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## Ashes to Go returns to Jefferson City

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by [Joe Gamm](#)



Rev. Angela Madden, pastor of First Presbyterian Church on Madison Street, prays with a congregant who took part in the Ashes To Go drive through Wednesday, March 2, 2022, at the downtown Jefferson City church. Madden who serves as pastor of the church was thrilled that the unseasonably warm weather allowed several of the members to take part in the activity. (Julie Smith/News Tribune photo)

Pastors at First Presbyterian Church offered "Ashes to Go" on Wednesday for the third consecutive year.

The Rev. Angela D. Madden and the Rev. Joe Tagliaferre, interim associate pastor, stood on the curb outside the church and offered the ashes as reminders everyone was created from dust, and will someday return to dust.

Cecil Caulkins, who received the ashes, said Wednesday marked the eighth year since his wife had died.

"So this is a special day for me. I'm an elder here at the church," Caulkins said. "It means a lot to me to be a part of this church and to have the connection to God."

He added the church creates a wonderful community.

Caulkins and others marveled at the 70-degree weather that came so early in March. Previous Ash Wednesdays have been cold and threatened snow, they said.

The event, which was held twice during the day, late in the morning and early in the evening, allowed the congregation to be outside and still participate.

Participants laughed and waved at the pastors as they arrived. They embraced each other.

"We've kind of gotten out of the habit (of embracing)," Madden told them.

Tagliaferre, who has done interim ministry for nearly 20 years, said he arrived in the Capital City at the beginning of November. He got to spend Christmas and the advent season in Jefferson City.

"Today we're doing drive-thru ashes. We'll provide ashes for folks and share a little prayer with them," Tagliaferre said. "We're still dealing with the challenges of COVID-19, so there will not be a service tonight."

People are welcome to circle through the driveway and receive ashes on their foreheads, he said. They would also receive an "origami heart," Madden said.

The pastors encouraged folks to place a prayer note in the hearts and share them with shut-ins or others.

They also passed out Lenten paper chain materials and instructions.

The chains are a series of strips of paper that are to be used as links in a chain. Each link has a passage of scripture (written on it) to read aloud with family (one for each day of Lent and one for each sabbath day).

The passages are just starting points, instructions tell readers. Feel free to read verses before and after the passage.