

ASH WEDNESDAY

The Temptation of Jesus

Scripture — Matthew 4:1-11

Questions for Reflection

1. Satan tempted Jesus with food while he was hungry (fulfilling earthly needs), power (forcing God into action), and recognition (ruling over the world's kingdoms). Jesus was tempted, and so are we. How do you work to avoid temptation or overcome the urge?
2. What do you notice about Jesus' answers to each challenge?
3. Angels came to tend to Jesus' needs and to protect him? When was a time you thought you needed to be protected? If someone came to your rescue, how did the person(s) help?

THURSDAY

Embracing Our New Normal

Scripture — Ezra 3:10-13

Questions for Reflection

1. Why do you think the people who celebrated the foundation of the new temple were happy?
2. Why were the few people who had seen the previous temple saddened by what they saw in the temple being built by Zerubbabel?
3. Can you remember a time when something you loved or celebrated was replaced by something that didn't quite measure up in your eyes? How did you move past the disappointment?

FRIDAY

Embracing Community

Scripture — Nehemiah 2:1-18; Nehemiah 5:1-13

Questions for Reflection

1. Why do you think the rebuilding of the wall around Jerusalem was so important to the people?
2. Nehemiah speaks out against injustice in chapter 5. What did the people who were taking from others eventually do?
3. What is one area of injustice in your community? How might be one way for you to get involved?

SATURDAY

Embracing Spirituality

Scripture — Nehemiah 8:1-12

Questions for Reflection

1. What do you think was the significance of Ezra being asked to read the instruction scroll?
2. Notice Ezra wasn't the only person to be involved with educating the people. What parallels do you draw from this story and how does it match with how pastors and laity can work together in the local church?
3. Ezra led a revival. What do you think revival would look like in your local church? What about in your community?