

WHY ASHES?

Ashes are an ancient sign of penitence. From the Middle Ages it became the custom to begin Lent by being marked in ash with the sign of the cross. The reminder that we are dust turns our attention to the creative power of God, and God's ability to heal the brokenness in our lives when we offer that brokenness to God. That turning to God is the work of Lent, preparation for the celebration of Easter.

We're offering ashes this evening because that reminder of need, humility, and healing shouldn't be confined to a church building. We probably need it more when we are in the middle of our daily business! The ashes we receive here are to remind us throughout the day of our need for God, and of God's call to us.

There is much more to the beginning of Lent than ashes alone, and we encourage you to make time for worship with a community of faith, for the support of others and of the great traditions of faith in our work of repentance and renewal. But God meets us not just in worship, but in the midst of life, and we offer the opportunity to remember our faith to those whose schedules make it hard to stop and pray with others today.

LENTEN WORSHIP & PROGRAMMING

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY

Mondays in February & March
10AM & 7PM
*Except 3/19
Cost: \$11 for book

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

PALM SUNDAY

March 24th at 10AM

AGAPE MEAL & MAUNDY THURSDAY WORSHIP

March 28th at 6PM

GOOD FRIDAY WORSHIP

March 29th at 7:30PM

EASTER SUNDAY WORSHIP

March 31st at 10AM

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**“REMEMBER THAT
YOU ARE DUST ...**



**... AND TO DUST YOU
SHALL RETURN.”**

ASH WEDNESDAY

2024



AN INVITATION TO A HOLY LENT

Dear People of God: From the early days of our faith, Christians have observed the remembrance of Christ's passion and resurrection with great reverence.

It became the custom to prepare for that observance by a season of prayer and fasting, and the reconciliation of those who had been separated from the community of faith. By keeping the season of Lent, we take to heart God's call to repentance and the assurance of forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel, and practice in our daily lives the work of reconciliation.

I invite you, therefore, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer and faith practices, for example reading and meditating on God's holy Word.

To make a right beginning to this season it is appropriate to receive the mark of ashes as a reminder of our mortal nature and of God's invitation to receive Christ's redeeming work.

PRAYERS FOR KEEPING LENT

These prayers are good for daily devotional practices during Lent. If you would like to delve deeper into a spiritual journey of reflection and repentance, seek out the leaders of your faith community.

God our Creator, the strength of all who put their trust in you, mercifully accept our prayers; and because, in our weakness, we can do nothing good without you, grant us the help of your grace, that in keeping your commandments we may please you, both in will and deed; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Almighty God, you know that we have no power in ourselves to help ourselves: Keep us both outwardly in our bodies and inwardly in our souls, that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

IMPOSITION OF THE ASHES

The minister offers a prayer:

Almighty and merciful God, you hate nothing you have made, and forgive the sins of all who are penitent; create in us new and contrite hearts, so that when we turn to you and confess our sins and acknowledge our need, we may receive your full and perfect forgiveness, through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. **Amen.**

Ashes are marked on the forehead with the following words:

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

*The minister then says,
Go in peace. **Amen.***

You are invited to kneel or be seated in a pew for a time of prayer if you wish.