



February 18, 2024
Ash Wednesday · 7:00 pm
304 E Spruce Ave Inglewood, CA 90301
www.inglewoodfirst.org

GATHERING

GREETING*

*People of God, set aside busyness of mind and body.
Create in me a clean heart, O God.*

*Let us gather in worship with heads unbowed with shame.
God, put a new and right spirit within me.*

*Children of God, receive grace from above.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and my mouth will declare your praise!*

OPENING PRAYER*

*God of Grace, we give thanks
that it is acceptable to be human.
We rejoice that we do not have to have every answer.
We praise you that you alone are God.
May this season of Lent be a time to lament the sin of our world
the suffering of humanity,
and the travail of creation.
Reassure us that you have created us "very good,"
and that you forgive us when we behave badly.
May our prayers be honest,
trusting you to forgive, heal, and guide us. Amen.*

HYMN* I Surrender All (UMH 269)

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Joel 2:12–17

LESSON FROM THE PSALMS Psalm 51:1–6

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON 2 Corinthians 5:20 –6:2

HYMN* Lord, I Want To Be A Christian (UMH 402)

GOSPEL LESSON* Matthew 6:1 –6, 16–21

MESSAGE

INVITATION TO THE OBSERVANCE OF LENTEN DISCIPLINE

Dear brothers, sisters and siblings in Christ: the early Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church that before the Easter celebration there should be a forty-day season of spiritual preparation.

During this season converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism. It was also a time when persons who had committed serious sins and had separated themselves from the community of faith were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to participation in the life of the Church. In this way the whole congregation was reminded of the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ and the need we all have to renew our faith.

We are invited, therefore, in the name of the Church, to observe a holy Lent: by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's Holy Word. To make a right beginning of repentance, and as a mark of our mortal nature, let us now kneel (bow) before our Creator and Redeemer.

THANKSGIVING OVER THE ASHES

*Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth. Grant that these ashes may be to us a sign of our mortality and penitence, so that we may remember that only by your gracious gift are we given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.***

IMPOSITION OF ASHES *

Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

CONFESSION AND PARDON

*May the almighty and merciful God, who desires not the death of a sinner but that we turn from wickedness and live, accept your repentance, forgive your sins, and restore you by the Holy Spirit to newness of life. **Amen.***

THE PEACE *

Let us offer one another signs of reconciliation and love.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

THE LORD'S PRAYER

HYMN* Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior (UMH 351)

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING *

GOING FORTH *