crosses, and follow Him. For, as Paul reminds us, it is not until we are united with Christ in a death like His that we will be united with Christ in a resurrection like His (Romans 6:5).

Ash Wednesday is a reminder to us all of what it means for us to be human. As human beings, the image of God within us has been stained by our sinfulness and mortality. Apart from Christ, we have no hope of overcoming these limitations. The ashes are visible symbols of how frail, fallen, and hopeless we are apart from the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord. This service leads us to take our humanity seriously, to confess our sinfulness, to acknowledge our mortality, and to ask for God's mercy made known to us in Christ. As Paul reminded the Corinthians: "For our sake God made Christ, who knew no sin, to be sin so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Throughout the Bible, ashes have always been a symbol of death. As early as Genesis 3, God reminded Adam and all of Adam's sons and daughters, "You are dust, and to dust you shall return." Ashes have also served as a sign of repentance. After Jonah preached to the people of Nineveh and they believed God, the king of Nineveh, as a sign of his repentance and remorse, arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes (Jonah 3:6). And in Matthew's Gospel, Jesus condemned the people who had gathered for not repenting in sackcloth and ashes as had been the custom of others (Matthew 11:21).

As we "gather" this Ash Wednesday, I encourage you to gather some ashes and be ready to participate with us virtually on February 17. My Ash Wednesday meditation will be based on Psalms 51:6 and 139:23-24. And the subject of my meditation will be self-awareness, a quality that is sadly missing in our culture, and even in the church. I hope you will join us for that special service and make the Lenten journey with us. We will begin a Lenten sermon series beginning the following Sunday, February 21, entitled "God's Determination to Have a Family."

JOIN US IN WORSHIP

Sunday, February 14
Transfiguration Sunday

Duet: *Be Thou My Vision* by Melanie Wells, clarinet;
Eric Wells, euphonium

Scripture: Mark 9:2-9

Sermon: "Living Without the Props"
by Stephen Clyborne

Wednesday, February 17
Ash Wednesday Online Service

Prelude: *Nearer, Still Nearer* by Randy Blackburn, organ

Anthem: *Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God*
by the Sanctuary Choir

Hymn: *I Take the Cross of Jesus Christ*

Music Meditation: *I Surrender All*
by Debbie Blume, piano

Scripture: Psalm 51:1-17; Psalm 139:23-24

Sermon: "Self-Awareness" by Stephen Clyborne

RECENTLY HOSPITALIZED

Doug Greer Lindsey Keck

CONGRATULATIONS

Brandon and Rachel Inabinet upon the recent birth of their son, Felix Maxwell Inabinet, born February 9, 2021. The proud grandparents are David and Martha Newton.

ATTENDANCE REPORT

Week of February 7, 2021

Sunday School Attendance

On-campus	0
On-line	71
Total.....	71

Worship Attendance

On-campus	29
On-line	206
Total.....	235

From the Minister Of Music and Worship

Janice Hinnant (ext. 202) – janice@ESBCgreenville.org

Preschool Choir, Music Makers, and Young Musicians—It's not too late to join in!

Wednesday, February 17

- Anytime— Music Makers Choir download activities
- 5:15 pm— Preschool Choir zoom rehearsal with Janice Hinnant
- 6:00 pm—Young Musicians zoom rehearsal with Debbie Blume

Youth Choir—We were missing several of you last Sunday. I hope you will plan to be at rehearsal this Sunday at 3:30. Please enter by coming up the front steps and through the front doors of the sanctuary. Masks are required, and we will maintain social distancing in the sanctuary. See you on Sunday!

Earle Street Ringers—Great rehearsals last week! I look forward to seeing you again this Sunday!

ASSISTANCE WITH VACCINE REGISTRATION 65+ eligible effective February 8

As the vaccines for Covid-19 have begun to roll out, many individuals are experiencing difficulty in getting registered for an opportunity to receive the vaccine, even though they are in the eligible categories. Do you need assistance or direction in knowing where to begin? Perhaps you don't have a smart phone or device to sign up online or don't know whom or where to call. If you are having difficulty in this area, our Medical Ministry Team would like to assist you.

The current eligibility group, as of February 8, includes individuals who are 65 years old or older. If you are having difficulty getting registered or would like to have someone give you some assistance or direction, please contact Denise Plumblee directly or call the church office. We will gather some preliminary information and then put you in touch with one of the team members who can assist you. Our Medical Ministry Team wants to do everything we can to keep our congregation safe and healthy.

BUDGET REPORT

Week of January 31, 2021

Weekly Budget Requirements.....	\$27,406
Budget Gifts (this week)	\$20,620
Budget Requirements to Date	\$164,436
Budget Gifts to Date	\$130,078

From the Associate Pastor

Chuck Emory (ext. 203) – chuck@ESBCgreenville.org

EXCITING NEW MISSION OPPORTUNITY!

Among the many frustrating things about the pandemic is how it has limited our opportunities to share the love of Jesus with our community through in-person, hands-on service. Being “inside the walls” has been challenging; going “outside the walls,” for the most part, has not been possible. We have continued to support our mission partners, both locally and globally, through the incredible generosity of our church family – and we will continue to do so. But, for good reason, the “hands and feet” aspect of our mission work has been limited.

So I am excited to share a new mission opportunity with you. Our good friend and long-time mission partner, Rev. Alfred Johnson of the Greenville Church Without Walls, has recently joined the Advisory Committee at Harvest Hope Food Bank. In partnership with Harvest Hope, Pastor Alfred and the Church Without Walls have begun a new ministry sharing food with people who need it.

Through their Feed His Sheep Ministry, the Church Without Walls is taking delivery of prepackaged boxes of food and passing them out in neighborhoods where Pastor Alfred serves. He calls this approach “mission-based evangelism” because it is a way to “meet people where they are at with the gospel both in word and deed.” In addition to food, each box also has a Bible, and the goal is to meet their physical and spiritual needs through generous love and service.

Here’s how it works: The boxes are packed at Harvest Hope Food Bank, then they are delivered to the Church Without Walls. The church loads the boxes on a flatbed truck, which drives through the neighborhood, and volunteers take the boxes from the truck and deliver them door-to-door. All volunteers are asked to observe COVID-19 precautions to keep things as safe as possible for everyone. There will be an opportunity to serve each Friday in February. Volunteers meet at noon at the appointed location. Here is the schedule:

- **February 12:** Berkley Ponte Apartments (500 Wenwood Road, Greenville, SC 29607)
- **February 19:** Avalon Apartments (490 Wenwood Road, Greenville, SC 29607)
- **February 26:** Super Lodge Motel (412 Mauldin Road, Greenville, SC 29605)

Also, beginning in March, there will be opportunities to help pack the food boxes at Harvest Hope Food Bank. The National Guard is assisting with packing boxes during February, but there will be a need for volunteers after they have completed their service. Pastor Alfred is in the process of setting up a spring schedule for volunteers.

The pandemic has certainly been frustrating for many of us, but it has been devastating for many others. This ministry is a great way to share the love of Jesus in a practical and helpful way. If you are interested in exploring this mission opportunity, please contact me at chuck@esbcgreenville.org.

From the Minister To Preschoolers and Children

Karli Selz (ext. 209) – karli@ESBCgreenville.org

Earle Street
Children go to:
**CENTRIKID
CAMPS**

July 19 - 23, 2021
Ridgecrest Conference Center

Children 2nd - 5th grade
If you are a parent of a first grader you would like to come to camp, let's chat!

\$339
\$60 Nonrefundable deposit due March 1, 2021
Contact karli@esbcgreenville.org

From the Minister of Youth and Recreation

Lucy Wilkinson (ext. 212) – lucy@ESBCgreenville.org

LAKE JOCASSEE
DEVIL'S FORK STATE PARK

**SPRING
CAMPING
2021**

MAY 21-23RD
\$75
CONTACT LUCY FOR SITES!