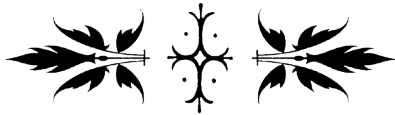


As you prepare to go back out into the world, find a spot perhaps outside the church, in your car, or at home to offer this two-part prayer:

Accomplish in me, O God,
the work of your salvation,
that I may show forth your glory in the world.

In your church,
accomplish in us, O God,
the work of your salvation,
that we may together show forth your glory in the world.

*Thank you for sharing in this Ash Wednesday service.
May you go in peace to love and serve the Lord.*



Participants:

The Rev. Dr. Randall K. Bush
Senior Pastor

The Rev. BJ Woodworth
Director of Spiritual Life and Minister of Taizé

Musicians:
Charlie Anderson
Billy Wayne Coakley
Jennifer Gorske
Kathy Whittaker

Audio/ Visual Engineer:
Wayne Gaines

Ash Wednesday

REFLECTIONS AND IMPOSITION OF ASHES

February 17, 2021
6:30-8:00 PM



**East Liberty
Presbyterian Church**

www.ELPC.church

116 South Highland Ave ♦ Pittsburgh, PA 15206
412.441.3800 ♦ www.ELPC.church

prayer pause

1

**BLESSING
THE DUST:
INVITATION
TO OBSERVE
A HOLY LENT**

Lent is a time to prepare for the timeless mystery of our redemption through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We begin this holy season by acknowledging our need for repentance and for the mercy proclaimed in the gospel of Christ.

Our journey to Easter begins with the sign of ashes – an ancient sign that speaks of the frailty and uncertainty of human life.

(Repeat silently to oneself)

I seek to observe a holy Lent by intentional self-examination, penitence, prayer, works of love, and meditating on God's word. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. (Psalm 51:10)

After a brief time of self-examination, you may proceed to the next prayer station.

prayer pause

2

**ONE'S OWN
DEATH:
CONSIDER
YOUR OWN
DEATH**

As hard as it is to confess, everybody dies. Today we are here; one day we will all be gone. For centuries Christians have paused to consider their own mortality and death on Ash Wednesday.... not to be morbid, but to remind ourselves that life is now and that every day is a gift.

Thomas à Kempis said, "Happy and wise is that person who strives now to be in life what [s]he wishes to be found in death... Keep yourself as a pilgrim and stranger on earth, a person to whom

the affairs of the world mean nothing apart from Christ."

(Light a Candle)

Each candle before you represents a person's life. Light one candle to represent your life. Watch it burn. Thank God for lighting the fire in your body and soul. Spend a moment pondering your own impermanence and significance.

Spend a moment in silent prayer, considering your own life. Is there anything holding you back from God? Any invitation you sense as you begin this Lenten journey?

(A prayer you may want to pray)

Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth. May these ashes be for us a sign of our mortality and penitence, and a reminder that only by your gracious gift are we given everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

When you are ready, step forward to the altar to receive the ashes. You may receive them from one of the pastors, or if you prefer, you are free to apply them to your own forehead.

When you are done, move to your left, proceeding down the side aisle to the last prayer station.

prayer pause

3

**RECEIVE
ASHES:
PREPARE FOR
IMPOSITION
OF ASHES**

(Read blessing slowly)

**All those days
you felt like dust,
like dirt,
as if all you had
to do
was turn your face
toward the wind
and be scattered
to the four corners
or swept away
by the
smallest breath
as insubstantial –
did you not know
what the Holy One
can do with dust?**

**This is the day
we freely say
we are scorched.
This is the hour
we are marked
by what has made it**

**through the
burning.**

**This is the moment
we ask
for the blessing
that lives within
the ancient ashes,
that makes
its home
inside the soil of
this sacred earth.**

**So let us be marked
not for sorrow.
And let us
be marked
not for shame.
Let us be marked
not for
false humility
or for thinking
we are less
than we are
but for claiming**

prayer pause

4

**GOD'S
WORLD:
RE-ENTERING
GOD'S
WORLD**

**what God can do
within the dust,
within the dirt,
within the stuff
of which the world
is made
and the stars
that blaze
in our bones
and the galaxies
that spiral inside the
smudge we bear.**