

# ASH WEDNESDAY

February 22, 2023



Everyone is welcome to join us via Zoom.us  
07:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)  
Zoom meeting opens at 7:15 PM.

The link to join the meeting is

<https://zoom.us/j/231599312?pwd=bHJMT1NZOEtERE1oOTQwdS84NU45Zz09>

For those joining by phone or through an app, you will need meeting ID and password:

**Meeting ID: 231 599 312**

**Password: 333 333**

One tap mobile

+16468769923,,231599312# US (New York)

+13126266799,,231599312# US (Chicago)

Dial by your location

+1 646 876 9923 US (New York)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 408 638 0968 US (San Jose)

Meeting ID: 231 599 312

**Password: 333 333**

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/abm1zHjEP>

## ***Additional Instructions and Preparation***

- When signing into Zoom liturgy, kindly type your name and where you're joining us from in your caption.
- Mute mic and chat functions help to optimize your experience during the liturgy.

## **Suggestions for Ash Wednesday and the Lenten Season:**

- Participate in the DignityUSA weekly Lenten refection each Wednesday at 8 pm ET.
- Fasting on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday
- Dedicate set time for pray, quiet time or meditation
- Help defeat anti- LGBTQI actions (bills, policies, appointments) by writing to your politicians, corporations who have supported the politicians, participate in rallies, etc.
- Donate to food banks
- Find ways to help the Ukrainian people through donations and advocating support for them.
- Take time to clean closets and cabinets and give away unwanted items.

## **GATHERING**

### **Hymn**

*Ashes*

(video) Tom Conry

1. We rise again from ashes, from the good we've failed to do.  
We rise again from ashes, to create ourselves anew.  
If all our world is ashes, then must our lives be true,  
An offering of ashes, an offering to you.
2. We offer you our failures, we offer you attempts,  
The gifts not fully given, the dreams not fully dreamt.  
Give our stumblings direction, give our visions wider view,  
An offering of ashes, an offering to you.
3. Then rise again from ashes, let healing come to pain,  
Though spring has turned to winter, and sunshine turned to rain.  
The rain we'll use for growing, and create the world anew  
From an offering of ashes, an offering to you.

## **WELCOME**

### **Sign of The Cross & Greeting**

Presider: Let us begin in the name of God, who is Creator,  
Redeemer, and Sanctifier.

All: Amen.

Presider: May the grace and peace of God be with each of us.

All: And also with you.

Presider: We begin this Lent by asking God to be with us this Lent in our daily lives  
and to shower us with love and mercy.

Reader 1:

### **Opening Prayer**

Let us pray.

Loving God, as we begin this Lenten journey toward a greater union with you, strengthen our faith through our practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Open us up to deeper spirituality and discovery of your love. We ask this through Christ, the Compassionate One.  
Amen.

## **WORD**

Reader 2:  
**First Reading**

Joel 2: 1, 12-17

*A Reading from the Book of Joel*

Blow the trumpet in Zion!  
Sound the alarm on my holy mountain!  
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,  
for the day of God is coming. It is near.

"Yet even now," says God,  
"return to me with all your heart,  
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;  
but rend your hearts and not your clothing."  
Return to your God who is gracious and compassionate,  
slow to anger, abounding in kindness,  
ready to yield even as disaster looms.  
You never know:  
God may turn back and relent,  
and leave a blessing behind instead,  
a blessing enough for grain offerings and libations  
to be presented to the Holy One, Your God.

Blow the trumpet in Zion! Proclaim a fast.  
Call a solemn assembly.  
Gather the people. Summon the community.

Assemble the aged and gather the children,  
even the nursing infants.  
Call the bride from her canopy,  
the bridegroom from his tent.

Between the vestibule and the altar,  
let the priests, the ministers of God, weep.  
Let them say, "Spare your people, O God,  
and do not make your heritage a mockery,  
a byword among the nations."

Why should it be said among the world's peoples,  
"Where is their God?"

The Word of God. R/ Thanks be to God.

**Responsory****Hosea**

Gregory Norbert

1. Come back to me with all your heart. Don't let fear keep us apart.  
Trees do bend, 'though straight and tall; so must we to others' call.

Long have I waited for your coming home to me and living deeply our new life.

2. The wilderness will lead you to your heart where I will speak.  
Integrity and justice, With tenderness, you shall know.

Long have I waited for your coming home to me and living deeply our new life.

3. You shall sleep secure with peace; faithfulness will be your joy.

Long have I waited for your coming home to me and living deeply our new life.

Reader 3:

**Second Reading**

2 Corinthians 5:20 — 6:2

*A reading from the second letter of Paul to the Corinthians.*

We are Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making the appeal directly through us. Therefore we implore you in Christ's name: be reconciled to God. For our sake, God made the One who was without sin to be sin, so that in Christ we might become the very holiness of God.

As Christ's co-workers we beg you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For God says through Isaiah, "At the acceptable time I heard you, and on the day of salvation I helped you." Now is the acceptable time! Now is the day of salvation!

This is the Word of God. R/ Thanks be to God.

Reader 4:

**Acclamation:**

Praise to you, Jesus Christ Word of God eternal.

**Gospel**

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

*May God be with you. R: And also with you.*

*A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew*

Take care not to perform righteous deeds in order that people may see them. Otherwise, you will have no recompense from our Loving God. When you give alms, do not blow a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win the praise of others. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. Instead, when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing, so that your almsgiving may be secret. And your Loving God, who sees in secret,

will thank you.

When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, who love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on street corners so that others may see them. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. Instead, when you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Loving God in secret. And your Loving God, who sees in secret, will thank you.

When you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites do. They neglect their appearance, so that they appear to others to be fasting. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. When you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to others to be fasting, except to your Loving God who is hidden. Your Loving God who sees what is hidden will thank you.

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and decay destroy, and thieves break in and steal. Instead, store up treasures in the heavens, where neither moth nor decay destroy, nor thieves break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.

*The Good News of Salvation!      R. Glory and praise to our Savior Jesus Christ!*

## **Reflection**

## **BLESSING AND DISTRIBUTION OF ASHES**

### **Prayer of Blessing**

God, bless these ashes we are about to use, that they are reminder of the work we called to do throughout our lives and in particular during Lent. Amen.

### **Distribution**

*If possible, have someone else put ashes on your forehead making the a cross and saying out loud,*

**Come to Jesus with all your heart. Be faithful to the Gospel.**

## **Intercessions**

Reader 5: As we gather here today to begin our Lenten Journey Spring let us turn to our God and ask for help. Our response will be: **God of mercy, hear our prayer**

1. For the DignityUSA community, that we might come together in a more intense time of prayer and diligent attentiveness to the Word of God during this season of grace, let us pray: **God of mercy, hear our prayer**

2. For each one of us that has gathered here this evening, that we may challenge ourselves throughout Lent to stay in God's light and make the choices that bring us closer to our God, let us pray: **God of mercy, hear our prayer**

3. For all of our members, our families and friends, and for all Christians, that during this Lent they may use this opportunity for their personal renewal, growth and development, let us: **God of mercy, hear our prayer**

4. For all members of the LGBTQIA community, that they too may grow and develop their internal life and experience renewal in the love of our God, let us pray: **God of mercy, hear our prayer**

5. For all people, that during this Lenten season, maybe some of the anger and hostility that seems to plague our world these days, subsides and peace becomes the new word of the day, let us pray: **God of mercy, hear our prayer**

6. For the Ukrainian people as they fight for their sovereignty, may the cost of life be at a minimum and a way to lasting peace may be found, let us pray: **God of mercy, hear our prayer**

7. Lastly, let us pray for those Special Intentions we will now speak aloud, record in the chat box, or affectionately cherish in our hearts ...

Presider: God in the heavens, the greatness of your love is beyond words. By the power of Your Spirit, liberate us from all self centeredness, that we may be free to love others as Christ loves us. We ask this through Christ our Companion. Amen.

### **The Greatest Prayer**

Now, in obedience to Christ himself,  
let us join in prayer, asking God to forgive us as  
we forgive others.

### **Final Prayer**

Reader 6: Let us pray,  
God, the source of all life,  
you know our weakness.  
May we reach out with joy to grasp your hand  
and to walk more readily in your ways.  
We ask this through Christ our Savior.

All: Amen.

## **SENDING**

### **Blessing**

Presider: Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

Presider: And may God, who is Absolute Mystery, bless us all,  
the Creator, and the Redeemer, and the Sanctifier.

All: Amen.

### **Hymn**

### ***Turn to the Living God***

Lori True

#### ***Refrain:***

Turn, turn to the living God,  
the God of healing and comfort,  
and with delight, God will turn to you.  
With delight, God will turn to you.

1. For now is the time of fulfillment. The reign of our God is at hand.  
Reform your life, turn from sin and believe this glorious news.
2. Come, and return to the Lord. All you weary, bring your grieving hearts.  
With kindness and mercy God's compassion will fill your hearts with love.
3. Have mercy, O Lord, on your people. In your goodness wipe away our guilt.  
Wash us clean, free us to become your living song of praise.
4. Come, sing with joy to the Lord. Listen with an open heart.  
Hear God's voice and follow; our good shepherd is guiding the way.

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