

Hamden Clergy Team Up to Present Second Annual "Ashes-to-Go" Event and Interdenominational Ash Wednesday Worship Service

HAMDEN, Conn.—It will be “ashes-to-go” once more for the area faithful as five Hamden churches host their second annual “Ashes-to-Go” Drive-Through Event and Interdenominational Ash Wednesday Service on Wednesday, February 22, 2023. That’s when clergy from the participating churches will use ashes to mark the foreheads of area residents with an ancient symbol of repentance in observance of Ash Wednesday.

“On Ash Wednesday, our foreheads are marked with ashes as a two-fold reminder,” said The Rev. Joshua Sullivan, pastor of Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. “First, the ashes remind us that we believe all false things will pass away, and second, and most importantly, the ashes help us confess that our true self comes only from God.”

In addition to Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran, other Hamden congregations participating in the “Ashes-to-Go” event and Interdenominational Ash Wednesday Service include Dunbar United Church of Christ, Grace & St. John’s Episcopal Church, Hamden Plains United Methodist Church, and Mount Carmel Congregational Church.

“When it came to doing this event again this year, it was a no-brainer,” said Pr. Sullivan. “Especially because last year more than 100 people of diverse backgrounds received their ashes at the Ashes-to-Go event. And at the worship service in the evening, with over 80 members of the five congregations attending, a band made up of all the church clergy played a rousing rendition of 'I'll Fly Away'. During the freewill offering, over \$700 was raised to benefit Columbus House in New Haven.”

This year, on February 22, the opportunity to receive “Ashes-to-Go” will once more be offered at Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 600 Shepard Ave., during two sessions: In the morning from 7:30 a.m. to 9 a.m., and at lunchtime from 12 noon to 1 p.m. Those wishing to receive ashes should remain in their cars as they enter the church parking lot at the north entrance (nearest the traffic light).

In the evening on February 22, the Interdenominational Ash Wednesday Service will be held at Hamden Plains United Methodist Church, 15 Church St., at 7 p.m. Clergy and church members from the five Hamden congregations and more will be participating. The public also is invited to attend. For those unable to attend the service, a recording will be available for viewing after the event on YouTube and Facebook.

For more information about the “Ashes-to-Go” Drive-Through Event or the Interdenominational Ash Wednesday Worship Service, contact Pastor Sullivan at Pastor@christgoodshepherdlutheran.org or call the church office at (203) 288-3196.

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The Hamden Clergy Band performed a rousing version of “I’ll Fly Away” at the 2022 Interdenominational Ash Wednesday Service at Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran.