



The Elim Scribe



Reflections from Pr Bruce ~

Ashes! Again?

Smudged. On the forehead. Again! Visible! Dirty! Greasy! From last Palm Sunday's palm fronds. In the shape of a cross. So why do we do that? It is morbid. Depressing!

Ashes and dust are a historic way of showing sorrow or repentance. Think of Genesis 3:19 "... you are dust and to dust you shall return."

Ashes remind us of where we come from. We are part of creation. Not separate. We do not always understand or realize how inter-connected we are with all creatures and the rest of creation. We come from the basic elements of earth and share that common origin of identity. That keeps us humble and hopefully helps us be more accountable and responsible in how we treat this globe we call home and all life that inhabits it.

We are mortal. Our bodies get old and tired. We die. That, too, is part of our connection with the rest of creation. The cycles of life. Even the four seasons reflect that. Our mortality can be depressing. Making peace with that is healthy and life-giving. We cannot fight it or deny it. Pretending or ignoring it does not change the reality. Ashes help us to be honest. And, maybe, with that honesty, live with more responsibility and integrity.

Ashes in the shape of a cross help us to look beyond ourselves to what God has done for us in Christ Jesus. God created us for life. Life that goes beyond the grave. Life that defies mere mortal limitations. Ashes in the sign of the cross give us hope. The Bible gives us hope that there is life beyond the grave; that there is meaning and purpose beyond singular, selfish living.

Ashes in the sign of the cross also connect us with all others who share that hope. We have a shared faith and a common hope. The longing for life beats fervently within us. That, too, seems to be a factor we share with all of creation. So much can be said about that. But for now consider Lent, and Ash Wednesday, as a way of reminding yourself and ourselves of our inter-connectedness, and our common need for God's mercy, grace and love. And, once again, thank God for that need's being met so completely through Jesus. Remember that Easter includes Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

"As for me, I shall behold Your face in righteousness; when I awake I shall be satisfied beholding Your likeness." Psalm 17:15

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Remember:

Ash Wednesday - March 2, 2022 (Service at 6 p.m.)

Palm Sunday - April 10, 2022

Good Friday - April 15, 2022 (Service at 6 p.m.)

Easter Sunday - April 17, 2022

[Daylight Savings Time begins at 2 a.m., March 13, 2022]

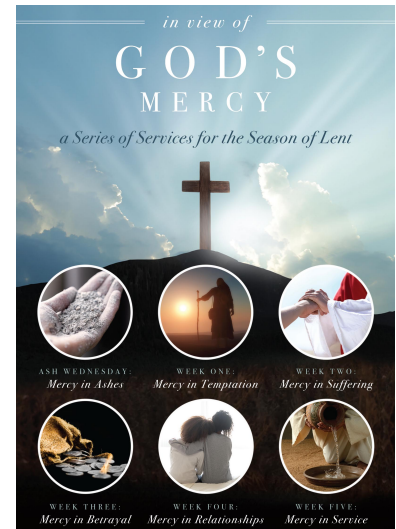


Lenten Sermon Series

Pr Bruce will be presenting this series entitled “In View of God’s Mercy” throughout Lent. Please join us as you are able!

The weekly themes are:

- Ash Wednesday (3/2) — Mercy in Ashes
- Week 1 (3/6) — Mercy in Temptation
- Week 2 (3/13) — Mercy in Suffering
- Week 3 (3/20) — Mercy in Betrayal
- Week 4 (3/27) — Mercy in Relationships
- Week 5 (4/3) — Mercy in Service



Featuring

Steve Munson, our newly-elected congregational president, is adding this Elim volunteer opportunity to a list of others, at Elim and in the community. His service for the Ogden Nature Center resulted in his being recognized by the State of Utah with a Volunteer of the Year award (<https://utahphilanthropyday.org/awards/item/82-heart-hands-award>) for Utah Philanthropy Day in November 2021. Steve's award nomination letter notes that he "generously and enthusiastically volunteers to help with every Ogden Nature Center event and fundraiser, missing only when he is out of town. He has been a responsible board member for the last six years and has been active on the land management committee. His expertise in management and natural resources has been extremely valuable. ... [W]e appreciate deeply ... Steve’s willingness and ability to help no matter the task, his positive attitude, responsibility and follow through, as well as his wise and down-to-earth analysis of issues facing our organization. He sets a wonderful example to others in his service to the US Forest Service, the community and to the Ogden Nature Center."

Steve also volunteers as a delivery driver for Catholic Community Services (Pantry Pak program, providing take-home meals for disadvantaged students) and is a long-time regular blood donor for the Red Cross. Additionally, he has been a great help to Elim with many "fix-it" problems.

Kudos and many, many thanks to Steve!

