

Hello everyone and welcome to Ash Wednesday, that marks the start of the Lenten Season. Throughout this time, but especially here at the beginning, you are encouraged to consider what it means to journey with Jesus as your authentic self; the person God has created you and nurtured you to be. What might it mean this Lent, if you were to drop all pretenses, to let go of what the world has decided you will be, to put down all those things you think you should be, and to accept and embrace the person God has so carefully created you to be. As this season begins, I pray each of you enter this time as wholly you, for you are holy loved.

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Land Acknowledgement

Call to Worship:

One: Even now, declares the Lord, return to me with all your heart.
(Joel 2:12)

All: Roll up your sleeves,

One: let down your guard

All: Come in from the storm,

One: make yourself a home.

All: Pull up to the table,

One: release your tension,
breathe deeply of this moment,
open your heart to God.

All: Make it be so, as we worship.

Opening Prayer (*Unison*)

Loving Creator, as we enter worship this evening we come as ourselves opening our hearts to your presence around us and within us. Hold us in your tender embrace and assure us that in your care, we are free to be the people you have loved and created us to be. As your children we come to you, as we are for who we are, praying that our relationship with you deepens as we completely open our spirits to you. Tonight, we are at the edge of our seats listening for Your voice as you speak. Amen.

Hymn: "Spirit, Open My Heart"

MV#79

Readings: Psalm 139: 13-24

Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-21

Sermon: "Come As You Are"

Hymn: "Throughout These Lenten Days and Nights" **VU#108**

Imposition of Ashes

Pastoral Prayer / Lord's Prayer

Hymn: "Spirit God, Be Our Breath"

MV#150

Blessing:

May the Love of God sustain you in your Lenten Journey
The Peace of Christ hold you as you walk with Jesus
and may the fellowship of the Holy Spirit remain with you this, and
every day in freedom and in joy. **Amen.**

An Ash Wednesday Prayer

God our Creator,
You have formed us out of the dust of the earth.
May these ashes be to us a sign of our mortality and penitence,
and a reminder of your grace.
Amen

—Voices United 106, adapted



At Mount Royal United Church, our mission is to serve God; living our faith inside and outside these walls and nurturing each individual on their faith journey.

