

# Ash Wednesday and Lenten Reflection Walk

March 5, 2025, 11:00am-6pm



# Welcome to Your Reflection Journey

This booklet is your guide. For each station, you will find scripture and instructions, with some space throughout the booklet for you to write your own reflections. Please respect the privacy of those ahead of or behind you. Let one person at a time do each station, unless you are doing the stations together.

## The Beginning

Lent is a season for reflection, for looking at what in our hearts, minds, and actions draws us away from God. We also focus during this season on what can bring us closer to God. Since the Biblical understanding of repentance is to change direction, which can include changing the direction of our lives or changing what draws us away from God, Lent is often described as a season of repentance or penitence. However, it can also be understood as a season of renewal. One that brings us closer to God and to experiencing God's love.

Before beginning, use the following or a similar prayer to focus yourself:

*Almighty God, whose love and forgiveness are unending, help me as I begin this time of reflection. Let this be a time where I can focus on you, draw closer to you, and recognize that you are welcoming me even if I do not sense your presence or if I feel unworthy. May I put aside distracting thoughts, worries, or plans for the future. Amen.*

**You are ready to begin.**

# Station 1. The Journey of Faith

## Genesis 12

Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup> I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." <sup>4</sup> So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.

## Instructions

All of us are on a journey of faith. At times, it leads us closer to God. At other times, away from God. As you walk the path that is before you, consider your own journey. What has shaped your understanding of faith? Are you drawing closer to God? Or does God seem further away or unreal?

Along the center aisle of the Chapel you will find the first station. The others will be found along the outside walls as you move clockwise around the sanctuary.

## Your Reflections:

## Station 2. Creation.

**Genesis 2:7** (Complete Jewish Bible)

*Then ADONAI, God, formed a person [Hebrew: adam] from the dust of the ground [Hebrew: adamah] and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, so that he became a living being.*

### Instructions

Before you is a bowl of dirt. Run your fingers through the dirt. Remember we are a part of creation, with atoms that have previously been part of other parts of creation. Eventually, all of us return to the earth.

Now take a deep breath. Feel the air move inside you. The Hebrew word ruach (roo'-akh) means wind, breath, and also spirit. What does it mean that God breathed God's spirit into us? Into you?

## Station 3. Brokenness

**2 Corinthians 1:3-4**

*<sup>3</sup> Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, <sup>4</sup> who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.*

### Instructions

Before you is a bowl of broken pottery shards and a sharpie. Reflect on the parts of our world that are broken and hurting. On a piece of pottery, write something about the world or your life that you wish could be healed. Leave it on right side of the table. If you like, write on a second piece to take with you.

**Your Reflections:**

## Station 4. The Light

### Isaiah 9:2

*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness — on them light has shined.*

### Instructions

Before you a candle is burning, near it are pencils and post-it notes. Reflect for several moments on how God brought light into a dark time in your life. On a post-it note, write a short description of one way Christ has brought light to you, do not sign the note. Either place the note on the table or put it in your pocket with a short prayer of thanks.

## Station 5. Responding to The Light

### Romans 3:22-24

*For there is no distinction,<sup>23</sup> since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God;<sup>24</sup> they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,*

### Instructions

Before you is another candle and a stack of post-it notes. You have had an opportunity to reflect on the hurt and brokenness of the world and on how God's light shines in the darkness.

Now is a time to reflect on how you are involved in the troubles of the world. All of us are human, none are perfect. Each of us does something, even if unintentionally, that hurts ourselves, others, or God's world. Reflect on what you do that is hurtful, even if it is something small. What are you willing to stop doing, even if it takes multiple tries? Write it on one of the post-it notes. Either post it anonymously on the table, or take it as a sign of your commitment to cease.

## Station 6. Sharing the Light

### **Matthew 5:14-16**

*<sup>14</sup> "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.*

### **Instructions**

Before you is another candle and a stack of post-it notes. You now have the opportunity to reflect on how you can be part of God's light shining in the darkness.

What is something new that you can do to help bring light into a broken or hurting part of our world? It may be something small, actively smiling and wishing people who are seldom acknowledge (such as online helpers) can make their day. Picking up trash others leave lying around, volunteering in a program like the food pantry, calling and encouraging someone having a difficult time are other possibilities. You may also choose to become involved with a group addressing major social or justice issues. Write your commitment on post-it note. Either post it anonymously on the table or take it with you as a reminder of your commitment.

### **Your Reflections:**

## Station 7. Communion as Jesus is our light

### **John 1:1-4**

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning.*

*<sup>3</sup> Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup> In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*

### **Matthew 26:26-28**

*<sup>26</sup> While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." <sup>27</sup> Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you, <sup>28</sup> for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.*

### **Instructions**

Before you are the elements of communion. Above are the accompanying words. Together they remind us that the light that comes in Christ was not and is not always welcome. Too often, it can feel like the darkness will overcome the light.

Take this moment to reflect on the cost that has often come with God's light, not only to Jesus, but to modern martyrs like Oscar Romero, Archbishop in El Salvador; Janani Luwum, Archbishop under Idi Amin in Uganda; Esther John, who became an evangelist in Pakistan.

When you are ready either take the elements alone, repeating Jesus' words from Matthew 26 as you do, or gather with others around you, saying his words to each other.

Quietly say a prayer for all who have died or suffered for their faith.

## Station 8. Ashes

### Genesis 3:19

*<sup>19</sup> By the sweat of your brow  
you will eat your food  
until you return to the ground,  
since from it you were taken;  
for dust you are  
and to dust you will return.*

### Daniel 9:2-3

*I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the Lord given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years.<sup>3</sup> So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes.*

Dust and ashes have a long history as a sign of grief. They become a sign of repentance when they mark our grief over what we have done and our commitment to change. It is a time to reflect on our past, not in order to beat ourselves up over it or load ourselves with guilty feelings, but to learn from it so we can become better, more caring, more Christ-like people.

### Instructions

Begin by reading the Litany of Penitence.

Holy and merciful God,  
we are reluctant to admit that we are imperfect people,  
but all of us have times when we struggle or fall or lose our  
way.

We do things we wish we had not done.

We leave undone things we know we could or should do.

We say things that hurt other people  
and think things that are not even good for ourselves.



We don't love you. We don't love our neighbors.  
Often, we don't even love ourselves.

We say we want a better world, but refuse to enter into  
community with others and so contribute to the brokenness  
of our world. Have mercy on us, O God.

Give us the support we need to be honest with you and with  
ourselves.

We are not faithful to our commitments and instead let  
pride, hypocrisy, and impatience rule our lives.

We indulge our own wants without concern  
for the impact on others.

And our world remains broken.

We vent our frustration and envy on those around us.

And our world remains broken.

We seek worldly goods and comforts,  
while ignoring dishonesty in daily life and work,  
And our world remains broken.

We neglect prayer and worship,  
and fail to live up to our faith.

And our world remains broken.

We neglect human need and suffering  
and are indifferent to injustice and cruelty,  
And our world remains broken.

We ignore our own prejudice and contempt  
toward those who differ from us,  
And so jump to false judgments about others.  
And our world remains broken.

We waste resources and pollute your creation  
and show little concern for those who come after us,  
And our world remains broken.

Restore us, O God of our salvation,  
and show us your steadfast love.

Renew us and empower us to help establish the kinds of  
relationships and community you call us to.

And our world will no longer be broken.

### **Imposition of ashes**

Before you are two bowls: one containing ashes, and one containing oil. As you look at them, take time to reflect on the journey you have had as you experienced each of the stations. Think about the changes you are encouraging yourself to make this Lenten season.

When you are ready, you may use the following prayer either on your own or with the person standing nearby who is willing to say the words as you mark yourself with the sign of the cross. Simply dip your finger lightly into the oil, then into the ashes, and make the sign of the cross on either your forehead or the back of your hand.

As you do this, remember, you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

### **Prayer with ashes**

*Almighty God,  
You created us out of the dust of the earth.  
May these ashes be for us a reminder  
That we are broken and in our brokenness we become part of  
the problems that surround us.  
Only through the gracious gift of renewal that comes through  
you, Jesus Christ, can we begin to help others and ourselves.  
Amen.*

**Reflections:**

# COME CELEBRATE THE LENTEN SEASON @ GENEVA

April 13

**PALM SUNDAY**

**10:30am Worship**

In the Sanctuary and  
livestream @  
genevapres.org.

April 17

**MAUNDY THURSDAY**

**7pm Worship**

Tenebrae service in the  
Sanctuary with communion.

April 18

**GOOD FRIDAY**

**12pm Worship**

**"The Seven Last Words"**

In the Sanctuary.

April 20

**EASTER SUNDAY**

**10:30am Worship**

In the Sanctuary and  
livestream @ genevapres.org.

## Our Pastor

The Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Steele  
(transitional pastor)  
949-837-2323  
esteele@genevapres.org

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## Office Information

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Woods, CA 92637 /  
949-837-2323

### Office Hours:

Mon. -Thurs., 9am-4pm and  
Fridays 9am-1pm.

### 24-Hour Emergency Line:

949-837-2323



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