



Ashes to Easter

A Round-Table IDEA Potluck

January 16, 2021 - 10:00am CST

or

January 19, 2021 - 12:00pm CST



Ash Wednesday through Easter Ideas

Ash Wednesday:

- Mardi Gras celebration on Shrove Tuesday- finding way to speak to the tradition of the congregation. Drive -by beignet event and "ash pick-up" for worship on Ash Wednesday. (First United Methodist -Denton).
- David Gambrell, PC(USA) Office of Theology and Worship: "In light of COVID, I would advise this year that people apply the ashes themselves or to others who are in their family unit or bubble. For those worshiping from home, an alternative to palm ashes is "local dust" -- soil from the yard, a potted plant, or a nearby green-space. Where ashes or soil are not practical, people may trace the shape of the cross (a sign of baptism) on hands or foreheads with water, oil, or just the thumb or finger."
- Create/supply version of ashes - paper with scripture and marked with ashes for people to carry with them during the Lenten season.
- Explore reversal ashes - possible symbol of growth, bring ashes or dirt to grow seeds in becoming new life.
- Don't let the ashes get in the way of what the day is about - the promise.
- Mix ashes with anointing oil when painting on paper to add smell.
- Have pieces of paper with people's names on it and mark it with ashes.
- Using dirt instead of ashes, use of playdough as a touch piece of spiritual practice (children).
- Outdoor Ashes-to-go - individual cups with people self-imposing ashes (First UMC, Denton).
- Distribute ashes in a container to people.
- Set brown paper and allow people to make sign of cross with ashes on the paper and leave out on campus.
- Focus on cycle life rather than our mortality. Ask people to bring oil and anoint themselves.
- Reverse Ash Wednesday - invite the congregation to bring and leave dirt/ashes to become part of a garden. Working with compost to symbolize new growth/new life.
- Use q-tips to impose ashes.
- Worship kits for each family unit prepared for Lent and picked up in prior to Ash Wednesday via a drive-through Sunday event before Ash Wednesday - communion supplies, children's materials, liturgical art project, etc.
- Drive through imposition of ashes.
- Catholic church is suggesting sprinkling ashes rather than impose - do it in silence.
- Impose ashes on the back of hands rather than forehead.

Lent:

- First Sunday of Lent - planting paper white bulbs via video during sermon. Process of planting and watching progress each week. Consider using a fishbowl/aquarium so that the viewers can see inside the box.
- Organize a drive-through Sunday to take the place of previous in-person gatherings – prayer shawls, pancake breakfasts, etc.
- Focus on spiritual practice and use time to grow into something new and different, rediscovering the basics of Lent and prayer.
- Study on Jill Duffield's Book "Lent in Plain Sight".
- APCE Blog Post: Anticipating Lent – Ideas for Ash Wednesday and Lenten Activities <https://apcenet.org/2021/01/10/anticipating-lent-ideas-for-ash-wednesday-and-lenten-activities/>
- Small groups for Lenten studies on zoom; small groups have several different themes - "Reflect and Connect".
- Prayer Tree - prayer requests are emailed to pastors, pastors write prayers on origami butterflies that members have made and dropped off in advance, butterflies are hung from branches of a large, bare tree branch that is on the chancel (or outdoors!). Prayers of the People are offered in front of the prayer tree each week.
- Remote Sunday school idea: Godly Play story videoed and shared. Ex. Lenten Mystery story

Holy Week:

- Palm Sunday - Drive Thru Parade the Sunday before Palm Sunday with All Glory, Laud & Honor playing! Cars surround church building. Palms passed out by youth. Cars drove around, palms waving - very slowly. Videoed the procession. Video played on Palm Sunday.
- *Seven Last Words* on Good Friday (choir is learning this individually in virtual rehearsals with recording in the church, recorded the video with them lip syncing their track (together with masks/social distanced). Music will be interspersed with artwork (some created by the church/some traditional artwork).
- Holy Week - Maundy Thursday with communion as the focal point of the week, prayer for Good Friday; prayer in the garden for Maundy Thursday; foot washing with family members.
- Maundy Thursday - gather art experiences focused on communion - all kinds. During Communion - share pictures of all the different experiences.
- Handbells on Good Friday - tolling of bells outside C, D#, G (minor chord) - 6 to 9 people - random ringing - do it for 2 minutes. Wear Black.
- Handbells on Easter - C, E, G (major chord) - Wear White - same ringing as Good Friday.

Easter:

- Easter Egg Hunts - collection of colored eggs from the congregation. Trace an oval on paper. Decorate like an Easter egg and forward to church prior to Easter. Laminate, string, and hang them all over church campus. Take pictures, post on church's social media pages. While typically an activity for children, adults found it to be easy to participate in too.
- Rent an outdoor space to safely gather outdoors for Easter worship. COMPLETELY MASKED!
- Caterpillars to butterflies (intergenerational)- release on Easter morning in parking spaces with the release (2nd Little Rock) Website to order butterflies: <https://www.insectlore.com/> or call 1-800-LIVE BUG
- Outdoor Easter Morning service (COVID-dependent)
- Doing worship in parking lot for a sense of community. Bring ashes back to lay at cross before the Easter flowering of the cross.
- How do you modify an Easter Egg hunt? - selfie scavenger hunt; what is the most important aspect of an Easter Egg hunt and modify for safe social distancing.
- Easter "lessons and carols" to continue for several weeks after Easter.
- Random handbell ringing outside for Easter Sunday.

Lent through Easter:

- How to vary livestream services? Maundy Thursday or Ash Wednesday – organize a pass through the church in stages - set up stations to get ashes, stop in Chapel to pray, etc.
- Illustrated Ministry (www.illustratedministry.com) - posters that may be duplicated and sent to members and returned to church for use during worship.
- A Sanctified Art (www.sanctifiedart.org) – Lenten devotional is available with many Lenten and Easter worship resources.
- Video series for Sunday school - Amy Jill Levine on Cokesbury's website.
- Prayers/music from different continent: Each week a different continent was highlighted in prayers as well as in music. (FPC-FW)
- Spirituality Center- registration to come in for certain hours (because of COVID), garden, prayer stations etc., labyrinth (outdoors). (FPC Kerrville)
- Drive through prayer station (Round Rock) - outdoor labyrinth.
- Virtual Prayer Room: Modeled after the sanctuary to have a familiar place, intergenerational. (2nd Little Rock)
- APCE will have virtual spirituality center (Feb 5-7) through Google classroom.

Other shared ideas:

- What can we do with music for drive through/parking lot worship - carol/hymn sing with live brass ensemble safely spaced.
- Use of Switcher on iPad and iPhones - Various cameras and music can be used simultaneously.