

A Liturgy for Ash Wednesday

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Call to Worship

As soon as Jesus was baptised, he went up out of the water.
At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God
descending like a dove and lighting on him.

***And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love;
with him I am well pleased."***

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert... (*Mt.3:16-4:1*)

We seek to follow you, Jesus.

***Lead us by your Spirit into a season of preparation and of growing faith.
Amen.***

Prayer of Praise and Thanksgiving

God of passionate love and zealous commitment,
It is Your kindness that has softened our hearts and led us to Your arms.

We praise and thank You, O Lord.

It is Your devotion to us that has given us the courage
to commit ourselves to You.

We praise and thank You, O Lord.

It is Your invitation that has inspired us
to take upon us Your yoke, and in it find purpose, meaning and rest.

We praise and thank You, O Lord.

Receive again our offering of worship, of love and of our lives.

***This is our sacrifice of praise for Your blessing and glory,
God of our hearts.***

Amen.

Prayer of Confession & Preparation

Holy and Most Beautiful Lord,
We are humbled by Your compassion and mercy.
We recognise that within us is much that has hurt and offended You.
We acknowledge our faithlessness
and admit that we are undeserving of Your commitment to us.

(Silence)

But now, empowered by Your grace,
given to us through Jesus's life, death and resurrection,

We seek to renew our commitment,
and consciously deepen our relationship with You.

***We recognise, O Lord, that we are simply dust.
Remind us through these ashes of our dependence on You,
and Your devotion to us.***

***May we know the strength of Your Spirit as we seek to follow You;
May we know the discipline of Your love as we seek to draw nearer to You;
May we know the insight of Your wisdom as we seek to learn of You.***

***As we receive the ashes upon our foreheads,
may we know the joy of sharing with You in ministry,
in suffering, in death and in life.
For Your glory and your kingdom's sake.***

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Imposition of Ashes

*Those leading the service make the sign of the cross on each other's foreheads
with these words: "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.*

Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ."

After this the people come forward and kneel at the rail.

The leaders make the ash sign on each one's forehead.

Prayers of Request

God of Eternal Love,

We have made our commitment to You,
and have started a new journey into purposeful growth.

But, we know that if we are to remain faithful
we need Your help and Your strength.

So, we ask...

***Teach us to pray with faith
and read Your Word with understanding.***

***Teach us to worship with passion
and gather together with love.***

***Teach us to give generously, serve compassionately
and use our time mindfully,***

***So that we may reflect Your goodness,
and that others may discover Your grace through us.***

In Jesus Name. Amen.

Final Prayer

May God Himself, the God of peace, sanctify You through and through.

May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless
at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
The One who calls you is faithful and He will do it.
Amen.

***And now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us all for ever.
Amen.***