

## Blessing the Dust – A Blessing for Ash Wednesday

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  
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.

Jan Richardson, Circle of Grace  
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## A Gathering for Worship in the style of the Taizé Community



## Ash Wednesday

Metropolitan United Church  
February 26, 2020, 12pm

*Rev. Karen Bowles, Rev. Jason Meyers, Dr. Patricia Wright and Charles Davidson*

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## We gather in reflective silence

(all songs printed in bold text - join in, or listen, as you prefer)

*Some candles will be lit as we begin the service.  
Feel free to come forward to light a candle at this time.*

Song: **Dona nobis pacem, Domine.**  
(Grant us peace, O Lord)

Song: **O Lord Hear my prayer, O Lord hear my prayer  
When I call answer me,  
O Lord hear my prayer, O lord hear my prayer  
Come and listen to me.**

Prayer

Song: **Nothing can trouble, nothing can frighten,  
those who seek God shall never go wanting,  
Nothing can trouble, nothing can frighten,  
God alone fills us.**

Reading: Psalm: 51:1-2,6-17

Song: **Ubi caritas, et amor,  
ubi caritas, Deus ibi est**  
(where there is love, there also is God)

Reading: Isaiah: 58: 1-12

Prayer of Confession  
**God of life, we confess the ways we turn away from the fullness  
of life that you offer.  
God of love, we confess the hatred we hold in our hearts.**

**God of compassion, we confess our indifference.  
God of justice, we confess that our lives are linked to oppressive  
systems.  
God of peace, we confess the violent movements of our hearts,  
the violent realities of our world.  
God we confess our sins, our fragmentation to you.**

Silence

Imposition of Ashes

Song: **Stay with me, remain here with me,  
Watch and pray.  
Watch and pray.**

Song: **Within our darkest night,  
you kindle the fire that never dies away,  
never dies away.  
Within our darkest night,  
you kindle the fire that never dies away,  
never dies away.**

Reading: Matthew 6: 1, 19-21

Song: **Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's holy name  
Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me into life.**

Blessing the Dust

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Prayer

Benediction

*You may wish to remain in the sanctuary in reflection.  
When you leave, please do so in silence.*