

ASH WEDNESDAY



FAMILY WORSHIP

Sing

To begin your time together, lift your voices in song. There are so many hymns that have put the words of Psalm 51:10 to music. "Create in me a clean heart O God, and renew a right spirit within me." If you don't have a favorite version to sing together as a family, consider one of these:

Create in Me, John Tirro - <https://johntirro.com/track/912466/create-in-me>

Create in Me, from Evangelical Lutheran Worship - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TBpBlh0ZmA8>

Create in Me a Clean Heart, Keith Green - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vD847UcRbL4>

Create in Me, Rend Collective - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wveqWij0a_Y

Pray

Gracious God, we invite you into our hearts tonight as we gather together on this first day of Lent. We ask that you fill our hearts with your Holy Spirit tonight and in the days to come.

Read Joel 2:12-17

After reading the Bible story ask, *What did you hear in that passage? Did anything stick out to you?*

Talk About Sin and Confess

Have a conversation about how we all sin. *No matter how old we are or how hard we try, there are always times when we do things that hurt others. Sometimes we do things that hurt ourselves or our relationships with God.*

Have scraps of paper lying on your table along with colored pencils.

When we confess our sins to God and to one another, it helps us turn away from the wrong things we've done and allows us to turn back to God. Let's take a few minutes to write or draw pictures of some of the things we've

done wrong in the last several days. What are some things you need forgiveness for?

After 5 minutes or so, you can invite people to share what they've written or drawn. If no one feels comfortable sharing, that's okay too. In writing (or drawing) our confessions we have shared them with God and have asked for forgiveness.

Burn Your Confessions

This is a physical reminder that through Christ our sins are forgiven. Invite one another to put your written sins into a large mason jar or other heat safe container. As you put your sins in the container say,

*Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and put a new and right spirit within me.*

Once all the sins are in the container, light a match or two, throw it in the container, and watch your sins burn away.

Let the ashes cool a bit, then mix with the tiniest bit of olive oil to form a thin paste.

Read Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

After reading the Bible story ask, *What did you hear in that passage? Did anything stick out to you?*

Talk about Lenten Disciplines

Talk about one thing you can do during Lent that might help you turn away from your sins and towards God.

Mark the sign of the cross with ashes

Using the ashes from your burning ceremony, have each person mark the sign of the cross of the person beside them. As they make the cross, they say

Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

If you have ashes leftover, take them outside and pour them into the garden, as a physical reminder that everything returns to dirt.

Pray the Lord's Prayer

Finish your worship holding hands, and saying the Lord's Prayer.