



LENT DEVOTIONAL

## CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
WEEK ONE	5
WEEK TWO	6
WEEK THREE	8
WEEK FOUR	9
WEEK FIVE	11
PALM SUNDAY	12
HOLY WEDNESDAY	13
MAUNDY THURSDAY	14
GOOD FRIDAY	15
HOLY SATURDAY	16
EASTER SUNDAY	17

# INTRODUCTION

## WHAT IS LENT?

Lent is a season devoted to the awareness of our sin and the practice of turning our hearts toward Christ in humble repentance. The 40 days of Lent between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday mirror Jesus' temptation in the wilderness, lasting 40 days (Matt. 4:1-11). Lent invites Christians everywhere to slow down and focus on Jesus' ministry each day – specifically his sacrificial death, which we celebrate on Good Friday. Therefore, Lent is often marked by fasting, prayer, and reflection on our need for Christ's atoning sacrifice. The season of Lent culminates on Easter, when we celebrate the hope of the resurrection life that comes through faith in Jesus!

## HISTORY + TRADITIONS

Lent is not mentioned anywhere in Scripture, but we must not overlook its importance. This great tradition dates as far back as the 4th century AD and continues to be a vital rhythm in the church calendar across many denominations all over the world. In many ways, Lent is a retelling of the gospel story with our own lives through the practices observed. These formational practices remind us that the gospel isn't only *for us*, but it is also a reality we *participate in*—both with Christ himself and the Church. In this tradition, we imitate our great God and Savior (1 Peter 2:21; Eph. 5:1).

Typically, there are two main practices that accompany the season of Lent: fasting and confession. *Fasting* has long been a primary practice that Christians observe during the Lenten season. In his Lenten devotional, *Journey to The Cross*, Will Walker notes that fasting is “a tangible, physical activity that points to our spiritual longing to be rooted in Jesus alone and find our true comfort and joy in him.” In other words, our physical hunger brings about a deeper awareness of our spiritual hunger, which only Christ can satisfy. It's about saying no to lesser things (even good things) in order to say yes to greater things.

*Confession* is a reminder of our deep need for Jesus as our Savior. Every day we face testing and temptation—being confronted by the reality of sin that plagues our lives and world. Yet, Christ went into the wilderness in our stead, as our representative (Matt. 4). He faced temptation and left the wilderness victorious, without the corruption of sin, and filled with

the Holy Spirit. On the cross, Jesus again went as our representative, allowing all sin and death to be absorbed into himself so our slavery to sin and death would be undone. So, we practice confession precisely because we cannot (and did not) represent ourselves in overcoming sin. Rather, Jesus did. Each time we confess our sins to Christ and one another, we are slowly stepping into New Creation—who we were intended to be in Christ. So, until we enter glory, we need to confess our private sins *and* collective injustices toward others.

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The beauty of Lent is there isn't a one-size-fits-all approach. As a church family, we will observe Lent together on Sundays. But, we encourage you to go through this guide on your own (and/or with your family) to slow down and intentionally "journey to the cross" with Jesus. There are guided prayers to work through as well as a passage of Scripture and a Psalm for each day. Holy Week will have a slightly different variation, which will help slow us down for the anticipation of the Easter celebration! We know personal devotions can be intimidating, so each week provides a liturgical flow for you to follow. Feel free to adapt it to fit your personal rhythm.

**F** **A NOTE TO FAMILIES:** Look for this family icon for additional suggestions geared toward families participating in Lent together.

## WHAT ABOUT SUNDAYS?

If you did the math, then you probably realized there are forty-six days of Lent. This is because Sundays are known as "Feast Days" where people often break their fast one day of the week and celebrate with friends and family. This is encouraged since Sundays are a *celebration* as God's people gather to worship Jesus and remember the new life we have in him! Use Sundays as a day to celebrate in this season.

## A FINAL WORD

This is all by *invitation*. There is no requirement as disciples of Jesus to observe Lent. However, we will go through these practices as a community and while we seek a deeper hunger for God to move in our church, we invite you to journey along with us!

# START HERE:

## LENTEN FASTING RHYTHM

For the season of Lent, we invite you into this particular rhythm of fasting: a *weekly* fast and a *seasonal* fast.

**WEEKLY FAST:** Pick one weekday (we recommend Friday) to abstain from eating two consecutive meals (we recommend breakfast to lunch). Every time you feel the pang of hunger, give that moment to intentional prayer, asking God for a deeper hunger and satisfaction in Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit in your life. If you've never fasted before, try skipping just one meal for the first two weeks. When you're comfortable, work your way up from there. *It is important to pay attention to your body!* If you are unable to fast from food for health reasons, try fasting from something else.

**SEASONAL FAST:** Perhaps what you most associate with the season of Lent is being asked what you intend to “give up.” Although Lent is much deeper than just “giving up” something, abstaining from particular pleasures is a rich practice during this season. Typically, people give up alcohol, red meat (or certain foods), media and entertainment, and shopping in order to live simply for the season. In the space below, write one thing you intend to fast from for the entirety of Lent (Feb 22 – April 8, except Sundays):

***For Lent 2023, by God's grace and in the Spirit's power,***

***I will give up*** \_\_\_\_\_.

**F** Consider participating in “Rice and Beans Month” through Lahash Ministries. Simplify some of your meals to rice and beans and donate the money you save to increase the impact of food focused projects across East Africa. For more information go to [lahash.org/project/rice-and-beans](http://lahash.org/project/rice-and-beans).

**SUGGESTED FAST** See Page 4

## OPENING PRAYER

I praise and worship you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! Turn my affections toward you as I seek your presence. Fill me and renew me during my time with you. Amen.

## CONFESSION

Most merciful God,  
whose Son Jesus Christ was tempted in every way, yet without sin,  
I confess before you that I have sinned;  
I have hungered after that which does not satisfy;  
I have compromised with evil;  
I have doubted your power to protect me.  
Forgive my lack of faith; have mercy on my weakness.  
Restore in me such love and trust that I may walk in your ways  
and delight in doing your will.  
Amen.

## MEDITATE ON YOUR FORGIVENESS

Spend a moment meditating on this Scripture to joyfully receive the forgiveness that is already yours in Jesus Christ!

*“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)*

## READING PLAN

### ☐ MONDAY

Genesis 2-3; Psalm 19

### ☐ TUESDAY

2 Samuel 12:1-15; Psalm 51

### ☐ WEDNESDAY

Isaiah 1:10-17; Psalm 42

### ☐ THURSDAY

Isaiah 40; Psalm 42

### ☐ FRIDAY (FAST DAY)

Joel 2; Psalm 42

### ☐ SATURDAY

Reflect and catch up

### ☐ SUNDAY

Rest and feast!

**F** Read together from The Jesus Storybook Bible (JSB),  
“The Terrible Lie.”

## CLOSING PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your Kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
Forgive us of our sins,  
as we forgive those who have sinned against us.  
In moments of temptation, carry us through to the other side,  
and deliver us from the evil one.  
For yours is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.  
Amen.

**F** **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** What is the purpose of Lent?  
What does it mean to confess and why is it important?

---

## WEEK TWO | MARCH 6-12

**SUGGESTED FAST** See Page 4

## OPENING PRAYER

I praise and worship you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! Turn my affections toward you as I seek your presence. Fill me and renew me during my time with you. Amen.

## CONFESSION

Most merciful God and Father,  
whose Son Jesus Christ was tempted in every way, yet without sin,  
I confess to you that I have sinned in thought, word and deed,  
by the things I have done, and by the things I have failed to do.  
I have not loved you or my neighbor with my whole heart.  
I have hungered after that which does not satisfy;  
I have compromised with evil, through my flesh,  
and I have doubted your power to protect me.  
Forgive my lack of faith; have mercy on my weakness.  
Restore in me such love and trust that I may walk in your ways  
and delight in doing your will.  
Amen.

**F FAMILY PRAYER:** Father, teach us what it looks like to give our whole hearts to you. Reveal our sin and turn our eyes to you. We love you Lord and thank you that you can use all things for good. Amen.

## MEDITATE ON YOUR FORGIVENESS

Spend a moment meditating on this Scripture to joyfully receive the forgiveness that is already yours in Jesus Christ!

*“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)*

### READING PLAN

☐ **MONDAY**

Amos 5; Psalm 51

☐ **TUESDAY**

Zephaniah 1; Psalm 63

☐ **WEDNESDAY**

Malachi 3-4; Psalm 5

☐ **THURSDAY**

Matthew 3; Psalm 2

☐ **FRIDAY (FAST DAY)**

John 1; Psalm 19

☐ **SATURDAY**

Reflect and catch up

☐ **SUNDAY**

Rest and feast!

**F** Read together from The Jesus Storybook Bible (JSB), “How to Pray.”

### CLOSING PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your Kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

Forgive us of our sins,  
as we forgive those who have sinned against us.

In moments of temptation, carry us through to the other side,  
and deliver us from the evil one.

For yours is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.  
Amen.



## WEEK THREE | MARCH 13-19

**SUGGESTED FAST** See Page 4

### OPENING PRAYER

I praise and worship you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! Turn my affections toward you as I seek your presence. Fill me and renew me during my time with you. Amen.

### CONFESSION

Most merciful God and Father,  
whose Son Jesus Christ was tempted in every way, yet without sin,  
I confess to you that I have sinned in thought, word and deed,  
by the things I have done, and by the things I have failed to do.  
I have not loved you or my neighbor with my whole heart.  
I have hungered after that which does not satisfy;  
I have compromised with evil, through my flesh,  
and I have doubted your power to protect me.  
Forgive my lack of faith; have mercy on my weakness.  
Restore in me such love and trust that I may walk in your ways  
and delight in doing your will.  
Amen.

**F FAMILY PRAYER:** Lord, we know we sin against you when we think, say or do things that dishonor you. We are sorry for not following you and following our own desires instead. We are grateful that we can be forgiven through Jesus our Savior. So, forgive us and draw us close to you, Lord. Amen.

### MEDITATE ON YOUR FORGIVENESS

Spend a moment meditating on this Scripture to joyfully receive the forgiveness that is already yours in Jesus Christ!

*“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)*

### READING PLAN

☐ **MONDAY**  
Matthew 3; Psalm 91

☐ **TUESDAY**  
Mark 1; Psalm 61

☐ **WEDNESDAY**

Luke 3; Psalm 91

☐ **THURSDAY**

Matthew 4; Psalm 91

☐ **FRIDAY (FAST DAY)**

Luke 4; Psalm 61

☐ **SATURDAY**

Reflect and catch up

☐ **SUNDAY**

Rest and feast!



Read together from The JSB, "Let's Go!"

**CLOSING PRAYER**

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your Kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
Forgive us of our sins,  
as we forgive those who have sinned against us.  
In moments of temptation, carry us through to the other side,  
and deliver us from the evil one.  
For yours is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.  
Amen.

---

**WEEK FOUR** | MARCH 20 - 26

**SUGGESTED FAST** See Page 4

**OPENING PRAYER**

I praise and worship you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! Turn my affections toward you as I seek your presence. Fill me and renew me during my time with you. Amen.

**CONFESSION**

Most merciful God and Father,  
whose Son Jesus Christ was tempted in every way, yet without sin,  
I confess to you that I have sinned in thought, word and deed,  
by the things I have done, and by the things I have failed to do.  
I have not loved you or my neighbor with my whole heart.  
I have hungered after that which does not satisfy;  
I have compromised with evil, through my flesh,  
and I have doubted your power to protect me.

Forgive my lack of faith; have mercy on my weakness.  
Restore in me such love and trust that I may walk in your ways  
and delight in doing your will.  
Amen.

**F** **FAMILY PRAYER:** Lord Jesus, forgive us for the ways we deny you  
and fail to stand up for what we know is right. Give us courage to  
follow you even when it is hard. Thank you for forgiving and redeeming  
our mistakes. We love you Lord! Amen.

## MEDITATE ON YOUR FORGIVENESS

Spend a moment meditating on this Scripture to joyfully receive the  
forgiveness that is already yours in Jesus Christ!

*“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to  
cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)*

### READING PLAN

#### ☐ MONDAY

Luke 4; Psalm 91

#### ☐ TUESDAY

Matthew 4; Psalm 91

#### ☐ WEDNESDAY

John 6-7; Psalm 63

#### ☐ THURSDAY

Luke 9; Psalm 32

#### ☐ FRIDAY (FAST DAY)

Matthew 16; Psalm 62

#### ☐ SATURDAY

Reflect and catch up

#### ☐ SUNDAY

Rest and feast!

### CLOSING PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your Kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
Forgive us of our sins,  
as we forgive those who have sinned against us.  
In moments of temptation, carry us through to the other side,  
and deliver us from the evil one.  
For yours is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.  
Amen.

**F** **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** What does it mean to have new life  
in Jesus and be a new creation? How does following Jesus look  
different than following the crowd?

**SUGGESTED FAST** See Page 4

## OPENING PRAYER

I praise and worship you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit! Turn my affections toward you as I seek your presence. Fill me and renew me during my time with you. Amen.

## CONFESSION

Most merciful God and Father,  
whose Son Jesus Christ was tempted in every way, yet without sin,  
I confess to you that I have sinned in thought, word and deed,  
by the things I have done, and by the things I have failed to do.  
I have not loved you or my neighbor with my whole heart.  
I have hungered after that which does not satisfy;  
I have compromised with evil, through my flesh,  
and I have doubted your power to protect me.  
Forgive my lack of faith; have mercy on my weakness.  
Restore in me such love and trust that I may walk in your ways  
and delight in doing your will.  
Amen.

**F FAMILY PRAYER:** Dear Heavenly Father, You have given us new life in Jesus and are in the process of making all things new. Forgive us for the times when we chase after the things that the world tells us are important instead of listening to you. Help us to live as the new creations we are because of you. Amen.

## MEDITATE ON YOUR FORGIVENESS

Spend a moment meditating on this Scripture to joyfully receive the forgiveness that is already yours in Jesus Christ!

*“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)*

## READING PLAN

### ☐ MONDAY

John 3; Psalm 42

### ☐ TUESDAY

Mark 8; Psalm 72

### ☐ WEDNESDAY

Mark 9; Psalm 32

☐ **THURSDAY**

Matthew 17; Psalm 63

☐ **FRIDAY (FAST DAY)**

Matthew 21; Psalm 2

☐ **SATURDAY**

Reflect and catch up



Read together from The JSB, “Filled Full”

**CLOSING PRAYER**

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your Kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
Forgive us of our sins,  
as we forgive those who have sinned against us.  
In moments of temptation, carry us through to the other side,  
and deliver us from the evil one.  
For yours is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.  
Amen.

**F DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** Why do you think Jesus allowed the disciples to participate in the miracle of feeding the 5,000? What do the leftover baskets of food indicate about Jesus?

---

**PALM SUNDAY | APRIL 2**

**THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY**

**OPENING PRAYER**

King Jesus, you are the King of Glory; You are the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I praise you today, and forevermore. Amen.

**READING**

☐ Luke 19:28-40; Psalm 2

**F FAMILY PRAYER:** Dear Jesus, You are our King and You reign over all of creation. Forgive us for thinking we know better than you do and for failing to recognize that you have a plan that is bigger and better than anything we can imagine. Help us to live a life that celebrates and reflects Your love, Your forgiveness, and the hope that we have in you. Amen.

## SILENCE

Spend 2 minutes silently meditating on these passages, focusing your attention on the character of God as revealed in these verses.

## CLOSING PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your Kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
Forgive us of our sins,  
as we forgive those who have sinned against us.  
In moments of temptation, carry us through to the other side,  
and deliver us from the evil one.  
For yours is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.  
Amen.

---

# HOLY WEDNESDAY | APRIL 5 INTO THE DARKNESS

## OPENING PRAYER

Holy Spirit, my Advocate and Helper; help me to keep my eyes fixated on Jesus Christ, the Son of God, that in moments of weakness and temptation of betrayal, I may remain steadfast and faithful. Lord, have mercy on me.  
Amen.

## READING

□ Matthew 26:14-25; Psalm 139

**F** Read together from The JSB, “The Servant King.”

## SILENCE

Spend 2 minutes silently meditating on these passages, focusing your attention on the character of God as revealed in these verses.

## CLOSING PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your Kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

Forgive us of our sins,

as we forgive those who have sinned against us.

In moments of temptation, carry us through to the other side,  
and deliver us from the evil one.

For yours is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.

Amen.

**F** **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** Judas acted like a disciple, but his heart was hard toward Jesus. How can this happen in our own lives? How did God use Judas' betrayal for his good purposes?

---

## MAUNDY THURSDAY | APRIL 6

### THE LAST SUPPER

#### OPENING PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, though you are a King, you came into the world as a servant – giving your life as a ransom for many. Teach me, that I may serve another; strengthen me, that I may give my life away. To the glory of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

#### READING

□ John 13

**F** Read together from The JSB, “A Dark Night in the Garden.”

#### SILENCE

Spend 2 minutes silently meditating on these passages, focusing your attention on the character of God as revealed in these verses.

#### CLOSING PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your Kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

Forgive us of our sins,

as we forgive those who have sinned against us.

In moments of temptation, carry us through to the other side,  
and deliver us from the evil one.  
For yours is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.  
Amen.

**F** **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** What are ways we “deny” Jesus in our lives? Can you think of a time when you didn’t stand up for your faith in Jesus? Did God give up on Peter? Does God give up on us? Does God delight in forgiving us?

---

## GOOD FRIDAY | APRIL 7

### THE DEATH OF JESUS

#### **OPENING PRAYER**

Father, help me to feel the weight of this day and the weight of my sin, only that I may be drawn into your abundant grace and everlasting forgiveness, which this gruesome day has made possible. Amen.

#### **READING**

□ Matthew 26:32-61; Psalm 22

**F** Read together from The JSB, “The Sun Stops Shining.”

#### **SILENCE**

Spend 2 minutes silently meditating on these passages, focusing your attention on the character of God as revealed in these verses.

#### **CLOSING PRAYER**

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your Kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
Forgive us of our sins,  
as we forgive those who have sinned against us.  
In moments of temptation, carry us through to the other side,  
and deliver us from the evil one.  
For yours is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.  
Amen.



# HOLY SATURDAY | APRIL 8

## THE HARROWING OF HELL

### OPENING PRAYER

Father, today I feel the tension of the in-between. The in-between of Christ's death of yesterday, and the joyous celebration that comes with his resurrection tomorrow. But, so much of my life is lived in this in-between and waiting. Give me the patience for renewal, for resurrection life, that my hope may be steadfast. Amen.

**F FAMILY PRAYER:** Dear Jesus, You are our King and You reign over all of creation. Forgive us for thinking we know better than you do and for failing to recognize you have a plan that is bigger and better than anything we can imagine. Help us live a life that celebrates and reflects Your love, Your forgiveness, and the hope that we have in you. Amen.

### READING

□ Luke 23:55-56; Psalm 31

### SILENCE

Spend 2 minutes silently meditating on these passages, focusing your attention on the character of God as revealed in these verses.

### CLOSING PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your Kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
Forgive us of our sins,  
as we forgive those who have sinned against us.  
In moments of temptation, carry us through to the other side,  
and deliver us from the evil one.  
For yours is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.  
Amen.

**F DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** In a Christian context, what do blessing and abundance mean? What does it mean to sacrifice?

# EASTER SUNDAY | APRIL 9

## THE VICTORIOUS RESURRECTION

### OPENING PRAYER

King Jesus, I owe you my life and allegiance, for you have overcome Sin, triumphed over Evil, and ushered in the Age to Come! Glory to you! Glory to Christ! Glory to you! Amen.

### READING

□ John 20:1-29; Psalm 148

**F** Read together from The JSB, “A Wonderful Surprise.”

### WORSHIP

Sing a song to the Lord Jesus Christ from your heart, sing a hymn, or play your favorite worship song! Spend this time adoring the victorious King Jesus!

### CLOSING PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your Kingdom come, your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

Forgive us of our sins,  
as we forgive those who have sinned against us.

In moments of temptation, carry us through to the other side,  
and deliver us from the evil one.

For yours is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.  
Amen.