

## Welcome to our 2024 Lenten Devotional Guide!

We want to invite you to take a prayerful journey with us through the season of Lent and we have prepared this resource as a tool to help guide you.

Depending on your past church experiences, you may be unfamiliar with Lent.

### **What is Lent?**

Lent is a season of personal repentance, prayer and fasting during the 6 1/2 weeks that lead up to Easter, beginning on Ash Wednesday. The observation of Lent likely dates back to apostolic times but was formalized at the Council of Nicea in 325 AD.

During these weeks of personal preparation, we want to invite you to take up the daily practice of prayerfully reading the scriptures and fasting once/a week.

### **What is fasting?**

Fasting is abstaining from something to intentionally focus on another thing.

In the Christian tradition, that has generally been practiced by abstaining from food to focus on connecting with Jesus through worship, prayer, and reading scripture.

In Matthew 6 (what we know as the Sermon on the Mount), Jesus is speaking to His followers and says these three practices will mark people connected to His Kingdom.

<sup>2</sup> **When you give** to someone in need ...

<sup>4</sup> Give your gifts in private,  
and your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

<sup>5</sup> **“When you pray** ...

<sup>6</sup> But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you,

and pray to your Father in private.  
Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

<sup>16</sup> **“And when you fast,**  
don’t make it obvious, as the hypocrites do,  
for they try to look miserable and disheveled  
so people will admire them for their fasting.  
I tell you the truth, that is the only reward they will ever get.  
<sup>17</sup> But when you fast, comb your hair<sup>[d]</sup> and wash your face.  
<sup>18</sup> Then no one will notice that you are fasting,  
except your Father, who knows what you do in private.  
And your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

Did you see that?

Jesus says His people are to be a generous people who pray and fast. Those spiritual practices are not unique.

What makes these practices unique for followers of Jesus is the motivation out of which they are carried out. We pray and fast, *not for the applause of others*, but out of a love for and desire to connect with our audience of One: your heavenly Father.

To the extent that we do these three things with this God-directed heart motivation, here is the promise: your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

Jesus’ words here from the Sermon on the Mount align with this statement from the author of Hebrews:

<sup>6</sup>And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him.

God is not playing hide and seek with us. He is inviting us to meet with Him and He wants to bless you!

During the season of Lent, we are inviting you to fast with us for breakfast and lunch one day a week to spend focus time in worship, prayer, and reading the scriptures.

If your health does not allow you to fast, you are welcome to fast from certain foods, from social media, from tv, etc ... Again, the heart behind this is that we turn our appetites and attention away from one thing and turn them toward Jesus.

The day of the week you choose to fast is up to you. You know your schedule best, but we encourage you to schedule the day because we all know what happens if priorities don't land on our calendars.

### **How can I prayerfully read the scriptures?**

Some evenings when I am home, I will suddenly realize my wife is asking me, "Did you hear what I just said?"

I'm sure you've never heard that before!

As I pull myself from watching TV, I suddenly realize my wife, Stephanie, has been talking to me but I was not listening.

Now there are two potential answers to her question.

One is to pretend I heard and try to figure out what we are talking about as we continue the conversation or just fess up and say "No" I did not.

I find it usually goes better if I do the latter!

Too often, God is trying to speak into our lives but we are so zoned into the busyness of life we do not hear his voice.

In the Old Testament, the boy Samuel was trying to discern God's voice. His mentor Eli said, go sit and pray, "Speak Lord for your servant is listening."

During this season of Lent we are asking you to make space and time to open the Scriptures, listen for God's voice, and pray the prayer of Samuel, "Speak Lord, your servant is listening."

In this resource, you will find Scriptures for each day of Lent. We invite you to read them and take the time to **HEAR** God's voice by applying this acronym to each passage.

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|---------------------------|--|
| <b>H</b> <u>Highlight</u> | Highlight what speaks to you in the verse.                               |
| <b>E</b> <u>Explain</u>   | Write in your own words what this verse means to you.                    |
| <b>A</b> <u>Apply</u>     | Write down write down how this scripture might apply to your life.       |
| <b>R</b> <u>Respond</u>   | Write down one action that you might take because of what you have read. |

We invite you during this journey of Lent to join us each day by reading the following verses and applying the H.E.A.R. model. You may want to start a daily journal to write out the Scripture references and your responses applying the H.E.A.R. model. In doing so we pray that together we will hear from God and grow.

## **WEEK 1**

### **February 14**

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you.

– 1 Peter 5:6

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

### **February 15**

“And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others.

Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.

But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others

but by your Father who is in secret.

And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

– Matthew 6:16-18

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

### **February 16**

“Yet even now,” declares the Lord,

“return to me with all your heart, with fasting,

with weeping, and with mourning;

and rend your hearts and not your garments.”

Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful,

slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster.

– Joel 2:12-13

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

## **February 17**

But he answered, “It is written, “‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

– Matthew 4:4

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

## **WEEK 2**

## **February 18**

### **Worship!**

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.

**2** Worship the Lord with gladness;  
come before him with joyful songs.

**3** Know that the Lord is God.

It is he who made us, and we are his;  
we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

**4** Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise;  
give thanks to him and praise his name.

**5** For the Lord is good and his love endures forever;  
his faithfulness continues through all generations.

– Psalm 100

## **February 19**

Is this not the fast that I choose:

to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke,  
to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?

Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into  
your house...

- Isaiah 58:6-7

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

## **February 20**

At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness,  
and he was in the wilderness forty days,  
being tempted by Satan.  
He was with the wild animals,  
and angels attended him.  
– Mark 1:12-13

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

## **February 21**

Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink,  
or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath.  
These are a shadow of the things to come,  
but the substance belongs to Christ.  
– Colossians 2:16-17

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

## **February 22**

Then I turned my face to the Lord God,  
seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy  
with fasting and sackcloth and ashes.  
– Daniel 9:3

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

### **February 23**

As the deer pants for streams of water,  
so my soul pants for you, my God.  
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.  
When can I go and meet with God?  
– Psalm 42:1-2

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

### **February 24**

<sup>1</sup> Out of the depths I cry to you, LORD;  
<sup>2</sup> Lord, hear my voice.  
Let your ears be attentive  
to my cry for mercy.  
<sup>3</sup> If you, LORD, kept a record of sins,  
Lord, who could stand?  
<sup>4</sup> But with you there is forgiveness,  
so that we can, with reverence, serve you.  
– Psalm 130:1-4

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

## **WEEK 3**

### **February 25**

### **Worship!**

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.  
**2** Worship the Lord with gladness;  
come before him with joyful songs.  
**3** Know that the Lord is God.  
It is he who made us, and we are his;  
we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.



**4** Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise;  
give thanks to him and praise his name.

**5** For the Lord is good and his love endures forever;  
his faithfulness continues through all generations.

– Psalm 100

### **February 26**

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace.  
In this world you will have trouble.

But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

- John 16:33

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

### **February 27**

**6** But you must return to your God;  
maintain love and justice,  
and wait for your God always.

– Hosea 12:6

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

### **February 28**

**18** Yet the LORD longs to be gracious to you;  
therefore he will rise up to show you compassion.  
For the LORD is a God of justice.

Blessed are all who wait for him!

- Isaiah 30:18

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

## **February 29**

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD,  
"plans to prosper you and not to harm you,  
plans to give you hope and a future.  
Then you will call on me and come and pray to me,  
and I will listen to you.  
You will seek me and find me,  
when you seek me with all your heart.  
- Jeremiah 29:11-13

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

## **March 1**

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy;  
I have come that they may have life,  
and have it to the full.  
- John 10:10

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

## **March 2**

<sup>13</sup> For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness  
and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves,  
<sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.  
– Colossians 1:13-14

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

## **WEEK 4**

### **March 3    Worship!**

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.

**2** Worship the Lord with gladness;  
come before him with joyful songs.

**3** Know that the Lord is God.

It is he who made us, and we are his;  
we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

**4** Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise;  
give thanks to him and praise his name.

**5** For the Lord is good and his love endures forever;  
his faithfulness continues through all generations.

– Psalm 100

### **March 4**

**7** But as for me, I watch in hope for the LORD,  
I wait for God my Savior; my God will hear me.

– Micah 7:7

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

### **March 5**

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness,  
and all these things will be given to you as well.

– Matthew 6:33

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

## **March 6**

**4** Show me your ways, LORD, teach me your paths.

- Psalm 25:4

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

## **March 7**

**5** Guide me in your truth and teach me,  
for you are God my Savior,  
and my hope is in you all day long.

**6** Remember, LORD, your great mercy and love,  
for they are from of old.

**7** Do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways;  
according to your love remember me, for you, LORD, are good.

- Psalm 25:5-7

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

## **March 8**

The LORD is good to those whose hope is in him,  
to the one who seeks him;  
it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD.

- Lamentations 3:25-26

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

## **March 9**

Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord.

- Psalm 27:14

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

## **WEEK 6**

### **March 10**

### **Worship!**

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.

**2** Worship the Lord with gladness;  
come before him with joyful songs.

**3** Know that the Lord is God.

It is he who made us, and we are his;  
we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

**4** Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise;  
give thanks to him and praise his name.

**5** For the Lord is good and his love endures forever;  
his faithfulness continues through all generations.

– Psalm 100

### **March 11**

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

- Romans 12:12

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

### **March 12**

<sup>1</sup> The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.

<sup>2</sup> He makes me lie down in green pastures,  
he leads me beside quiet waters, <sup>3</sup>he refreshes my soul.  
He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake.

<sup>4</sup> Even though I walk through the darkest valley,<sup>[a]</sup>

I will fear no evil, for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

– Psalm 23:1-4

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

### **March 13**

But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.  
They will soar on wings like eagles;  
they will run and not grow weary,  
they will walk and not be faint.  
– Isaiah 40:31

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

### **March 14**

We wait in hope for the Lord; he is our help and our shield.  
In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name.  
May your unfailing love be with us, Lord,  
even as we put our hope in you.  
– Psalm 33:20-22

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

### **March 15**

I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits,  
and in his word I put my hope.  
I wait for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning.  
– Psalm 130:5-6

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

### **March 16**

The Lord your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves.  
He will take great delight in you;  
in his love he will no longer rebuke you,  
but will rejoice over you with singing.”  
– Zephaniah 3:17

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

## **WEEK 7**

### **March 17**

### **Worship!**

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.

**2** Worship the Lord with gladness;  
come before him with joyful songs.

**3** Know that the Lord is God.

It is he who made us, and we are his;  
we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

**4** Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise;  
give thanks to him and praise his name.

**5** For the Lord is good and his love endures forever;  
his faithfulness continues through all generations.

– Psalm 100

### **March 18**

He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord,  
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.

And they will live securely,  
for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth.

– Micah 5:4

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

### **March 19**

I want to know Christ—yes,  
to know the power of his resurrection  
and participation in his sufferings,  
becoming like him in his death,  
and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead.  
– Philippians 3:10-14

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

## **March 20**

<sup>24</sup> To him who is able to keep you from stumbling  
and to present you before his glorious presence  
without fault and with great joy—

<sup>25</sup> to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.  
— Jude 24-25

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

## **March 21**

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding:  
in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.  
- Proverbs 3:5-6

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

## **March 22**

my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge,  
my shield and the horn of my salvation.  
He is my stronghold, my refuge and my savior—  
from violent people you save me.  
- 2 Samuel 22:3

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

## **March 23**

He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth;  
he was led like a lamb to the slaughter,  
and as a sheep before its shearers is silent,  
so he did not open his mouth.  
— Isaiah 53:7

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond



## **HOLY WEEK**

### **March 24**                      **Worship!**

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.

**2** Worship the Lord with gladness;  
come before him with joyful songs.

**3** Know that the Lord is God.

It is he who made us, and we are his;  
we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

**4** Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise;  
give thanks to him and praise his name.

**5** For the Lord is good and his love endures forever;  
his faithfulness continues through all generations.

– Psalm 100

### **March 25th**

Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem!  
See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious,  
lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.  
– Zechariah 9:9

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

### **March 26th**

As he (Jesus) went along, people spread their cloaks on the road.  
When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives,  
the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all  
the miracles they had seen: “Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the  
Lord!” “Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, rebuke your  
disciples!” “I tell you,” he replied, “if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out.”  
As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said,  
“If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—

but now it is hidden from your eyes.

– Luke 19:40-42

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

### **March 27th**

When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. And he said to them, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.” After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, “Take this and divide it among you. For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you. But the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table. The Son of Man will go as it has been decreed. But woe to that man who betrays him!” They began to question among themselves which of them it might be who would do this.

– Luke 22:14-23

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

### **March 28th**

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” When he had said this, he breathed his last.

– Luke 22:44-46

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

### **March 29th**

Now there was a man named Joseph, a member of the Council, a good and upright man, who had not consented to their decision and action. He came from the Judean town of Arimathea, and he himself was waiting for the kingdom of God. Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body. Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen cloth and placed it in a tomb cut in the rock, one in which no one had yet been laid.

– Luke 23:50-53

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

### **March 30th**

It was Preparation Day, and the Sabbath was about to begin. The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee followed Joseph and saw the tomb and how his body was laid in it. Then they went home and prepared spices and perfumes. But they rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment.

– Luke 23:54-56

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond

### **March 31<sup>st</sup>**

#### **He is Risen!**

**24** On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!

– Luke 24:1-6

Highlight / Explain / Apply / Respond