

FEBRUARY &  
MARCH 2021

The Rev. Bailey Norman  
PRIEST-IN-CHARGE  
clergy@ststephensor.org

The Rev. Dr. Stephen Damos  
PASTORAL ASSOCIATE

Simon Ballintoy  
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC  
choir@ststephensor.org

Caroline Wood  
YOUTH MINISTER  
youthminister@ststephensor.org

Cameron Ellis  
TREASURER  
treasurer@ststephensor.org

Elizabeth Pack  
PARISH SECRETARY  
secretary@ststephensor.org

Nancy Anderson  
CHRISTIAN FORMATION  
cecoord@ststephensor.org

Caroline Wood, Craig Brent,  
Mary Petersen  
EPISCOPAL YOUTH FELLOWSHIP  
(EYF)  
eyf@ststephensor.org

Jim Ball  
WEBMASTER  
webmaster@ststephensor.org

Sharon Thomas  
NURSERY SUPERVISOR

Judith Delaney  
SENIOR WARDEN  
seniorwarden@ststephensor.org

Barbara Steele  
JUNIOR WARDEN  
juniorwarden@ststephensor.org

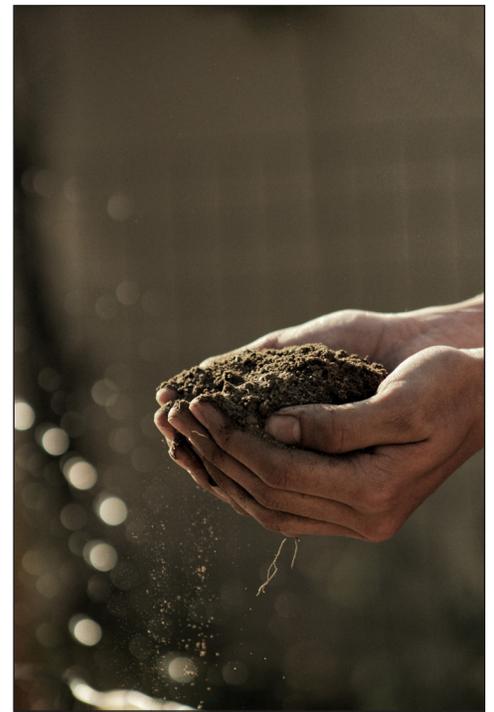
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church  
212 N. Tulane Avenue  
Oak Ridge, TN 37830  
Tel: 865.483.8497  
www.ststephensor.org

# The Evangel

## REMEMBER YOU ARE DUST

Even if you are not familiar with the meaning and practice of Ash Wednesday, it is inevitable on that day to see at least one person walking around town, at work or at school, looking like they seriously missed a spot on their face in the morning shower! This year the sightings of people out and about with this powerful witness on their forehead will be far scarcer since many churches who practice the fast of Ash Wednesday are either restricting in-person worship or not meeting at all. But if you can't wear it, why are we still practicing it? Where does this high holy day on our worship calendar originate, and why does it carry so much power for believers when its images communicate a far more sobering message compared to the sublimity of Christmas or the cosmic transformation of Easter?

The familiar words uttered at the administration of ashes – “Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return” – proclaim on the surface an ominous and threatening fate for humanity, especially when one takes a cursory read at the verse from Scripture on which this is based. In Genesis 3:19, God indeed proclaims a punishment upon the progenitors of humanity, Adam and Eve, for their disobedience in the Garden of Eden by setting a finite existence upon them. Their fate is tied to the earth – “By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” Underneath this (as is often the case in Hebrew), a subtle word play takes place. “Admah”, the transliterated Hebrew word for dust, is also translated (and perhaps more appropriately so in this context) as earth or soil. The root of “admah” is exactly the same as the root in the word “Adam”, which is not only the proper name for the first man but also the generic term for man. In essence, while the punishment was mortality, the fate and purpose of man was literally tied to the earth from which man (and woman) came.



*Photo by Gabriel Jimenez on Unsplash*

*Continued on page 2...*

*...Continued from page 1*

To be sure, penitence for sinfulness and repentance – the act of turning one’s life around – towards God are deeply enmeshed from the beginnings of these practices in the church. Throughout both the Old and New Testaments, the act of contrition often involved individuals (as in the case of Job) or whole communities (the people of Nineveh in response to Jonah’s post-aquatic proclamation) putting on sackcloth and sitting in dust and dirt, sprinkling them over their heads and bodies for good measure. It is this ritual from which originated the earliest practices of what we now call Ash Wednesday. From early on in the church’s existence, it was common for those who had committed acts of sinfulness to separate themselves from the wider congregation. These believers could only be readmitted through public acts of penance. One of these notable practices that gradually evolved was the priest (and occasionally members of the congregation) throwing dirt and ashes at the penitent before they were allowed to re-enter the fellowship. This served as a warning to others within the congregation, but it also commended believers both to pray for the sinner and for themselves that they should be reminded of their utter dependence and need for the grace of God.



*Photo by Annika Gordon on Unsplash*

By the late 6th century, during the time of Pope Gregory the Great, we can see the earliest practices of a special day of public penance by which the faithful placed ashes on their foreheads. It was not until the 11th century that a specific fast called Ash Wednesday came to be celebrated. This day initiated the penitential season of Lent, which remained a time in which sinners were publicly reconciled but also that converts to the faith were prepared for baptism at Easter. This latter purpose inspired what is now the most notable practice of Ash Wednesday, namely, the specific smudging of crosses upon the foreheads instead of simply sprinkling ashes. Besides the sprinkling or submersion in water, one of the most powerful symbols of baptism is the marking of the cross with holy oil upon the forehead of the newly baptized, done as an invocation of the Holy Spirit is made marking that person as

Christ’s own forever. As Ash Wednesday marked the beginning of the catechumenate period (the period of preparation for converts), the marking of the cross with ashes on the forehead was in essence “tilling the soil” in anticipation of the permanent and life-giving seal of the Holy Spirit being placed upon the believer that proclaimed the redemption and salvation of all that is mortal and frail in our human nature.

The paradoxical symbolism reflected in the giving of ashes – salvation in the context of our mortal existence, which is intimately tied into the very nature of God’s creating work – speaks a word of realistic hope and assurance to us as we come to grips with our inability to be masters of our own existence. The imposition of ashes and the words of their institution may speak a slight momentary message of punishment, but the true intent behind them is that God’s saving work, the breadth of Christ’s love, and the Spirit’s encouragement cannot be restrained. Humanity’s destiny is not to be trapped in this mortal life but rather that baptism and repentance points us to a literal and spiritual resurrection with God in which we are called to place all of our hopes and purposes in this life.

This year, be mindful of what wearing dirt on your head means in our current context. Some may see your dirt and look upon you with the normal curiosity. Some may see it and be frustrated that they cannot access this rite due to their own church not meeting in person or for some other reason. You can wear your dirt cross all day or wipe it off at the conclusion of our virtual service. In all things, be mindful of the message that is always proclaimed in our readings for Ash Wednesday. Our penitence, while public, calls us to a time of profound self-reflection. It is not for us to parade around our “righteousness” with pride, but it is rather for us to be mindful of what it means to bear the scars of our mortality and the reflection of Jesus’ sacrifice for others to see. I pray that we may all be mindful of this for that day and every day so that the sign of the cross and seal of the Holy Spirit given in baptism, while invisible to the literal eye, may be seen on us and through us. As all humanity shares this longing to know the depths and riches of true love and purpose, may Ash Wednesday prepare us to better show our participation in the riches and goodness of God’s Kingdom.

*Christ’s Peace,  
Bailey*

## LENT: A TIME OF PREPARATION

Well, here we are with Lent fast approaching and we are still socially distancing. I must say I am missing being in the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Atrium. There is a rhythm to our time there, just as there is a rhythm to the Church year. After Epiphany we focus on some of the teachings of Christ, such as the parable of the unleavened bread, and the parable of the mustard seed. We need our green, or growing time to learn and explore Jesus teachings and to expand our hearts in the knowledge of God.



*Photo by Biegun W, Schodni on Unsplash*

and think about those answers as

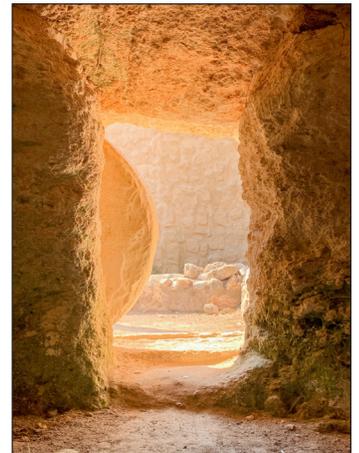
This brings us to Lent, another purple or preparation time. Like Advent, it is another intense time where we prepare, this time for the Lord's death and resurrection. In Catechesis, we always pair Jesus' death with his resurrection because it is so distressing to think about a world where there is no light of Christ. Most of our focus is on service to others during Lent which brings the Parable of the Good Shepherd to the forefront. Who is the Shepherd? Who are the sheep? Can we be both? What does it mean when the sheep know the voice of the shepherd? These are simple questions but the answers are anything but. I would suggest that you read the passages is the Catechesis way.

Another area we tend to focus on is the geography of the Jerusalem where Jesus spent his last days. In the atrium we have a puzzle of sorts with the temple surrounded by the walls of the old city with the mount of olives overlooking the city. It is helpful to see the place where Jesus walked and spent his last days. For me it makes his presence on earth more real and I hope it does the same for other Catechists of the Good Shepherd.

We also have a diorama of the upper room where Jesus and his disciples shared their last meal. Our ritual of the body and blood of Christ stems directly from that last meal and we are rooted in the tradition of Christ's words. We draw the children's attention to the rituals around the last supper and let them experience it for themselves by performing some of the actions themselves.

Finally, we come to the women at the empty tomb. Their wonder, amazement, and belief is inspirational. I wonder how we would react today in a similar situation. What complex emotions they must have experienced. Jesus was still with them after they had seen him suffer and die on the cross. The light of the world has reigned supreme and darkness is conquered for all of eternity. Pretty heavy stuff indeed.

In Catechesis we unpack the messages in scriptures, lessons, and rituals as we are able. This is but an abbreviated description that takes weeks or months of exploration. I hope this gives you a glimpse into the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd curriculum and methods. We are guided by the belief that each of us has our own journey of discernment dictated by God. I hope that you are blessed with your own appreciation of the rhythm of this time and find joy in the service to others during this period of Lent.



*Photo by Pisit Heng on Unsplash*

May God Bless you and keep you safe until we sing Alleluia again.

~ Linda Twohig

# VIRTUAL ASH WEDNESDAY

It has been a frequent conversation among my clergy colleagues – How do we do a contact-less Ash Wednesday? It seems to defeat the purpose when the priest can't smudge a big blob of ash on your forehead! But these conversations have been fruitful, and from them I have developed the following rite by which we are doing Ash Wednesday, Wednesday, February 17, 2021.

- First, the service will be totally virtual (I grind my teeth as I type this, as I especially long for this service to be in person. But physical separation remains appropriate at this time). The service will be broadcast at 9 AM that morning.
- Instead of ashes this year, we will be using DIRT. Between now and Ash Wednesday, a set of prayers and instructions (similar to the prayer card that has come with our pandemic communion distribution) will be sent out both physically and electronically for the purpose of self-imposing dirt on your forehead.
  - How will this be done? As you watch the service, at the appropriate time (which will be when I self-impose dirt) you will administer the ashes to yourself. If there are others in your household, it is certainly appropriate for you to administer to each other.
  - How will you get dirt? Well, of course dirt is everywhere, which is part of the reason for substituting dirt instead of ashes. Does it have to be “magic” dirt? This question is certainly humorous on the surface, but while it hasn't been phrased exactly like that, many people who are familiar with the Ash Wednesday liturgy and its special blessing over the ashes have asked what is appropriate liturgically. So here are three options for you in this regard:

Option 1 PICK-UP – You can come by the church anytime after 9 AM on Tuesday Feb. 16 to pick up a small plastic bag of dirt (which will be regular potting soil). We will leave these bags on a table outside the glass office doors under the portico.

Option 2 DELIVERY – We will have a sign up like we do with communion where these same small bags of dirt can be delivered to you sometime on Tuesday.

Option 3 DIY – You can get your own dirt from anywhere ranging from your own yard, God's wider creation, or even potting soil from a store.

- When the dirt is blessed during the service, whenever you watch it, consider the dirt you acquired by one of the three methods above to be blessed from afar and appropriate for administering.

Like everything else this past year, Ash Wednesday will look very different from its usual form. But to so many of us, rituals have become even more important as buoys in the turbulent waters of our world. The simple act of being called through the smudging of dirt/ashes on our foreheads to remember our mortality powerfully reminds us especially now that true and sustaining life comes from the One who formed us from these very elements and from His Son who shared our mortal existence and rose beyond it into the perfection of God's eternal love for all people. I look forward to worshiping with you on this special day.

*Bailey*

# “YOU ARE DUST AND TO DUST YOU SHALL RETURN”

*And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes.*

*Acts 2:20*

**A**s we approach our Ash Wednesday celebration, I am again reminded that as a physicist, these words carry a different symbolism to me than I believe they do to most parishioners.

We are indeed dust! We ourselves, and the world we live on, are very literally made of star dust. All of the elements, heavier than hydrogen, were produced in the furnaces we call stars. All of the elements heavier than oxygen were produced during the explosion of very large stars called super-nova. Over time gravitation has coalesced some of these elements into objects we call planets. Our earth is one of those that has been formed in an orbit around a small star. It is from that collection of dust that God created us. So to me, we are indeed dust – star dust.

Our sun is what astronomers call a “yellow dwarf”. This is a “main sequence” type of small star, which means it has a predictable lifetime of about 10 billion years. Our sun is about halfway through its life span. The end-of-life event for our type of star is rather spectacular. Our sun is powered by hydrogen fusion, producing helium. When it exhausts its supply of hydrogen, it will go dark and undergo a gravitational contraction until the combination of pressure and temperature ignites helium fusion. This reaction is so energetic that it now blooms into what is called a red giant. In this stage, it will expand out as a fiery furnace probably to a bit beyond the orbit of Mars, incinerating everything within it, turning us back into stardust. “You are dust and to dust you shall return.”

When God spoke to the prophets, it was not the right time in man’s development to talk about anything as detailed as I have just gone through. But, did he leave some clues?

~ Jim Ball

*But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.*

*2 Peter 3:10*



# LENT: A TIME OF PREPARATION AND LISTENING

**L**ent: the fourth season of the liturgical year, rich with history and tradition, it is the 40-day period during which we remember the events leading up to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, and his subsequent resurrection on Easter. The season is called “Lent” after an old English word meaning ‘lengthen’, as we see the days gradually get longer and springtime draws near.

Lent is a time of reflecting, asking for forgiveness, and preparing to celebrate Jesus’s resurrection at Easter, which comes at the very end of Lent. Just as Jesus went into the desert to pray and fast for the 40 days before dying on the cross, we observe 40 days of Lent as a time of fasting, abstinence and sacrifice - and frequently, we will “give up” something for Lent, as a sign of sacrifice and to test our self-discipline, just as Jesus resisted Satan’s temptation to turn away from God. Lent allows us time to say “no” to distractions so that we can deepen our prayer life and journey with God.

Last summer, the Parish Life team sent out packets that included Anglican Rosaries. Lent is the perfect time to practice praying with the Anglican Rosary. Try adopting one of the prayers below during Lent to help guide you on your journey.

Find a quiet spot and allow your body and mind to become restful and still. After a time of silence, begin praying the prayer beads at an unhurried, intentional pace. To begin, hold the Cross and say the prayer you have assigned to it, then move to the Invitatory Bead. Then, enter the circle of prayer with the first Cruciform Bead, moving to the right, go through the first set of seven beads to the next cruciform bead, continuing around the circle, saying the prayers for each bead. Pray around the circle of beads three times (signifying the Trinity) in an unhurried pace, allowing the repetition to become a sort of lullaby of love and praise that enables your mind to rest and your heart to become quiet and still.

Praying through the beads three times and adding the crucifix at the beginning or the end, brings the total to one hundred, which is the total of the Orthodox Rosary. A period of silence should follow the prayer, for a time of reflection and listening. Listening is an important part of all prayer.

## JULIAN OF NORWICH PRAYER

### The Cross

In the Name of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

### The Invitatory

O God make speed to save me (us)

O Lord make haste to help me (us)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

### The Cruciforms

God of your goodness, give me yourself,

For you are enough to me.

And I can ask for nothing less that is to your glory.

And if I ask for anything less, I shall still be in want,  
for only in you have I all.

### The Weeks

All shall be well, and all shall be well,

And all manner of things shall be well.

-- or --

In His love He has done His works,  
and in His love He has made all things beneficial to us.

## A CELTIC PRAYER

### The Cross

In the Name of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

### The Invitatory

O God make speed to save me (us)

O Lord make haste to help me (us)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

### The Cruciforms

By the eye of God dwelling with me,

The foot of Christ in guidance with me,

The shower of the Spirit pouring on me, richly and generously.

### The Weeks *(pray each phrase on a separate bead)*

I bow before the Father who made me,

I bow before the Son who saved me,

I bow before the Spirit who guides me,

In love and adoration.

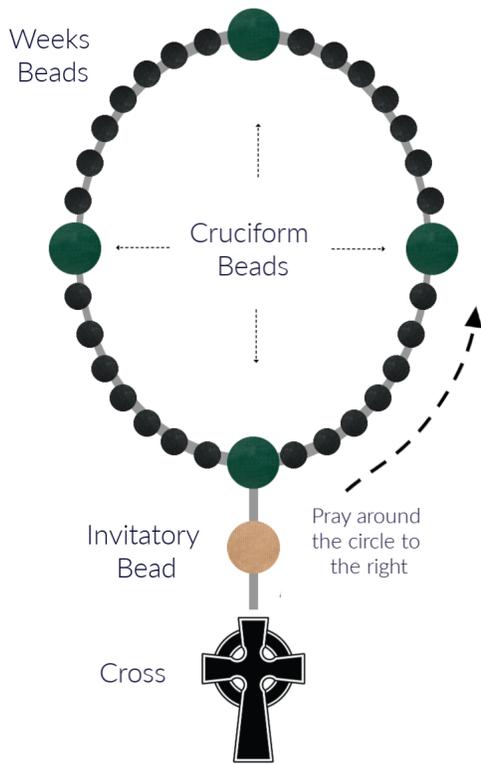
I praise the Name of the one on high.

I bow before the Sacred Three,

The ever One, the Trinity.

*These prayers were created by Sister Brigit-Carol, S.D.*

# Anglican Prayer Beads



## A LENTEN PRAYER

We take this time, God, to remember Jesus' death.

We are reminded of the greatness of our sins and that Christ paid their price before he left.

We take this time, God, to remember Christ.

We are reminded of the price he paid on the cross and that he made for us the ultimate sacrifice.

We take this time, God, to remember that we sin a lot.

We are reminded that this hurts you and yet you will always love us no matter what.

We take this time, God, to remember to read your Word.

We are reminded that you spoke to us long ago and when we read the Bible your voice can be heard.

We take this time, God, to remember you hear what we ask.

We are reminded that you want the best for us and that when we pray you're up to the task.

We take this time, God, to remember that you are coming back.

We are reminded that you are in charge and because of you there is nothing that we lack.

## HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

PALM SUNDAY: MARCH 28, 2021

- Livestream Palm Sunday worship
- Stations of the Cross: 1 & 2

MONDAY IN HOLY WEEK: MARCH 29, 2021

- Stations of the Cross: 3 & 4

TUESDAY IN HOLY WEEK: MARCH 30, 2021

- Stations of the Cross: 5 & 6

WEDNESDAY IN HOLY WEEK: MARCH 31, 2021

- Stations of the Cross: 7 & 8
- Tenebrae:

MAUNDY THURSDAY: APRIL 1, 2021

- Stations of the Cross: 9 & 10
- Labyrinth Walks: sign-ups for 30 minutes in the Labyrinth
- Virtual Agape Meal
- Stripping of the Altar
- Virtual Vigil: all-night livestream of the Garden of Repose in the Nave from 8 am to noon on Good Friday

GOOD FRIDAY: APRIL 2, 2021

- Stations of the Cross: 11 & 12
- Good Friday Liturgy: Livestream at 12 noon
- Seven Last Words: meditations & music, 5 p.m.

HOLY SATURDAY: APRIL 3, 2021

- Stations of the Cross: 13 & 14
- Holy Saturday Liturgy on YouTube
- Great Easter Vigil: 5:30 p.m., outside in-person worship (weather & COVID permitting)



# LOOKING AHEAD TO EASTER AND BEYOND

Planning for Easter is underway! We will certainly hold one livestream worship service, but beyond that, we still don't have any firm details to share. As we've discovered in the last year, when we make plans, God laughs! We will inform the parish once we are able to finalize details for Easter and make concrete decisions about what happens on Easter Sunday.

We are excited to welcome the Bishop of East Tennessee, the Right Rev. Bishop Cole on the second Sunday of Easter, April 11, 2021. He will see how we are doing our livestream worship, and (crossing fingers) how we hold in-person worship outdoors in our Grove. Cross your fingers for warm weather and sunshine!

## February & March Celebrations

### BIRTHDAYS

2/2	Adam Ballintoy	3/5	Nancy Carow
2/5	Jamie Burnham	3/7	Wes Singer
2/7	Rob Steele	3/8	Chloe Kirk
2/8	Kathie Shearer	3/9	Ted Swilley
	Caleb Justice	3/10	Jane Cappiello
2/9	Parker Stanley	3/11	Dominic Giuliano
	Mary Petersen	3/12	Jim Anderson
2/10	Elizabeth Botica	3/13	Gay Marie Logsdon
2/12	Adolf King		Virginia Jones
2/13	Fiona Yearwood		John Storey
2/14	Eileen Hartley	3/14	Linda Hagaman
2/15	Mary Jeanne French	3/14	Jim Kring
2/16	Katherine Etheridge	3/18	Ed LaRose
	David Felton	3/20	Susan Meredith
2/17	Brent Sigmon	3/21	Joy Fournier
2/19	Dan DiGregorio	3/22	Molly Justice
	Audrey Henry	3/24	Jonathan Heischman
2/21	Carol King	3/26	Judy Kidd
2/22	Carol Skyberg	3/27	Daryl Yearwood
2/23	Joe McGrory	3/29	Pete Peterson
2/25	Charles Jones		John C. Joyce
2/26	Nathan Kruzic	3/31	Ross Mol
	Cammie Owens		

### ANNIVERSARIES

2/6	Linda & Lew Felton
2/18	Mary Nell & Jack Campbell
2/20	Kathy Moore & Dan Tuxbury
2/22	Jamie & Ed LaRose
3/1	Jamey Kennedy & Allan Reiss
3/16	Judy & Dan DiGregorio
	Virginia & Charles Jones
3/18	Karen & Daryl Yearwood
3/25	Katherine & Gary Grubb
3/30	Stella & Bill Schramm



Where God is seen, love is felt, lives are changed!

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church 212 N. Tulane Avenue Oak Ridge, TN 37830

865.483.8497 Tel • 865.483.9926 Fax • [www.ststephensor.org](http://www.ststephensor.org)