

What is Lent

Lent is the 40 day (plus Sundays) season of preparation for Holy Week and Easter. During this time, we consider the ways in which we have gotten distracted from God and seek to reorient ourselves through practices of self-examination, fasting, acts of generosity, and studying God's word.

These practices ready us to join Jesus as he offers himself in love on the cross, dying for the sake of all he taught of the power of love and God's desire for true justice.

These practices ready us to receive the astonishing gift of the Resurrection with eager hearts, refreshed and renewed to give ourselves wholly to the work of God in service to the world that God so loves.

This year, you are invited into a particular Lenten discipline of gratitude. Fast from complaining and grasping and focus instead on the good and growing things God has placed in your life. Keep a daily journal, in which you record not only the things for which you are grateful but the experience of discovering and naming them. Say grace at every meal (a collection of possible prayers are included in your kit) and /or use these weekly reflections and prayers.

Ash Wednesday

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and sustain in me a willing spirit.

Psalm 51:10-12

The good news of Lent is that God is already waiting for us. We are forgiven before we even ask – but still we need to ask. We need to desire our restoration so that we will make good use of it, knowing ourselves to be reborn.

Give thanks to God for the challenge and the gift of true self-knowledge.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

God of infinite mercy, we turn to you and find you already waiting for us. Thanks be to you, O God.

Today, I/we offer thanks for...
add your thanksgivings

Thanks be to you, O God.

First Sunday of Lent

You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty, will say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust."

Psalm 91:1-2

We desire peace and security but we know that the world is often torn by violence, unrest, and uncertainty. God does not offer false promises of easy comfort but God does promise to be with us in the chaos.

Give thanks to God for moments of respite, for companions in times of trouble, for hope in places of fear.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

God of steadfast faithfulness, we reach out to you and our strength is renewed. Thanks be to you, O God.

Today, I/we offer thanks for...
add your thanksgivings

Thanks be to you, O God.

Second Sunday of Lent

*I believe that I shall see the goodness of the LORD
in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be
strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for
the Lord!*

Psalm 27:13-14

Sometimes, gratitude requires discipline. Sometimes, we need to believe that God is at work in order to recognize God at work. Sometimes, we need to have faith that God is at work even when we can't see it.

Give thanks for things you can't quite see.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

God beyond all knowing,
we open our hands and trust that you
will fill them with all we need.
Thanks be to you, O God.

Today, I/we offer thanks for...
add your thanksgivings

Thanks be to you, O God.

Third Sunday of Lent

Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you. So I will bless you as long as I live; I will lift up my hands and call on your name.

Psalm 63:3-4

God's love is the Source of all being; the well-spring of creation. We were made in love for love. Lent brings us back to this essential truth.

Give thanks for the loves that shapes your life.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

God of perfect love,
we open our hearts to you and discover
love beyond our imagining.

Thanks be to you, O God.

Today, I/we offer thanks for...
add your thanksgivings

Thanks be to you, O God.

Fourth Sunday of Lent

Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not hide my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," and you forgave the guilt of my sin. Therefore let all who are faithful offer prayer to you; at a time of distress, the rush of mighty waters shall not reach them. You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with glad cries of deliverance.

Psalm 32:5-7

True freedom is found in turning to God and discovering that our past failings do not determine our future. God's love protects us even from ourselves.

Give thanks for second chances and lessons learned.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

God of abundant life, we offer ourselves to you and find ourselves made whole. Thanks be to you, O God.

Today, I/we offer thanks for...
add your thanksgivings

Thanks be to you, O God.

Fifth Sunday of Lent

May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy. Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.

Psalm 126:5-6

The season of Lent leads us through sorrow and into joy – but doesn't allow us to skip past the sorrow. Death must come before resurrection and, very often, tears come before joy.

Give thanks for the gifts that have come to you in tears.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

God of deep joy, we come to you in tears
and you turn them into blessings.
Thanks be to you, O God.

Today, I/we offer thanks for...
add your thanksgivings

Thanks be to you, O God.

Holy Week

But I trust in you, O LORD; I say, "You are my God." My times are in your hand; deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors. Let your face shine upon your servant; save me in your steadfast love.

Psalm 31:14-16

As we walk this week with Jesus, we acknowledge the uncomfortable limits of our own power and seek to place our trust in the One who saves us, turning to God as a flower turns to the sun.

Give thanks for the ways you are being made whole.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

God of all power, we seek your face and your face shines upon us.
Thanks be to you, O God.

Today, I/we offer thanks for...
add your thanksgivings

Thanks be to you, O God.
