

A Godly Play Story for Ash Wednesday

*Purple underlay for Getting Ready time—“The Road to Jerusalem” if available;
Terra-cotta flower pot with dirt/potting soil;
Terra-cotta or pottery saucer with sand (from Desert Box);
Clear glass bowl with water (from Baptism Story)*

Today is Ash Wednesday, when we think about dust and dirt.
(Touch flower pot, lift handful of dirt/soil and let it fall back into the flowerpot. Pause to let the silence gather.)

In the beginning, when God began to create everything and everyone, God made a person out of the dust and dirt of the ground. God breathed into the person, the breath of life. And the person of dust and dirt breathed in the breath of life, and came to life, and sat up.

God called the person “Earth-creature”, because they were made from the dust and dirt of the earth. The person also had God’s breath, God’s spirit, flowing in and out of them.
(Pause, let the words linger.)

Today we remember that we are also made of dust and dirt. The same dust and dirt that sticks to our shoes when it rains, the same dust and dirt where plants and trees, flowers and vegetables grow. We are all part of the same stuff that God uses to make everything and everyone. We all have God’s breath flowing in and out of us. Let’s stop and feel God’s breath flowing in and out of us.
(Pause, breathe in and out several times)

Many years later, the people of God walked for a long time in the desert, surrounded by dust and sand.
(Touch the sand, pick some up and let it fall back into the saucer)
As they walked, they wondered “Is God with us?”
As they kept walking, they discovered that God was with them, all the way.
They found God’s breath, God’s spirit, flowing in and out of them.
They learned that they were God’s people, no matter what happened.

Many years after that, Someone Else walked for a long time in the desert all by himself, surrounded by dust and sand.
As he walked, he wondered “Is God with me?”
As he kept walking, he discovered that God was with him, all the way.
He found God’s breath, God’s spirit, flowing into and out of him.
He learned that he was God’s Beloved, no matter what happened.

We are in the great time of Getting Ready.
We are walking together for a long time, in a kind of desert. Dry and dusty.
As we walk, we get to let go of the things we don’t really need, things that would slow us down.

We are looking for God to be with us, all the way.
We are breathing God’s spirit, into and out of ourselves.
We are remembering God’s words to us when we were baptized: You are my Beloved.
(Touch the water. Lift some up, and let it fall back into the bowl.)

In a minute we will put dirt and dust on our foreheads.
We will remember that we are dust, and we shall return to dust.
We will remember that we are also earth-creatures,
 with the breath of God flowing in and out of us.
We will remember that our foreheads are marked with water, and the Breath of God,
 calling us “beloved.” Claiming us as God’s own, no matter what happens.

(Sit and enjoy the silence for a while.)

We have dirt, and sand, and water, and breath.
I wonder what would happen if we put all those things together.
I wonder what would grow out of that sandy, moist, dirt?

I wonder if we could leave any part of the story out, and still have all the story we need?

I wonder what part of the story you will remember tomorrow?

