

MARCH 6, 2019
ASH WEDNESDAY



Practicing the presence of God.

ASH WEDNESDAY BIBLE READINGS

Take time to read and reflect on these Bible passages as part of your Ash Wednesday observance.

Wednesday	Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21	The practice of faith
	Joel 2:1-2, 12-17	Call to repentance
	Psalms 51:1-17	Have mercy on me
	2 Corinthians 5:20b–6:10	Messengers of Christ

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR ASH WEDNESDAY

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal.” **Matthew 6:19-20 (NRSV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for Ash Wednesday:

Dear loving and merciful God, we thank you for your presence in our lives that brings forgiveness and new life. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Mealtimes Prayer:

Dear God, help us enjoy a simple meal, filled with love that’s kind and real. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the God who is full of steadfast love grant you mercy and grace. (Joel 2:13)



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HYMN FOR ASH WEDNESDAY

Return to God



CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What is something that is very important to you? How do others see that it is important to you?
- Jesus states that all the things we might gain in life can be taken away or destroyed. How is faith in God the one treasure that really matters?
- Ash Wednesday is about practicing God’s treasured presence in our lives. How is God part of your daily life?

DEVOTIONS



Read: Psalm 51:1-17 and Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21.

Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent, and Lent helps us to focus on what matters. Psalm 51 expresses how important forgiveness is. Forgiveness matters. In Matthew 6, Jesus points out that things we typically value, that we treasure, can easily be taken away or destroyed over time. This is true of health, fame, or material possessions. What really matters—is to be treasured—is God’s living presence in our lives. Instead of practicing our faith to get the attention of others—to gain a kind of approval—simply enjoy the intimacy of God’s presence in our lives that gives us a new heart and a new beginning daily. Enjoying God’s presence through faith practices like prayer, fasting, and service to others, helps us to experience the true treasure of life. This Lent, how could you enjoy the treasure of God’s presence in your life?

Pray: **Merciful God, as we enter this Lenten season, guide our thoughts, words, and deeds to humbly receive your mercy and grace, the true treasure of life. In Jesus name, amen.**

SERVICE



Historically, almsgiving (Matthew 6:2-4) is a way to help those in need by giving food, clothing, or money to the poor. This Lent consider putting together some small care packages for the homeless that could include things like socks, snack foods, toothbrush, toothpaste, and soap. You could then deliver them to a service organization that helps those in need.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent. Lent traditionally has been a time of repentance and forgiveness. Christians around the world recognize Ash Wednesday with worship services held at varying times throughout the day. During the service, Christians are reminded of the words from Genesis 3:19, “you are dust and to dust you shall return” as ashes are placed in the sign of the cross on people’s foreheads. Attend a local worship service on Ash Wednesday and when you go home, look in the mirror at the visible reminder of the cross on your forehead and say this blessing: **May God create in me a new heart and a right spirit** (Psalm 51:10).



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