

**PROMPTS: read to the group to answer in private chat. Write responses below**

1. Someone or something you've lost to the pandemic
2. Something you love about in-person worship
3. Something that has brought you joy or comfort lately
4. A feeling or word that has come up a lot for you lately

God, we can't gather today to remember our mortality, to mark one another with ashes. But so many of us feel like we are covered in the grey dust of death.

We are grieving losses small and great, griefs we cannot compare but can only try and hold, together:

(1) \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and  
\_\_\_\_\_.

And, Lord, we *aren't* together. We thought the

(2) \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_,  
the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_,  
and the simple comfort of gathering would always be there.

We miss seeing your face in one another's.

We know that life and joy and love persist. With so much stripped away, we have still met you in new ways and old, in

(3) \_\_\_\_\_ and  
\_\_\_\_\_, in \_\_\_\_\_, in  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and  
\_\_\_\_\_. We are grateful.

Yet we are also grateful for the wisdom of a season that embraces grief and leads us through the difficult process of repentance, of change. We are comforted to know that sadness and ashes are neither surprising nor foreign to you. You make space for them to belong. You offer compassion to our (4) \_\_\_\_\_ and our

\_\_\_\_\_, our \_\_\_\_\_ and our  
\_\_\_\_\_, our \_\_\_\_\_, and our  
\_\_\_\_\_.

So while we cannot hold hands or impose ashes, let us still find ways to bless one another. May we offer each other your grace in this peculiar Lenten form, of sitting down and making room for each other's sadness, smallness, weakness.

Meet us here, in the paradox that this is the first step forward on the long road to resurrection.

Amen.