

Church of the Covenant

Boston Massachusetts



*“Beloved,
remember
that you
are dust,
and to dust
you shall
return.”*

Ash Wednesday 6:30pm
February 22, 2023



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ZOOM LINK: tinyurl.com/cotcworship

Welcome. Thank you for joining us on this sacred night. You are welcome to sit in any open pew, keeping in mind we'll likely be a smaller group than on a Sunday, so as comfortable, you are invited to sit closer to the front. Please settle in as the contemplative music is playing, we will get started a few minutes after 6:30pm.

Allow the music to guide you in meditative prayer and silent settling.

And remember to breathe.

In this hybrid service, we will celebrate communion. If you are joining us online, please locate something to put in a cup, and something to put on a plate. If you are worshipping with us via Zoom, mics will be automatically muted for the service. Also in our service, we will engage in an old ritual of the imposition of ashes. Here are some ideas of gathering some sacred dust/soil/ashes equivalent:

- Find a little soil (sacred dirt) from a house plant (if not immunocompromised/allergic), and mix it with a little water/cooking oil in a dish.
- Make some ash from matches or a candle wick, and mix with a little olive/cooking oil in a dish.
- Carefully burn a small piece of paper in some aluminum foil, then when cool, add 1 drop of oil.
- Ground up black eye shadow...
- Rumor has it burnt wine corks leave a good smudge...
- Air – if none of the above feels doable, simply use your finger to trace the sign of the cross on your forehead when invited, remembering together.

*When you hide your face, they are dismayed;
when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust.*

*When you send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the ground.*

But if you turn away from them, they panic. When you take away their breath, they die and turn again to dust. When you give them your breath, life is created, and you renew the face of the earth. –

Psalm 104:29-30

Opening Welcome

One: Peace be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

Kindling the Christ Light**Call to Worship**

One: God of Grace, you called us forth from the dust of the earth;
you claimed us for Christ in the waters of baptism.

Many: **Look upon us as we enter these forty days bearing the mark of
ashes, and bless our journey through the valley of Lent to the
font of rebirth.**

One: May our fasting be hunger for justice; our alms, a making of peace;
our prayer, the chant of humble and grateful hearts.

Many: **All that we do and pray is in the name of Jesus, through whom
you proclaim your fierce love forever and ever. Amen.**

Hymn: *Sunday's Palms are Wednesday's Ashes*

Tune: Beach Spring

Sunday's palms are Wednesday's ashes as another Lent begins;
thus we kneel before our Maker in contrition for our sins.
We have marred baptismal pledges, in rebellion gone astray;
now returning seek forgiveness; grant us pardon God this day

We have failed to love our neighbors their offences to forgive,
have not listened to their troubles, nor have cared just how they live.
we are jealous, proud, impatient, loving over-much our things;
may the yielding of our failings be our Lenten offerings.

We are hasty to judge others, blind to proof of human need;
and our lack of understanding demonstrates our inner greed;
we have wasted earth's resources; want and suffering we've ignored;
come and cleanse us, then restore us; make new hearts within us God

~Rae B. Whitney (1991)

A Litany of Curiosity

Ever Creative God,

This Lent we ask for a spirit of sacred curiosity.

As we journey with Jesus along paths less traveled,

May our hearts be filled with wonder.

As we feed our intrigue with inquiry,

May we be surprised by truths yet to discover.

As we delve deep into new terrain,

May our holy exploration be enchanted.

As we lovingly turn over stones in the search,

May our fingernails get filled with divine dirt that directs us.

As we cultivate questions that inspire or unsettle,

May we be filled with courage to dig deeper.

As we center more on the asking than the answering,

May our wondering, marveling and daydreaming be graced.

And in our seeking, knocking, and asking,

May doors be opened and the winds of new insight blow in blessing.

In the embrace of our Great Seeking Spirit we pray, **Amen.**

Readings from Scripture:

A Fast for Justice: A Sanctified Art Video: Joel 2 and Isaiah 58

Responsive Reading of Psalm 51

(The Voice Translation)

One: Create in me a clean heart, O God;

Many: **Restore within me a sense of being brand new.**

Gospel Reading: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

(*Reading from the Roots* translation)

“Careful: do not display righteousness in front of people, to be seen! If you do, you have no compensation from your Creator who is in heaven. When you give charity, do not trumpet your generosity, as the pretentious do in the congregations and in the streets, to be glorified by people. Trust me, I tell you: they already *have* their compensation! You, though, when you give charity, your left hand should not even know what your right hand does, so the charity you do is in secret, and your Creator who sees in secret will make it up to you. And whenever you pray, you shall not be as the pretentious, because they delight to stand up in prayer in congregations and on street corners, to flaunt themselves. Trust me, I tell you: they already *have* their compensation! But when you pray, enter into

your most private room, shut your door, and pray to your Creator who is in secret, and your Creator who sees in secret will treasure you.

“When you fast, do not be morose like the pretentious, who put on an expression to parade their fasting. Trust me, I tell you: they already *have* their compensation! But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that your fasting is not apparent to people, but only to your Creator who is in secret, and your Creator who sees in secret will treasure you. Do not store up valuables on earth, where moth and decay ruin them, and where thieves break in and steal. Instead, store up valuables in heaven, where neither moth nor decay ruin, and where thieves do not break in and steal. Where your treasure is, there will be your heart.”

One: God is still speaking, the word of God,

Many: **Thanks be to God.**

Collective Silence

Meditation

Prayer and Invitation to a Holy Lent

Let us contemplate more deeply, seek reconciliation more intentionally, and pursue justice more passionately.

*The Imposition of Ashes

At this time, you are invited to engage in a sacred ritual to remind yourself of your mortality, and your beloved nature. For those in-person who wish to receive the imposition of ashes, while singing, please come forward at this time.

After receiving, please return via the outer aisle back to your pew.

For those joining online, while singing along with the Taizé chant, you are invited to impose whatever ash-like reminder you have now on yourself and or someone you are with. If you don't have any ash-like substance, you are invited to use your finger and trace the sign of the cross on your forehead or hand.



*Remember
that you are
dust and into
dust you shall
return.*

Jesus, remember me

Two systems of musical notation for the hymn "Jesus, remember me". Each system consists of a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The tempo is marked as ♩ = 69. The lyrics are: "Je-sus, re-member me when you come in - to your king - dom." The first system ends with a double bar line, and the second system continues the melody and accompaniment.

Holy Communion of the People

The Great Thanksgiving

One: May God be with you!

Many: And also with you.

One: Beloved God, let us lift up our hearts!

Many: We open our hearts to the Spirit who fills us with hope.

One: Let us give thanks to God our light.

Many: It is right for us to offer our thanks and praise to God.

One: It is right for us to thank and praise you God...

Many: Holy, holy, holy One, God of heaven and earth. All creation is full of your love and grace. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of peace. Hosanna in the highest!

One: Holy are you, O God...

The Prayer of Jesus (New Zealand Prayer Book)

(in unison)

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver, Source of all that is and that shall be, Mother and Father of us all, Loving God, in whom is heaven: The hallowing of your name echo through the universe! The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world! Your heavenly will be done by all created beings! Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth. With the bread we need for today, feed us. In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us. In times of temptation and testing, strengthen us. From trials too great to endure, spare us. From the grip of all that is evil, free us. For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever. Amen.

Breaking of the Bread & Sharing of the Cup Post Communion Prayer

Sending Hymn: *Day Is Done*

~James Quinn (b. 1919)

1. Day is done, but love unfailing dwells ever here;
Shadows fall, but hope, prevailing, calms every fear.
God our Maker, none forsaking,
Take our hearts, of Love's own making,
Watch our sleeping, guard our waking, be always near.

2. Dark descends, but light unending, shines through our night;
You are with us, ever lending new strength to sight:
One in love, your truth confessing,
One in hope of heaven's blessing,
May we see, in love's possessing, Love's endless light!

3. Eyes will close, but you unsleeping, watch by our side;
Death may come, in love's safekeeping, still we abide.
God of love, all evil quelling,
Sin forgiving, fear dispelling,
Stay with us, our hearts indwelling, This eventide.

Closing Litany

The End is God's. The Beginning is God's.

The Storm is God's. The Peace is God's.

The Depths are God's. The Heights are God's

The Shadow is God's. The Light is God's.

For all times, all things and all, all belong to God.

Travel with God to the end from the beginning.

Walk slowly with the God of your salvation.

Continue with God during the storm as well as the peace.

Walk surely with the God of your liberation.

Journey with God through the depths and the heights.

Walk fully with the God of your restoration.

Wait with God in the dark and the light.

Walk always with the God of your assurance;

For all times, all things and all, all belong to God. *Amen.*

***Benediction & Passing of the Peace**

Worship Participants:

Liturgists & Digital Ministers – Rev. Rob Mark, Rev. Kate Carlisle

Minister of Music – Tom Handel

Covenant Choir

Cover Art – “Stardust” by Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity, Inspired by Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21, Acrylic on raw canvas with digital drawing © A Sanctified Art | sanctifiedart.org



Church of the Covenant

Lent 2023

The Way of Curiosity

Creatively opening ourselves to deeper truths through bolder questions.

Curiosity (noun): a desire to know; a desire to learn about things that do not properly concern one; inquisitiveness.

JOIN US FOR LENT 2023: The Way of Curiosity: *Creatively opening ourselves to deeper truths through bolder questions.* Join us this Lent (Feb. 22-April 9) as we journey through the wilderness with Jesus, cultivating more joyful curiosity around topics related to our daily living in search of deeper truths. Together we will consider: Embodied Practices, Make Believe, Simple Living, Active Art & Banned Subjects. Let's get inquisitive & imagine a world where *more (beauty, joy, vision, love, God)* is possible.

Free Lenten devotional from A Sanctified Art: [click here](#)

For more details and updates: www.cotcbos.org