

# **Wednesday Ashes-to-Go: Pastor Darla Ann Kratzer Brings Unique Program to Our Lord's Lutheran Church in Maryville**

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
February 25 2020 3:05 PM





MARYVILLE - Pastor Darla Ann Kratzer has formulated an innovative Ashes-to-Go program at Our Lord's Lutheran Church in Maryville and followers will be able to make the most of it on Wednesday.

Ash Wednesday is an important day for many in the faith world and Our Lord's Lutheran Church in Maryville at 150 Wilma Drive, will offer Ashes-to-Go from 7 to 9 a.m. and 4 to 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, then a regular service at 7 p.m. of Holy Communion and delivering of ashes.

The Lutheran pastor came up with the ingenious method of delivering ashes for the busy, on-the-go part of her congregation. Those wishing to participate are encouraged to follow the frontage road past Elmwood Care Center in Maryville, then turn right at the drive just before the church building, and pull up to the covered entryway.

For those without the time to attend a full service, Pastor Kratzer will come to the car window lead you in a brief order of confession and scripture reading and impose ashes on the foreheads of those in the car.

“For those who are able to attend an evening service, Our Lord's Lutheran Church offers a 7 p.m. service of Holy Communion with the imposition of ashes on February 26th,” the pastor explained. “Although the mood of the service is somber, it is not really a time of mourning. Instead, it is a service that starts us with an examination of our lives.

“In ancient times, ashes were used for cleaning and to enrich the soil. So, while ashes are a symbol of mortality, they also serve as a reminder to ‘come clean’ before God and prepare to grow in faith.”

Pastor Kratzer is new to the area, having arrived last summer from northeastern Ohio, where she first offered Ashes-to-Go in the city of Canton, Ohio. Pastor Kratzer said she is delighted to pastor an inclusive, welcoming, justice-seeking congregation.

“A new ministry group for older adults is starting this month,” Pastor Kratzer said at Our Lord's Lutheran Church. “A group for parents with young children will start in the spring. Family-friendly, interactive, outdoor summer mid-week worship services are being planned.”

Pastor Kratzer said she thoroughly enjoys working with children and youth, and their parents.

Two special ministry areas that Kratzer is passionate about are caring for the hungry and building relationships with people of other faith traditions so that we might better serve our neighbors, the stranger, and all who are in need of God's gracious love.

“To that end, I envision a Fall Speaker Series on hunger, homelessness, immigration, racism, and the environment,” Pastor Kratzer said.

For more information or info about the church, contact (618) 345-5692.