



Ash Wednesday Service

ASH WEDNESDAY

**February 26, 2019 – 12 noon & 7:30pm
James Chapel**

THE FIRST CHURCH IN ALBANY
(Reformed Church in America)

Founded in 1642

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ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRELUDE: *Kyrie, Lord Have Mercy; Kyrie Christ Have Mercy*
Johann Sebastian Bach

CHORAL INTROIT: *Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days*
(Text of hymn 81) Richard Shephard

CALL TO WORSHIP – Adapted from Joel 2

Blow the trumpet in Zion and let the people tremble,
for the day of the Lord is coming. The God of glory is near.

Never has there been such darkness and never have we imagined such
glory.

The ruler of all ages will triumph with greatness and power.

This is our Lord who is above all others.

The earth quakes and the heavens tremble.

The sun and the moon are darkened; the stars no longer shine.

The Lord utters his voice and all hosts are commanded.

Truly, the day of the Lord is great. Who can endure it?

Hallelujah! Only God can endure it!

—Katherine Lee Baker, M.Div.

HYMN *Spirit Open My Heart (see insert)*

PRAYER FOR CONFESSION

Through the prayer of confession, we acknowledge our sin and need for God's mercy.

O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth. You are compassionate beyond comparison, loving beyond imagination, and faithful beyond our betrayal.

Just as the psalmist declares, "our sin is ever before us." We, too, admit our transgressions: We have become stained with wrongdoing, sacrificing the goodness of your love for the demise of this world. We have abandoned your law, caring less for your creation and more for our own ambition.

Wash us clean, God of mercies, and deliver us from bloodshed. Help us to hear your voice calling us back, remind us of your love bringing us home, and renew our spirits that we might believe the covenant again.

For the sake of Jesus Christ, we pray in our hearts,
Amen.

—Katherine Lee Baker, M.Div.

PRAYER OF REFLECTION

Our hearts burst for Jesus Christ;
Our thirst cries out in awe.
The one who has broken bread for us
Was broken without flaw.

And blood was poured to quench our lives
Never as we had thought
But salvation came and taught us love.
We reflect upon our lot.

—Katherine Lee Baker, M.Div.

HYMN: *Bless the Lord My Soul* (taize)

Old Testament: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

New Testament: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

CENTERING PRAYER

PRAYER FOR THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES

IMPOSITION OF ASHES

RESPONSIVE READING: Psalm 103

CLOSING PRAYER

HYMN 339 *Be Thou My Vision*

CHARGE AND BLESSING

Adapted from an order written by John Paarlberg & Katherine Lee Baker for Prayers

POSTLUDE: *Oh God, How Great My Sin* Johann Sebastian Bach

PARTICIPANTS: Liturgist/Officiant: The Rev. Dr. M. Walston; Minister of Music: Mary Bon & the Choir of First Church