



## GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY

### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Dear God,

Today we arrive at Ash Wednesday  
and the beginning of this Lenten journey.  
We sign with a cross - - ashes on our bodies to remind us  
that we are of this earth and that one day we will  
return to dust.

We are marked with the cross and ashes,  
placed on a vessel that houses the Holy Spirit - -  
this earthen vessel is the very presence of God  
made visible in our acts of love  
and in the creativity within our human spirits.

Bless us as we begin our Lenten journey  
through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

### \*HYMN

#386 Lord Jesus Think on Me

SOUTHWELL

### PRAYER FOR A TIME OF TURNING ROUND

Have mercy, O God, have mercy on us.  
We have many treasures on earth that we hold too dearly;  
that we withhold from others in need.  
When we sin against neighbor,  
condone injustice,  
and quarrel with one another,  
we sin against you.

Forgive us, we pray, for we are weak in spirit.  
Do not see us for our faults,  
and the ways we are prone to wander.  
Keep us always in your presence  
so that we may be restored to the joy of your salvation.  
Sustain in us a willing spirit to treasure what you desire;  
then our hearts will be opened in joy and gladness.  
In Jesus Christ, our Treasure, we pray.  
Amen.

*(Silence for personal confession and reflection)*

### ASSURANCE OF PARDON

### FIRST READING

Isaiah 58:1-12 Pages 763-764, 1st half of NRSV Bible  
Response to the reading: "Thanks be to God"

### \*HYMN

#506 I Want Jesus to Walk With Me

WALK WITH ME

### SECOND READING

Matthew 6:1-6 Pages 5-6, 2nd half of NRSV Bible  
Response to the reading: "Thanks be to God"

### WORDS OF REFLECTION

Rev. Dr. Ryan Sato

### THE WISDOM OF ASH

**All: There is a wisdom in ash,  
that we need so much,  
but seldom hear.**

One: It's the wisdom of grief,  
that reminds us of our mortality,  
and that life is more than this dust can contain.

**All: It's the wisdom of confession,  
that brings our darkness out of hiding,  
and opens the windows to Light.**

One: It's the wisdom of repentance,  
that stops us in our tracks,  
and charts the way to Love.

**All: There's a wisdom in ash,  
and we welcome it, Jesus,  
thankful for the renewing gifts it brings.  
Amen.**

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### IMPOSITION OF THE ASHES

Our ancestors in the faith  
used ashes as a sign of our repentance,  
a symbol of the uncertainty and fragility  
of human life.

Like them,  
we have tasted the ashes of hopelessness;  
we have walked through the ashes  
of our loss and pain;  
we have stood knee-deep  
in the ashes of our brokenness.

God of our lives,  
out of the dust of creation  
you have formed us and given us life.  
May these ashes not only be a sign  
of our repentance and death,  
but reminders of your grace and mercy.  
~ written by Thom Shuman

*A period of silence will follow. You can receive the ashes in two ways:  
Receive the sign of the cross in ashes on your forehead or hand from  
the Ministry Staff; or you may self-anoint with the sign of the cross  
placed on your forehead or hand.*

*The ashes are made from palm branches used at FBC at the Palm  
Sunday service last year and the ashes are mixed with oil.*

### \*HYMN

#257 What Wondrous Love Is This  
(Sing verses 1 & 2)

WONDROUS LOVE

### WORDS OF BLESSING FOR ASH WEDNESDAY

One: So let the ashes come as beginning and not as end;  
the first sign but not the final.

**Many: Let them rest upon us as invocation and invitation,  
and let them take us in the way that ashes know to go.**

One: May they mark us with the memory of fire  
and of the life that came before the burning:  
the life that rises and returns and finds its way again.

**ALL: See what shimmers amid their darkness,  
what endures within their dust.**

**See how they draw us toward the mystery  
that will consume but not destroy,  
that will blossom from the blazing,  
that will scorch us with its joy.**

~ written by Jan L. Richardson

We are grateful for those who serve with us today:

Pianist - Nathan Olanday;  
FBC Ministry Staff: Evelyn Greiger, Jeremy Keay, Ryan Sato, Dawn Stiles  
Video & Sound Technician - Evan Adnams