

Lutheran FAQ:

Why Do We Wear Dirt on our Foreheads on Ash Wednesday?

Have you been to an Ash Wednesday worship service before? What was it like?

Is Lent usually something you pay attention to? If so, what do you do differently during Lent?

God made people out of dust, it says in the book of Genesis. Your body is an amazing and complex miracle. What does it mean to you that you are made of the same building blocks as the rest of creation? _____

"Mortality" means that someday, every person dies. It is part of our human nature that our lives have a time limit. What do you want to get done before your time runs out? _____

Ash Wednesday is a time to admit that life isn't perfect. Where have you seen the world be broken lately? Where do you see God's healing happening? _____

How do you know if church (or somewhere else) is a place you can bring your whole self? _____

When we repent, we are choosing a new way to act. We are putting down something that is harmful (sin) and choosing something helpful. When have you repented before? What changed? _____

How is God calling you to repent, or change, now? _____

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Is Lent a season you usually pay attention to? What do you do differently (as a congregation or on your own)? _____

Have you worn ashes somewhere other than church? What was that like, or what do you think it would be like? _____

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Mortality is part of our human nature. It means that someday, we will die. Our lives have a time limit. What do you want to get done before your time runs out? _____

When we repent, we are choosing a new way to act. We are putting down something that is harmful (sin) and choosing something helpful. When have you repented before? What changed? _____

What is a hard sin for you to let go of? Why? _____

Ash Wednesday is a time to admit that life isn't perfect. Where have you seen the world be broken lately? Where do you see God's healing happening? _____

How do you know if church (or somewhere else) is a place you can bring your whole self? _____

Deeper Dive:

- "Beautiful Things" by the band Gungor is a beautiful meditation on our dusty and holy natures.
- Read Psalm 51:1-17. When might you pray something like this? What verses are most familiar to you? Which phrases catch your attention?

Written by the ELCA South Carolina Synod to accompany the video "Why Do We Wear Dirt on our Foreheads on Ash Wednesday?" found at <https://youtu.be/aOyhKrToNR0>