

New Castle Presbyterian Church

25 E 2nd Street, New Castle, DE 19720



ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

March 5, 2025

7:00pm

GATHERING

Prelude

Call to Worship

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Therefore, we will not fear.

For God so loved the world, God sent Christ into the world that the world might be transfigured through him.

Create in us a clean heart, O God, and restore to us the joy of your salvation.

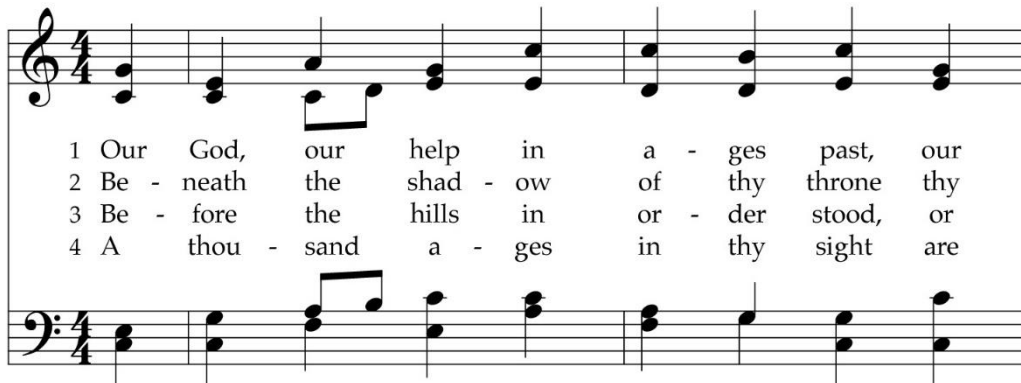
Have mercy on us, O God, according to your steadfast love.

O Lord, open our lips, and our mouths will declare your praise!


HYMN #687

Our God, Our Help in Ages Past Verses 1-3

(Psalm 90)



1 Our God, our help in a - ges past, our
2 Be - neath the shad - ow of thy throne thy
3 Be - fore the hills in or - der stood, or
4 A thou - sand a - ges in thy sight are



hope for years to come, our shel - ter from the
saints have dwelt se - cure; suf - fi - cient is thine
earth re - ceived its frame, from ev - er - last - ing
like an eve - ning gone, short as the watch that



storm - y blast, and our e - ter - nal home:
arm a - lone, and our de - fense is sure.
thou art God, to end - less years the same.
ends the night be - fore the ris - ing sun.

5 Time, like an ever rolling stream,
bears all our years away;
they fly forgotten, as a dream
dies at the opening day.

6 Our God, our help in ages past,
our hope for years to come,
be thou our guard while life shall last,
and our eternal home.

Many people sing this hymn unaware that it paraphrases Psalm 90, partly because this text speaks so immediately to the human condition. Since the middle of the 19th century, it has usually been joined to this tune named for the London parish where the composer was organist.

SCRIPTURE

Prayer for Illumination

O Lord of light and salvation, let these words of Scripture live not only in our mouths, but in our hearts. May we embody your truth and confess with our lives that Jesus is Lord. Amen.

Psalm 51:1-12

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. ² Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

³ **For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. ⁴ Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.**

⁵ Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me. ⁶ You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart. ⁷ Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. ⁸ Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice. ⁹ Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. ¹⁰ **Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.** ¹¹ **Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me.** ¹² **Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.**

HYMN #695

Change My Heart, O God

Sung first by soloist, then joined by the congregation

Refrain / Estribillo / 후렴

Change my heart, O God; make it ev - er true.
 Cám - bia - me, Se - ñor, con tu gran po - der.
 향 상 진 실 케 내 맘 바 꾸 사

Change my heart, O God; may I be like you.
 Haz - me co - mo tú, tu yo quie - ro ser.
 주 님 의 모 습 답 게 하 소 서

You are the Pot - ter; I am the clay.
 Tú el al - fa - re - ro, yo el ba - rro soy.
 주 는 토 기 장 이 나 는 진 흙

Mold me and make me; this is what I pray.
 Só - lo a tu i - ma - gen, quie - ro siem - pre ser.
 날 빛 으 소 서 기 도 하 오 니

The central image of the potter and the clay in this text comes from Isaiah 64:8 (and there is a similar reference in Jeremiah 18:1-6), while the petition for a changed heart is similar to Psalm 51:10. Such readiness to do God's will is a significant feature of the spiritual life.

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

[Jesus said to the disciples:] “Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. “So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

“And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

“And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; 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.”

Special Harp Music

INVITATION TO THE OBSERVANCE OF THE LENTEN DISCIPLINE

Siblings in Christ, every year at the time of the Christian Passover we celebrate our redemption through the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Lent is a time to prepare for this celebration and to renew our life in the paschal mystery. We begin this holy season by acknowledging our need for repentance, and for the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ. We begin our journey to Easter with the sign of ashes. This ancient sign speaks of the frailty and uncertainty of human life and marks the penitence of this community.

In the name of Christ, we are invited to observe a holy Lent by self-examination and penitence, by prayer and fasting, by works of love, and by reading and meditating on the Word of God. Let us turn to God, our Creator and Redeemer, and confess our sin.

CONFESSION

Merciful God, you sent Jesus Christ to save the lost. We confess that we have strayed from you and turned aside from your way. We fail in love, neglect justice, and ignore your truth. Have mercy on us and wash away our sin. Create in us clean hearts for the sake of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

Behold, now is the acceptable time; now is the day of salvation. Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

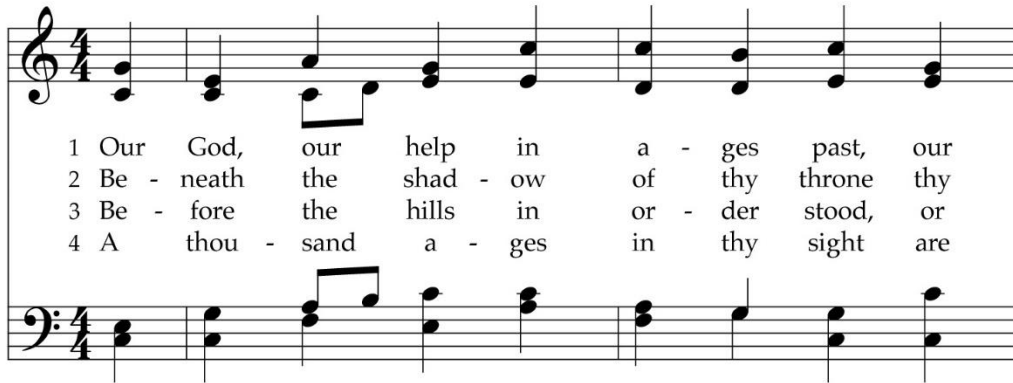
IMPOSITION OF ASHES

*The ashes are imposed with the following words:
Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.*

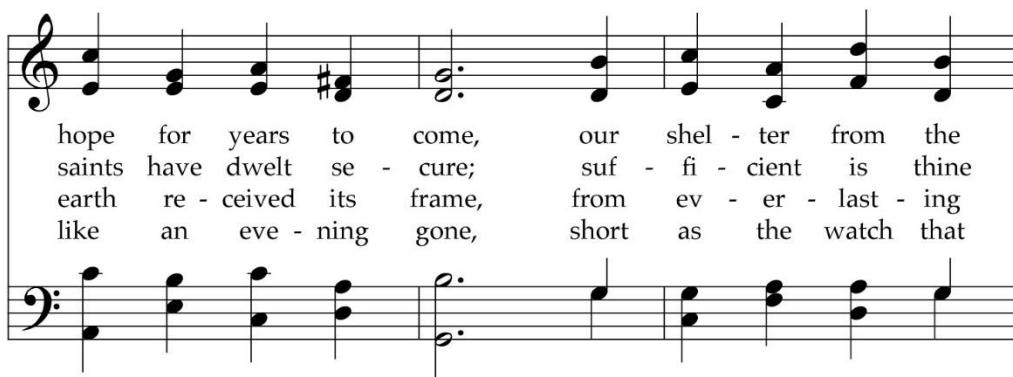
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BLESSING

May God who has called us forth from the dust of the earth, and claimed us as children of the light, strengthen you on your journey into life renewed. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine upon you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. **Amen.**

Marked with the cross of Christ, go forth to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

*You are welcome to remain in peaceful contemplation
and invited to leave in quiet when ready.*

Pastor: Rev. Miriam Foltz

Musicians: Eileen Larkin, Mary Anne Brundage, and Sarah McCann

Join us for the New Castle Ecumenical Lenten Dinners on Wednesdays at 6 p.m.,
beginning March 12 at New Castle Presbyterian Church.

Lenten Devotionals are available in the Meeting House Entrance.