A Dramatized Version of the Reading
from the Prophet Joel for Ash Wednesday
Joel 2:12-18 simplified (JB)

Reader 1
A reading from the prophet Joel.

God
Now, now . . .

Reader 2
It is the Lord who speaks!

God
Come back to me with all your heart, [getting quieter and slower . . .]
fasting,
weeping,
mourning.

Reader 3
Let your hearts be broken, not your garments torn,

Reader 1
turn to the Lord your God again,

Reader 2
for he is all tenderness and compassion,
slow to anger,
rich in graciousness,
and ready to relent.

Reader 3
Sound the trumpet in Zion!

Reader 1
Order a fast!

Reader 2
Proclaim a solemn assembly!

Reader 3
Call the people together!

Reader 1
Summon the community!

Reader 2
Assemble the elders!

Reader 3
Gather the children, even the infants at the breast!

Reader 1
Let the bridegroom leave his bedroom and the bride her alcove.

Reader 2
Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, lament.

Let them say . . .

Readers 1 + 3
Spare your people, Lord!

Reader 2
Then the Lord, jealous on behalf of his land . . .

God
[God steps forward and pauses before speaking, as though thinking about this]

. . . took pity on his people.

Reader 1
The word of the Lord.

People
Thanks be to God.