

Virginia Council of Churches
Lenten Series – Ash Wednesday

A Time of Turning Around

Truly dust we are, and to dust we shall return;
and truly yours we are, and to you we shall return.
Help this to be a time of turning around and beginning again.

John introduces us to encounter between Jesus and a Samaritan woman in the least likely of places, a well in the town of Sychar. Thirsty after traveling Jesus ask the woman for a drink. Her reply as astonishing as we believe it to be her response was not one of religiosity but of possibility. “How can you ask me for a drink she says, (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans). Her words were deeper than drawing water from a well her words were filled with the language of hope and possibility from her soul.” How is it possible that you a Jew, see something of worth, value or possibility in me?

Lent is a time of possibility, it is a time to believe again, live again and dream again, and just as Jesus quenches the woman’s thirst of impossibility and turns her life around allowing for her to begin again, he does the same thing for us. Despite this pandemic we have been living through, the adjustments, uncomfortableness and even the politicizing of it, Christ continues to make impossible possible. This woman at the well, from generation to generation continues to show us, that despite sin and societal shame that salvation through Christ is accessible and available to all.

Prayer

Lord, God,

Through the forty days of Lent, help us to follow you and to find you: in the discipline of praying and in the drudgery of caring. Help us to discover you in our isolation and in our community, in our emptiness and our fulfilment, in our sadness and our laughter. Help us in this season of “turn around”, to run back to you, help us to perceive new growth amid the ashes of the old.

Amen.

The Reverend Doctor A. Jerome Danage, Sr. serves as the Senior Pastor of the historic Providence United Church of Christ in Chesapeake, Virginia. Dr. Danage is a graduate of Kent State University with Associates and Bachelor’s degrees in Criminal Justice, a Master of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry in *Transformational Leadership* from Ashland Theological Seminary in Ashland, Ohio. His motto for ministry is “Real Ministry, 4 Real people with Real issues, serving a Real God”. Dr. Danage and his wife Semone reside in Chesapeake, Virginia. They are the proud parents of four adult children, Avery Jr, Ambyr, Jessica and Arielle and four grandchildren, Corrine, Tatum, Braxton and Colvin. Dr. Danage is a member of VCC’s Next Generation of Ecumenists.

