

One: For our waste and pollution of your creation and our lack of concern for those who come after us,

**Many: Accept our repentance, O God.**

One: Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us.

**Many: Favorably hear us, O God, for your mercy is great. Amen.**

#### **PRAYER OF PREPARATION**

Merciful God, draw near as we begin our Lenten journey.

Instill in us the humbleness to admit that we are not perfect. Let us accept our failings so that we can begin again as a wiser and more compassionate follower of Christ. Send your spirit upon us to instill in us the wisdom to see what is right and the courage to do it. May it also reveal in us what is good, as we seek forgiveness for where we have gone astray. We pray this, for ourselves and for all the world, in the name of your son Jesus. Amen.

#### **NAMING BLINDSPOTS**

In this Lenten season, we commit to learning the ways we have been blind to our shortcomings, both through ignorance and through intention. Use this space to name where you think your blindspots are.

#### **\*IMPOSITION OF ASHES**

*Come forward and present your forehead or hand. The minister will then make the sign of the cross on your forehead or hand.*

#### **MEDITATIVE CHANT** “Spirit Draw Near”

*Ashes to Ashes, Dust to Dust. Through Christ, we are given life.*

#### **\*BENEDICTION**

**First Congregational United Church of Christ**

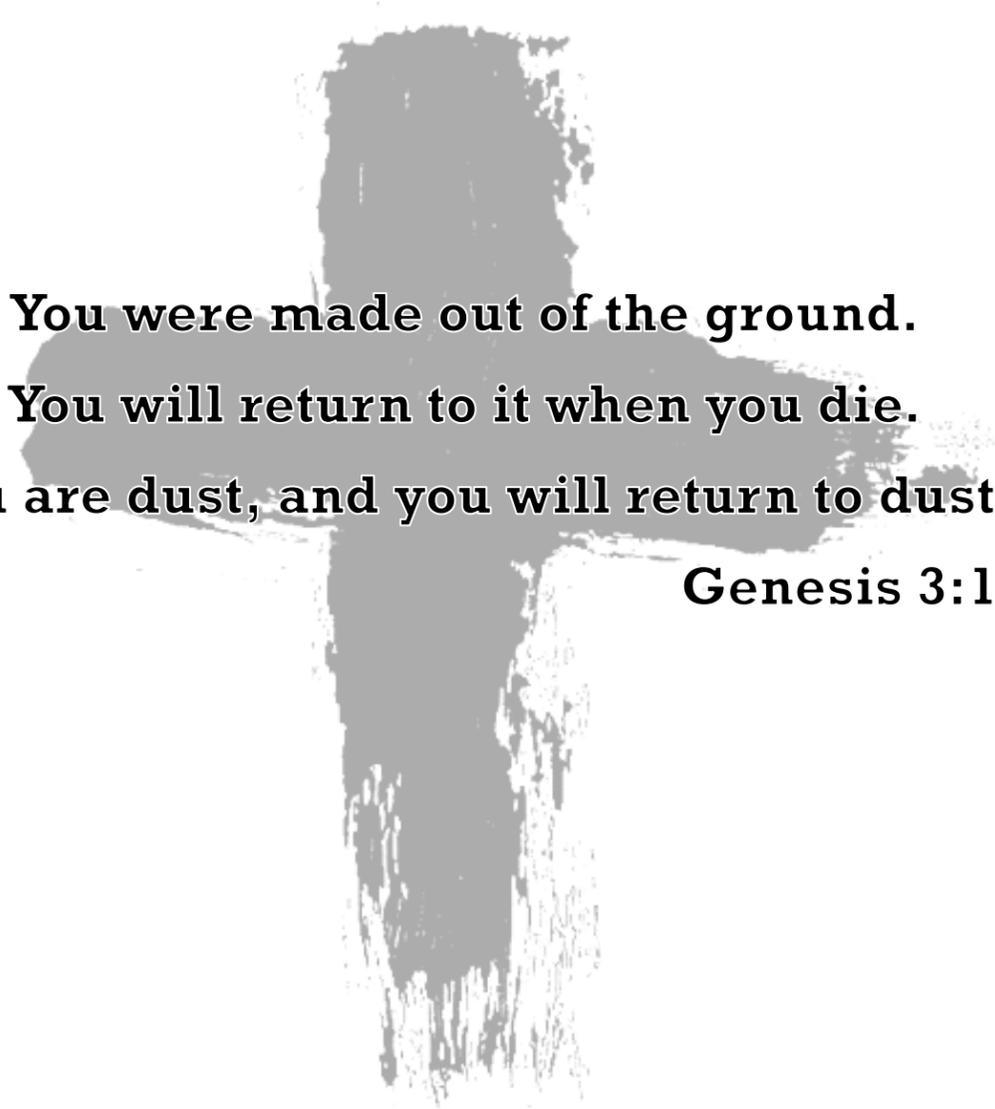
Wednesday, February 26, 2020 Ash Wednesday

**You were made out of the ground.**

**You will return to it when you die.**

**You are dust, and you will return to dust.**

**Genesis 3:19**



**\* CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: The season of Lent calls us to journey along the edge, to anticipate that final trip to Jerusalem.

Many: **Lent calls us to the cutting edge, when the wheat falls to the ground and new life comes forth.**

One: Lent not only calls us to give up something, but also invites us to participate in the mystery of God-with-us.

Many: **By your grace, call us from grief into gladness, despair into hope, estrangement into right relations with each other and with the earth.**

**MEDITATIVE CHANT** “Spirit Draw Near”

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major, 4/4 time. The first staff contains the first two phrases of the chant, with measure numbers 1 and 2 above the notes. The second staff contains the next two phrases, with measure numbers 3 and 4 above the notes. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Gath-ered here in the mys-tery of this hour, gath-ered here in one strong  
bod - y, gath-ered here in the strug-gle and the power, Spir - it draw near.

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

Psalm 51:1-17      889  
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21      1503, 1504

One: The grass withers and the flower fades, but the word of the Lord endures forever.

Many: **Amen**

**Reflection**      Pastor Greg Briggs

**PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR**

*Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we  
forgive our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.*

**\*HYMN**      #257 “What Wondrous Love Is This” verses 1, 2

**\*CONFESSION OF SIN**

*Pause for private reflection and prayer.*

One: Let us pray.

Many: **Most holy and merciful God: We confess to you and to one another that we have sinned by our own fault in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.**

One: We have not loved you with all our heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven.

Many: **Have mercy on us, O God.**

One: We have been deaf to your call to serve as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

Many: **Have mercy on us, O God.**

One: We confess to you, O God, all our past unfaithfulness. The pride, hypocrisy, and impatience in our lives,

Many: **We confess to you, O God.**

One: Our self-indulgent appetites and ways and our exploitation of other people,

Many: **We confess to you, O God.**

One: Our anger at our own frustration and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,

Many: **We confess to you, O God.**

One: Our lust of worldly goods and comforts and our dishonesty in our daily life and work,

Many: **We confess to you, O God.**

One: Our negligence in prayer and worship and our failure to commend the faith that is in us,

Many: **We confess to you, O God.**

One: Accept our repentance, O God, for the wrongs we have done. For our neglect of human need and suffering and our indifference to injustice and cruelty,

Many: **Accept our repentance, O God.**

One: For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us,

Many: **Accept our repentance, O God.**