

People: Truly dust we are, and to dust we shall return; and truly yours we are, and to you we shall return. May this be a time of turning around and beginning again. Through the forty days of Lent, help us to follow you and to find you: in the discipline of praying and in the drudgery of caring, in whatever we deny ourselves, and whatever we set ourselves to learn or do. Help us to discover you in our loneliness and in community, in our emptiness and our fulfillment, in our sadness and our laughter. Help us to find you when we ourselves are lost. Help us to follow you on the journey to Jerusalem to the waving palms of the people's hope, to their rejection, to the cross and empty tomb. Help us to perceive new growth amid the ashes of the old. Help us to be signs of your Kingdom as we carry your cross. Amen.

* **Hymn #433** *"Sign Us With Ashes"* (verse 1-solo; verses 4, 5, and 6-all)

Imposition of Ashes

Those wishing to receive the imposition of ashes may come forward

The Lord's Prayer (hymnal page 11)

* **Hymn #543** *"God Be the Love to Search and Keep Me"* Richard Colligan

* **Dismissal:**

Leader: From dust we came, to dust we will return.

People: We belong to God.

Leader: We are sent in penitence, we go in confidence,

People: We belong to God.

Leader: Marked by a cross, cherished and forgiven,

People: We are traveling home.

Leader: Called to be holy, called to be happy,

People: We are traveling home.

Leader: God in our hearts, God in our lives

People: We are traveling home.

Postlude *"God Be the Love to Search and Keep Me"* Richard Colligan

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent—a forty day season of prayer, fasting, and repentance preparing us for the celebration of Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday.

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First Presbyterian Church



March 6, 2019

Ash Wednesday

Prelude

"Spirit of the Living God"

Daniel Iverson

Opening Prayer

Leader: From dust we came, to dust we will return.

People: We belong to God.

Leader: We gather in penitence, we gather in confidence.

People: We belong to God.

* **Hymn #288**

"Spirit of the Living God"

Daniel Iverson

Prayer:

Leader: Marked by a cross, cherished and forgiven

People: We are traveling home.

Leader: Called to be holy, called to be happy,

People: We are traveling home.

Leader: God in our hearts, God in our lives

People: We are traveling home.

Leader: Choose this day whom you will serve;

(Silent Prayer)

Leader: Choose this day whom you will serve;

People: We will choose the living God.

Leader: The road is narrow that leads to life;

(Silent Prayer)

Leader: The road is narrow that leads to life;

People: We will walk the way of Christ.

Leader: Faith is not our holding on;
(Silent Prayer)

Leader: Faith is not our holding on;

***People:* Faith is letting go.**

Leader: We offer more than words, O God;
(Silent Prayer)

Leader: We offer more than words, O God;

***People:* We offer you our lives.**

Lent Meditation: “*I Am Giving You Me*”
Excerpt from *Stages On The Way*, by the Iona Community

* **Hymn #427** “*Jesus Knows the Inmost Heart*” Pashto hymn

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 58:1-12

Leader: Mysterious God, morning, noon, and night you reveal your creative power; around us the whole earth cries glory. Yet we go on our way deaf to the larks above us, looking down into the mud and not up into the clear sky. And, even then, we miss the myriad small signs of hope: the crocus opening its heart to the sun, colors of sea-washed stones, and rainbows in the mist. We despair so easily. We say: “Where is God in all this?” And we deny it has any meaning. We cannot find or feel the pulse of your life in us. We put our shaky faith in things we have made. We give up on ourselves, saying: “We are not good.” We live in a way that says: “There is no God.” And the song of creation turns to dust and ashes on our lips. Forgive us. Dust we are—and to dust we shall return.

***People:* But in Jesus you chose to share our human frailty, to enter into our mortality in all its mystery, to redeem this handful of dust. We are yours—and to you we shall return. Amen.**

(Silent Meditation)

Leader: Holy and merciful God, hear our prayers.

***People:* We confess to you, to one another, and to the whole communion of saints in heaven and on earth, that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have not done.**

Leader: We have not loved you with our whole heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven.

***People:* Have mercy on us, O God.**

Leader: We have not listened to your call to serve as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

***People:* Have mercy on us, O God.**

Leader: We confess to you, all our past unfaithfulness: our pride, hypocrisy, and impatience,

***People:* we confess to you, O God.**

Leader: Our self-indulgent appetites and our exploitation of other people,

***People:* we confess to you, O God.**

Leader: Our love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonest life and work,

***People:* we confess to you, O God.**

Leader: Our negligence in prayer and worship,

***People:* we confess to you, O God.**

Leader: For the wrongs we have done, for our neglect of human need and suffering and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,

***People:* accept our repentance, O God.**

Leader: For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us,

***People:* accept our repentance, O God.**

Leader: For our waste and pollution of your creation and our lack of concern for those who come after us,

***People:* accept our repentance, O God.**

Leader: Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us.

***People:* Hear us, O God, for your mercy is great.**

* **Hymn #695** “*Change My Heart*” Eddie Espinosa

Leader: Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation, that we may show your glory in the world. By the cross and passion of our Savior, bring us with all your saints to the joy of Christ's resurrection.