



Ash
Wednesday

Ash Wednesday Taize Worship – 2021

Welcome

Explanation of Lent & Taize

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent which is the 40 days leading up to Easter. This holy season within the Church is meant to be a time of refocusing on our spiritual practices as a way of preparing for Easter. We begin the season of Lent with Ash Wednesday which is meant to remind us of our need for forgiveness and our mortality, and of how the resurrection of Christ provides for us grace and release from death's grasp.

We'll be worshipping tonight in the style of Taize. The Taize Community is an ecumenical Christian monastery in France. One of its trademarks is the singing of distinctive prayers during candlelit services. Taizé music highlights simple phrases, usually lines from the Psalms or other pieces of scripture, sung repeatedly. The repetition is designed to help meditation and prayer.

I invite you now to settle into presence with God this evening. Get comfortable, feel free to close your eyes, there is nothing you'll need to read. Whenever we sing, Eileen will begin, and you can join in whenever you like.

Come and Fill Our Hearts (sing through three times)

Come and fill our hearts with your peace.

You alone, O Lord, are holy.

Come and fill our hearts with your peace, allelulia!

Let us join our hearts in prayer...

Ash Wednesday Prayer

United Methodist Hymnal #353

O God, maker of everything and judge of all that you have made,
From the dust of the earth you have formed us
and from the dust of death you would raise us up.

By the redemptive power of the cross,
create in us clean hearts and put within us a new spirit,
that we may repent of our sins and lead lives worthy of your calling;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN

***Hear these words from Christ from the Gospel of Matthew 11:28-30
(NIV)***

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

Silent reflection

Now hear those same words again in a different way... (The Message)

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”

Silent reflection

Shepherd Me, O God (sing through three times)

Shepherd me, O God, beyond my wants,
beyond my fears, from death into life.

Hear these words from Christ from the Gospel of Luke 9:23-24

Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it.

Silent reflection

Bless the Lord (sing through three times)

Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's holy name.

Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me into life.

Let us join together in a Prayer of Confession:

Adapted from Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C, edited by Kimberly Bracken Long

Merciful God, ... Open our eyes to see injustice in our world.

Give us courage to resist the powers that oppress the poor.

Open our ears to hear the cry of the needy.

Teach us generosity for sharing the abundance of your creation.

Open our minds to imagine an end to human strife.

Grant us wisdom to pursue the ways of peace.

Open our hearts to love our neighbors and our enemies near and far.

Give us desire to embody the compassion of Christ.

In the name of Christ we pray, AMEN.

Blessing the Dust for Ash Wednesday

By Jan Richardson

All those days you felt like
dust, like dirt, as if all you had
to do was turn your face
toward the wind and be
scattered to the four corners
or swept away by the smallest
breath as insubstantial—
did you not know what the Holy
One can do with dust?

This is the day we freely say
we are scorched.

This is the hour we are
marked
by what has made it through the
burning.

This is the moment we ask for
the blessing that lives within
the ancient ashes, that makes
its home inside the soil of this
sacred earth.

So let us be marked not for
sorrow.

And let us be marked not for
shame.

Let us be marked not for false
humility or for thinking we are
less than we are but for
claiming what God can do
within the dust, within the dirt,
within the stuff of which the
world is made and the stars
that blaze in our bones
and the galaxies that spiral inside
the smudge we bear.

The Imposition of Ashes

Sanctuary (sing through three times)

Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary, pure and holy, tried and true.
With thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary for you.

Declaration of Forgiveness

Our God is ever-merciful.

In infinite grace, God made us and called us good.

We are good.

In infinite compassion, God gave us the Christ, who said, "You are loved."

We are loved.

We are already forgiven, even before we asked.

Receive and accept the forgiveness of God
through the grace of Jesus, the Christ.

Jesus, Remember Me (sing through three times)

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

Blessing

Go now, to pick up your cross and follow Christ on the Lenten journey.

In the name of the One who made us,
the One who saves us,
and the One who goes with us now,
go in peace.

Worship Leaders: Rev. Nona Holy, Eileen Larkin, Minerva Lermond
and Conchita Showell

