

MARCH 5, 2025
ASH WEDNESDAY



Turning our hearts to God.

ASH WEDNESDAY BIBLE READINGS

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

Wednesday	Isaiah 58:1-12	The fast that God wants
	Psalms 51:1-17	A prayer for forgiveness
	2 Corinthians 5:20b–6:10	Messengers of Christ
	Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21	The practice of faith

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR ASH WEDNESDAY

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Isaiah 58:6 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for Ash Wednesday:

Merciful God, forgive us and renew us with your constant love that we may care for others and faithfully follow Christ Jesus our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

God gives us water. God gives us bread. Let us give thanks for now being fed. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May God give you a clean heart and a new and right spirit. (Psalm 51:10)



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HYMN FOR ASH
WEDNESDAY
Return to God



ASH WEDNESDAY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

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

- What story can you tell about someone you know who is a humble servant?
- When have you done something that pleases you and that needed no reward or acknowledgement from others?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Matthew 6:1-6 and Isaiah 58:1-12.

In Matthew 6, Jesus discusses the three faith practices most associated with Lent. They include prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Jesus lifts up each practice as something to be done to enjoy the heavenly treasure of your relationship with God, rather than being praised by others. What others do not see, God sees. Authentic and meaningful faith practices are not to be done for show and the attention of others. Isaiah 58 builds on the topic of fasting. Isaiah changes the fasting of self-neglect for a divine reward into a fast that looks like the humble care of others. Whether it's the voice of Jesus in Matthew or the voice of the prophet Isaiah, the heart of the Christian religion is a love of God that needs no earthly reward and the love of neighbor that is its own reward.

Discuss: What Christian faith practice will you focus on during Lent?

Pray: **Almighty God, you call us to a life that is humble, honest, and loving; cleanse our hearts to live faithfully through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Ash Wednesday Bible Readings and theme for today, how can you help lighten someone's worries or burdens?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

To mark the beginning of Lent, consider setting aside one day this week to "unplug" from technology and luxuries. Choose not to watch TV or use computers and other devices for leisure purposes. Eat simple foods and drink only water. Have a time of silence on that day. Sit quietly, light a candle, and reflect on your relationship with God.

Pray: **God, create a pure heart in me. Give me a new spirit that is faithful to you. Amen.** (Psalm 51:10)



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org