



**AN INTERACTIVE WORSHIP EXPERIENCE • FEBRUARY 17, 2021**

Thank you for joining us for this unique Ash Wednesday experience.  
We've worked to create an interactive worship service that works for everyone  
and that features Messiah's musicians, staff members, and servant leaders.

We are so glad you're here!





This Ash Wednesday service has been designed to be experienced two ways: tune in for a live experience OR visit our Ash Wednesday web page for the same videos and activities at your own pace.

### SUPPLIES

In order to fully participate, it will be helpful to gather the following supplies:

- Pen or pencil
- Colored pencils, crayons or markers
- Glue or tape
- Post-It Note or small square of paper
- White yarn
- Band-Aid
- Shoelace

Activity printouts  
(included in this guide):

- James 1:19 printout
- Acrostic printout
- Psalm 51:10 printout

To download additional copies visit [www.MessiahChurch.org/ash-wednesday-2021](http://www.MessiahChurch.org/ash-wednesday-2021)



Stream the full hour-long Ash Wednesday service on Wednesday, February 17 at 7 pm at [www.MessiahChurch.org/live](http://www.MessiahChurch.org/live) OR visit our Ash Wednesday web page at [www.MessiahChurch.org/ash-wednesday-2021](http://www.MessiahChurch.org/ash-wednesday-2021) to view the same videos and engage with the same activities on your own time, at your own pace. (Materials on the website will be available beginning at 8 am on Wednesday, February 17.)

This worship experience has five sections — each with music, scripture, a reflection, and a prayer. Following the reflection will be a time for you to participate with an interactive activity. We distributed materials for these activities in a kit at drive-thru events. If you didn't pick up a kit, that's okay! You can still participate fully. A supply list is printed on each of the following pages — most supplies are common household items. Gather these items before the service begins, or just follow along with the experience. During the live service, you'll have a little time to work through each activity, and then the next section will begin. Otherwise, you can work through these same videos and activities on our Ash Wednesday web page. This would allow you to work at your own pace, pause and help children with the activities, or work through the sessions throughout the day or week.

More than anything, we hope this time allows you space to rest, reflect, and prepare for the Lenten season before us.



“As we enter into this Lenten season, let's do so with a goal of having a change of mind, leaving our sin behind and making room to love God with a whole and longing heart.”

**SCRIPTURE** I preached that they should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds. — Acts 26:20

**REFLECTION** Since the early Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, it became the custom of the Church that before the Easter celebration there should be a 40 day season of spiritual preparation. Today, we begin that 40 day season called Lent. Lent is a season of self-examination and repentance by prayer, fasting, reading and meditating on Scripture. And to mark the beginning, Ash Wednesday is that moment when we remember our own mortality and reflect on the ways we have not been the people that we ought to have been.

In the Bible, the word repent means “to change one's mind.” It's not just about feeling remorseful about something we did or said, but about examining how we think so as to have a change of mind. True repentance will result in a change of action. In fact, the Apostle Paul said his whole life was about preaching so “that they should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds.” Genuine repentance is motivated by a desire to please God, to move away from thinking that leads to sin and move toward thinking that lines up with God desires for us. A person who has truly repents of their sin and exercises faith in Christ will give evidence of a changed life.

Repenting doesn't have to be a somber act but it does need to be intentional. So as we enter into this Lenten season, let's do so with a goal of having a change of mind, leaving our sin behind and making room to love God with a whole and longing heart. We need this new season to rest, reconcile, refocus and renew so that we can repent, change our minds, and be ready to claim the gift of Easter.

**PRAYER** Dear Lord, forgive me when I fall into the cycle of rescue, repent, and repeat and for treating Your forgiveness so casually. Help me to have a change of mind that results in a change of actions. I give you permission to have your way with my heart so it will be completely restored toward You. In Jesus' Name, **AMEN.**



## SUPPLIES

In order to fully participate, it will be helpful to gather the following supplies:

- Post-It Note or small square of paper
- Pen or pencil

Source: [www.instagram.com/liturgiesforparents](http://www.instagram.com/liturgiesforparents)

**SCRIPTURE** By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done. — Genesis 2:2,3

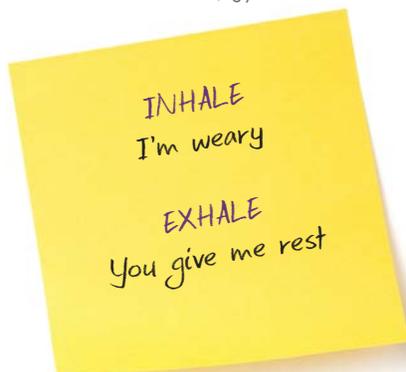
Return to your rest, my soul, for the Lord has been good to you. — Psalm 116:7

**ACTIVITY** The Breath Prayer allows space to slow down and pray simple prayers with the rhythm of your own breathing. Allow yourself a moment to pause, be present, and rest in God's grace as you inhale and exhale.

There are several breath prayers below. As you inhale, think on one word; as you exhale, think on the other. You can do this once, a few times, or at a set time each day.

You may choose to design a movement that goes with your breath prayer. Take a step forward with each foot on each inhale/exhale. Move your arms or open and close your hands. Find something that works for you as you breathe through these moments of rest and reset.

Read through the prayers below, or design your own based on your favorite scripture. Write your prayer(s) on a Post-It Note and place it somewhere you'll see it and be able to capture rest in the weariness of every day.



**Inhale** No Word of God  
**Exhale** Will ever fail

**Inhale** I will focus on today  
**Exhale** And not worry about tomorrow

**Inhale** Help my troubled heart  
**Exhale** I will not be afraid

**Inhale** O God, you are mercy and grace  
**Exhale** I give thanks for your love

**Inhale** You have called me  
by name

**Exhale** I am yours

**Inhale** As for me  
**Exhale** I will always have hope

**Inhale** I will trust in you  
**Exhale** With all my heart

**Inhale** The God of peace  
**Exhale** Is with me



## SUPPLIES

In order to fully participate, it will be helpful to gather the following supplies:

- James 1:19 printout (see next page). To download additional copies visit [www.MessiahChurch.org/ash-wednesday-2021](http://www.MessiahChurch.org/ash-wednesday-2021)
- White yarn
- Glue or tape
- Band-Aid
- Colored pencils, crayons or markers

**SCRIPTURE** Instead, be kind and tender-hearted to one another, and forgive one another, as God has forgiven you through Christ. — Ephesians 4:32

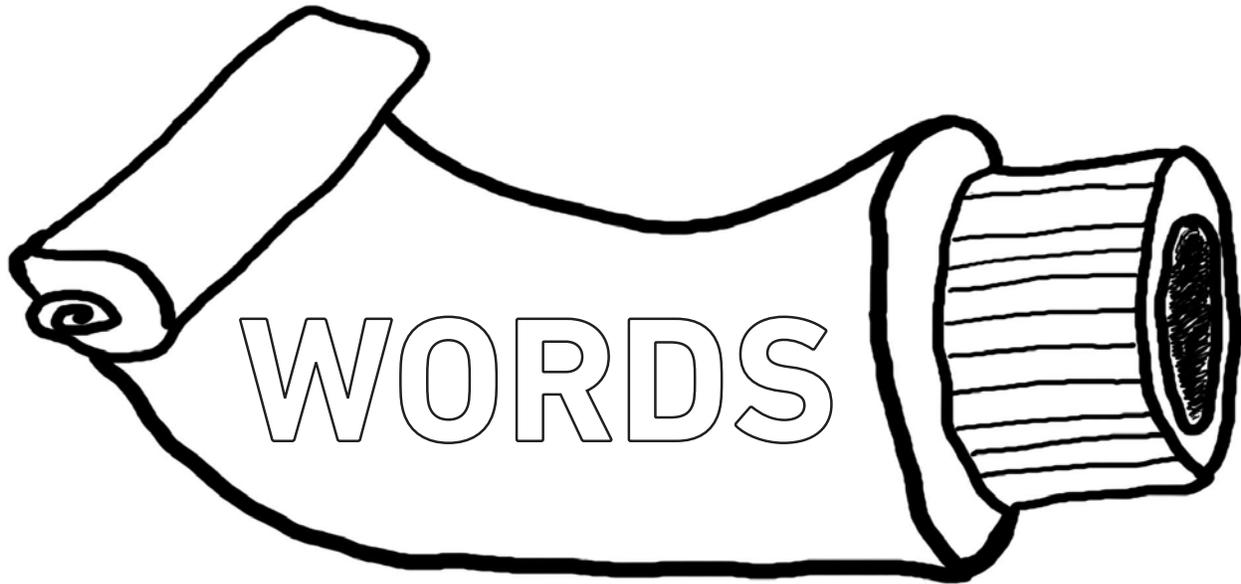
Remember this, my dear friends! Everyone must be quick to listen, but slow to speak and slow to become angry. — James 1:19

**ACTIVITY** Make this reminder about reckless and healing words as you spend some time thinking about the words you use in your relationships, and if there are any relationships in your life that need repairing.

The white yarn is used to represent toothpaste, and the Band-Aid as a symbol of healing, with this scripture reminder from James: *Remember this, my dear friends! Everyone must be quick to listen, but slow to speak and slow to become angry.*

**PRAYER** Gentle Lord, help me to be more like you. I pray to watch my words and how I say them. Guide me to slow down enough to shut off my anger and think about the words I'm about to say. I want to remember that the wrong words can hurt. I pray for forgiveness and changing my heart to be more tender. **AMEN.**





Remember this, my dear friends!  
Everyone must be quick to listen,  
but slow to speak and slow to become angry.

- James 1:19

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## SUPPLIES

In order to fully participate, it will be helpful to gather the following supplies:

- Shoelace
- Acrostic printout (see next page). To download additional copies visit [www.MessiahChurch.org/ash-wednesday-2021](http://www.MessiahChurch.org/ash-wednesday-2021)
- Pen or pencil

**SCRIPTURE** Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. — Hebrews 12:1-3

**ACTIVITY** Take your shoelace and tie five knots — spaced out as much as you want. Then, complete the Acrostic\* with areas you want to (re)focus on and give to God in the next 40 days. Use the knotted shoelace as a prayer cord, finding a time (or two) each day to pray for the things you want to focus on, pausing at each knot with one of your intentions.

### Here's an example:

*This Lent, help me to fix my eyes on Jesus and run the race before me with strength and endurance. I commit to daily praying for:*

**F**amily members  
**O**ther people in my immediate circle (friends, colleagues)  
**C**ommunity and my neighbors  
**U**nderserved and under-represented persons  
**S**tudents and teachers

Now do your own. (See Acrostic printout on the next page)

**PRAYER** Dear God, as we confront our own sin in this season, help us to fix our eyes on Jesus, that we may run the race before us with strength and endurance. **AMEN.**

\* Acrostic is a composition in which the initial letters of each line, when taken together, spell something meaningful.



**REFOCUS ACROSTIC** This is for you and your Lenten journey. You can list five things to commit to praying for daily. You can choose your own word (instead of FOCUS), you could list names of people, places, causes, or some of the things in the example. **This is your journey, your race – choose how you'll train.**

*This Lent, help me to fix my eyes on Jesus and run the race before me with strength and endurance. I commit to daily praying for:*

**F** \_\_\_\_\_

**O** \_\_\_\_\_

**C** \_\_\_\_\_

**U** \_\_\_\_\_

**S** \_\_\_\_\_



### SUPPLIES

In order to fully participate, it will be helpful to gather the following supplies:

- Psalm 51:10 printout (see next page). To download additional copies visit [www.MessiahChurch.org/ash-wednesday-2021](http://www.MessiahChurch.org/ash-wednesday-2021)
- Colored pencils, crayons or markers

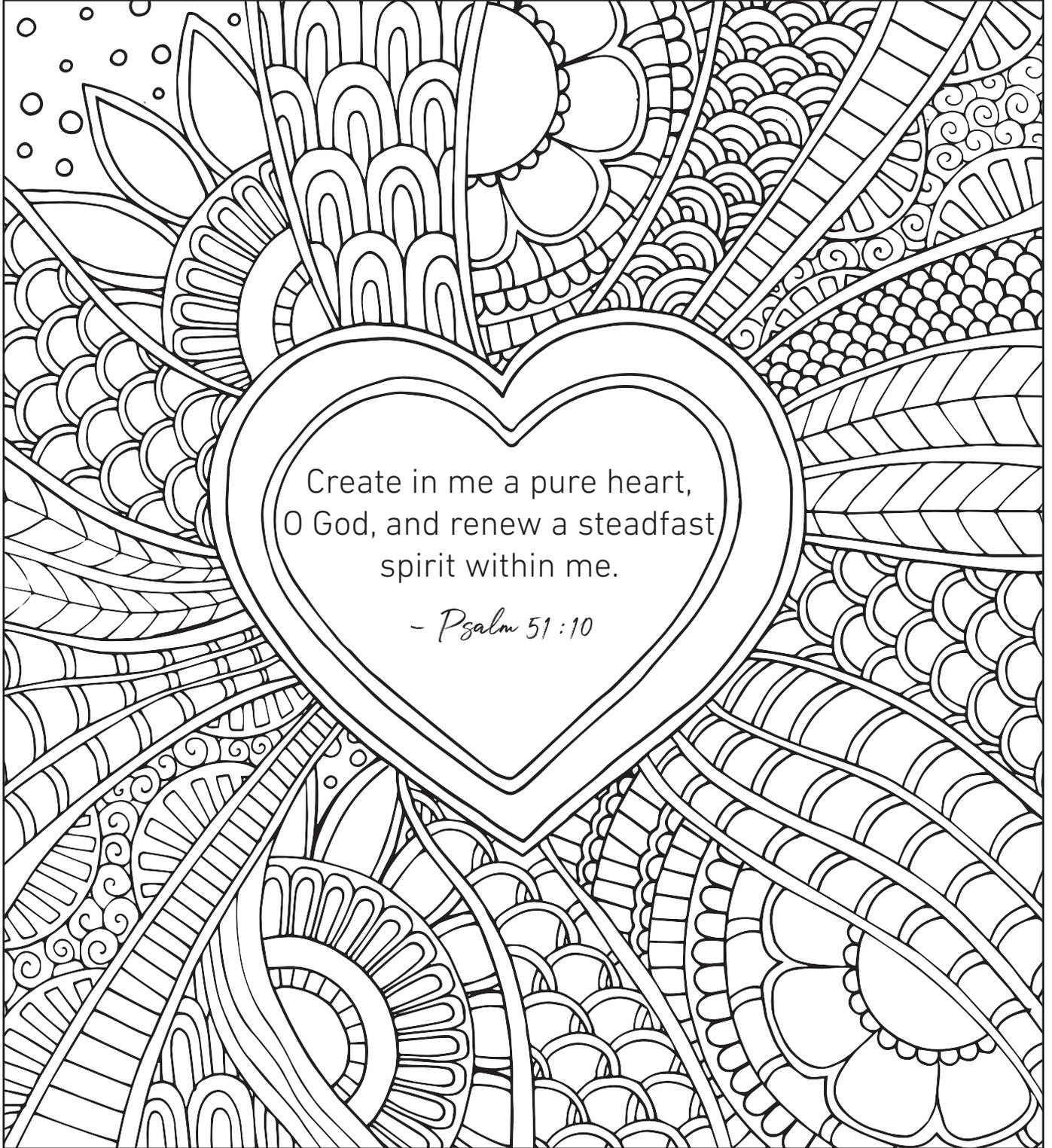
**SCRIPTURE** Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.  
— Psalm 51:10-12

**ACTIVITY** Take some time to meditate or focus on the scripture as you color the Psalm 51:10 printout (on the next page). As you sit quietly and read the scripture verse, pause and notice what word or phrase catches your attention. Allow your mind and heart to be open to hearing from God in a new way. Enjoy a moment getting lost in the rhythm of coloring and creativity. Pray and invite the Holy Spirit to move in your life as you continue to color and pray with the word or phrase from Scripture. Express your gratitude to God and rest in the renewing presence of the Holy One.

**PRAYER** May God renew our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit. **AMEN.**



Renew



Create in me a pure heart,  
O God, and renew a steadfast  
spirit within me.

- Psalm 51:10

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