



February 17, 2021 – Ash Wednesday

Today's service is a quiet service of meditation and contemplation. You are invited to come in, sit, and read through the service by yourself or with your family, praying and reading scripture, and fortifying yourself spiritually for the journey that is the Lenten season.

When you are ready, you may come forward for the imposition of ashes, or the benediction, and then you may return home. No time limit is set on this service – it is a time for us to prepare for the road ahead, by ourselves and with one another.

Opening Prayer

The ashes were once palms.

**The sign of mourning and repentance
was once waved in celebration.**

**The cross that will be on our hands or on our heads
has been there before,
water shaped in the form of a cross,
as we were washed in the waters of baptism.
Now it is made of ashes.**

We are reminded of the changes in our lives.

**We are reminded of palms and palm ash,
of tombs and stones rolled away.**

**We are reminded of the journey to Jerusalem,
and beyond.**

**May the cross always remind us who we are,
and who we are to you, O God. Amen.**

As you read the Scriptures, please feel free to take the time to look around, to focus on things that remind you of the Scripture passages or of your faith and to consider where these passages and this season may lead you in your journey or us in our journey together.

Psalm Reading

Psalm 5:7-8

But I, through the abundance of your steadfast love,
will enter your house,
I will bow down toward your holy temple
in awe of you.

Lead me, O Lord, in your righteousness
because of my enemies;
make your way straight before me.

Gospel Reading

Luke 9:52-61

When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. And he sent messengers ahead of him. On their way they entered a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him; but they did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem. When his disciples James and John saw it, they said, "Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?" But he turned and rebuked them. Then they went on to another village.

As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." But Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." Another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home." Jesus said to him, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

Prayer of Penitence

From Psalm 51:1-3

**Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin.
For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.
As the ashes are upon me,
I am reminded,
both of my sin,
and of the cross that frees me from my sin.
Walk with me, O God,
and remind me of both my sin,
and your forgiveness. Amen.**

Imposition of Ashes and Benediction