



Lent

A Prayer Guide
2017

Trinity Presbyterian Church

Love God. Love People. Love Fort Worth.

About this Prayer Guide

During Lent, Christians are urged to pray and meditate on the Gospel accounts of the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Lent may or may not be familiar to you. Some people grew up in churches where Lent was observed but with little or no explanation. Some were told it's wrong to observe Lent in any form or fashion. Lent may seem like an empty, needless, historic ritual—a hollow custom, or even foreign to the Gospel message of authentic Christianity. All of us, whether we've grown up in the church or not, should pause to ask, "What is Lent?"

What is Lent?

Lent lasts for forty days plus six Sundays corresponding to Israel's forty years in the wilderness and Jesus' forty-day fast in the wilderness. Sundays are not included in the Lenten forty days, because in the church's tradition, Sundays are always feast days and never fast days. Lent starts on Ash Wednesday and lasts until Holy Saturday, the day before Easter Sunday. The last week of Lent is called Holy Week. The word "lent" comes from an old German word that meant "long" and is connected to a long spring.

Since the early days of the church, Lent has been a season of self-examination, sorrow for sin, and commitment to following Jesus. It has also been a season for renewal, especially in preparation for Easter, which is the Sunday of Sundays, our greatest celebration of the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. However, in the rush to get to Easter, we often forget the life and ministry of Jesus. We often forget he was the Suffering Servant. We love his grace and goodness, but we forget his pain and heartbreak. Lent helps remind us. It helps prepare us.

In Lent's preparation for Easter, we focus especially on our repentance. Even though a repentant spirit should mark all that we do, it is still appropriate that certain times be set aside for a particular focus on repentance. When we stop to specifically ask questions about our spiritual health, we should consider:

- What are my characteristic or habitual sins, and how can I pray and work for change?
- What idols have captured my imagination so that my love for Jesus has grown cold?
- In what ways is my devotion to Jesus and his church less than wholehearted?
- How can I consider both the humanity and deity of Jesus as he lived on this earth in his life, ministry, and death before his resurrection?

Keeping Lent can be dangerous precisely because of this focus on the heart. It's much easier to read a book on prayer than to spend time speaking with God. It's much easier to fast from certain foods than it is to turn from idols of the heart. It's much easier to write a check than to spend time in ministries of mercy.

Likewise, Lent can be easily trivialized. The point of Lent is not to give up chocolate or Facebook. It's to give up sin and cling to Jesus! Although it is possible to exclusively externalize Lenten observance so that we end up trivializing it, it's also possible to forget that we are physical beings, created by God with bodies and souls. What we do physically has an effect on us spiritually. Our hearts and bodies are connected to each other, and we often forget this. We recognize and embrace this God-created link between the physical and spiritual during Lent. Lent has historically included a physical element, specifically fasting, and other acts of self-denial.

How Can I Keep A Holy Lent?

The Lenten season is observed in four overlapping ways:

- **SELF-EXAMINATION**

Use this time to ask yourself hard questions about your spiritual life and maturity. If you're married, ask your spouse to give you his or her evaluation of your spiritual health. Ask your Christian friends to give you

their thoughts and feedback. Open your life to wise, honest, gracious counsel. If you do not have this in your life, Lent would be a good time to initiate these types of relationships. Parents might use Lent as a season to spend more time with their children individually to ask and understand their spiritual and physical questions and struggles and to give them encouragement to pursue Jesus and his church.

With all of this self-examination, it's crucial to keep your focus on Jesus! All of us are more sinful, wicked, and helpless than we would have ever dared to admit. Yet in Christ, we are more accepted, forgiven, and loved than we would have ever dared to hope. That is good news! Be careful that your self-examination is centered on this Gospel good news. Let's not fall into morbid introspection and despair. God is at work, and He loves His people.

- **SELF-DENIAL**

The Lenten season is traditionally a time for acts of self-discipline or self-denial, a time to remind ourselves that we do not live by bread alone. Self-denial helps us remember what is beautifully signified and sealed in the Lord's Supper—that Jesus is the true bread of life, our only source of strength and sustenance.

The two major fast days of the traditional church calendar are Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Both of these occur during the Lenten season. The other days of Lent (except Sundays, as we have mentioned) are marked by other acts of self-denial. Common examples might be giving up one meal a day or one day of the week or fasting from a particular food or food group.

Self-denial doesn't always involve what we eat. Some might seek to better use their time or curb a habit or help themselves realize that man does not live by Netflix alone. Lent might be a time to cut back on the seemingly endless flow of activities in order to spend that time worshiping, praying, and learning as a family or friend group.

It would be helpful to talk with others about your fast, and to consider what Jesus says in Matthew 6. Remember there is nothing magical

about these spiritual practices. They are tools to help you grow closer to Jesus. They are not works that gain or merit you righteousness. God will not love you more or less.

- **ACTS OF COMPASSION**

Lent is an appropriate time to ask God to fill you with compassion for the poor and oppressed and to put this into practice in concrete, practical ways. For example, some Christians give up one meal a day and then give the money they saved to a group that serves the poor.

There are many ways you could practice compassion during Lent. There may be a poor family you know or could get to know. You could visit someone who is alone or shut in, a widow or the elderly. You could research and then implement best practices for helping those asking for money and the homeless. You could volunteer to serve meals during Lent. Lent is an important time to see (and teach our children to see) the value of compassion. Ask God to give you eyes to see and a heart that breaks. Ask God that he might involve you in seeing and meeting the physical and spiritual needs of people all around you.

- **USING THE MEANS OF GRACE**

Finally, Lent is a time for renewing our focus on the means of grace. That focus all too easily fades when we don't give it adequate attention. We need to closely pay attention to the ways Jesus gives himself to us and helps us grow to be more and more like him—the Scriptures, prayer, and the sacraments.

Lent is a wonderful opportunity to devote yourself (for the first time or again) to life-changing practices, disciplines, and habits. Commit yourself to reading the Bible and to developing a consistent life of prayer. Get involved in a community group with others, a practice generations of Christians have commended as a key to their spiritual growth. Begin (or begin again!) personal and/or family worship during the week—then continue during the year, even after Lent is over!

In our individualistic culture, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that Christianity is a communal faith. Christian faith is not private religious devotion, but corporate worship, gathering with fellow believers to sing, pray, confess, give, greet, and receive the Lord's Supper. There are many today who identify themselves as Christians but for whom the church is peripheral and tangential. Use this season of Lent to commit yourself to the community of God's people. If you have not been baptized, seek this sacrament from the church by talking to your pastor. If you have been baptized, remember that in that baptism you were incorporated into a community, the family of God, and you are to join the family meal, the Lord's Supper. Parents, help your children realize that their church is their family and that worship is their first duty and greatest joy. Take the time to help your children prepare to be admitted to the Lord's Supper. Invite those who do not have a church to join you for worship during Lent and all throughout the year. Pray for those who have wandered, for we are all prone to wander. May greater and greater numbers be incorporated into the church and the means of grace during this Lenten season.

How to Use this Guide

The season of Lent provides a wonderful opportunity for us to rekindle our relationship with God and his people, and especially to focus on the quality of our worship as a church, as families, and as individuals. We have prepared this guide for daily prayer with the hope that this season will be a time of renewal for you as well.

In this guide you will find a form for prayers and Bible readings for each day from Ash Wednesday until Easter. This liturgy can be read and prayed by individuals or with friends or family. If you are praying with others, have one person read the plain words and have the rest respond with the words in bold. There is a Psalm and three other readings for each day, but feel free to omit a reading for the sake of time. Do what works best for you, your roommates, your family members. The readings

are also available on your mobile device at www.esvbible.org/devotions/bcp/.

Our goal is not to load you down with more tasks in an already busy life, but rather to give you opportunity through prayer and Scripture to identify more fully with Jesus in his suffering and death on the Cross. So use the guide as just that: a guide.

As Lent begins this year, my prayer for you is that this would be a truly blessed season, a time of genuine and significant spiritual growth for you, your family, your friends, and for our church. May God grant you a truly holy, gracious, Christ-filled Lent. Amen.

REV. BRIAN DAVIS

(Adapted from Revs. Craig Higgins, Trinity Presbyterian Church & Doug Serven, City Presbyterian Church)

An Order for Morning Prayer¹

Leader: Jesus said, "If anyone will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." (Mark 8:34)

Leader: Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silent confession

Leader and People:

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Leader: May the Almighty God grant us forgiveness of all our sins, and the grace and comfort of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Leader: Lord, open our lips.

People: And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Leader and People:

Glorify to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Leader: The Lord is full of compassion and mercy: Come let us adore him.

¹ Adapted from the Book of Common Prayer.

The Psalm of the Day

The psalm of the day is available in the back of this prayer guide or at esvbible.org/devotions/bcp/

The Readings of the Day

The readings are available in the back of this prayer guide or at esvbible.org/devotions/bcp/

After each reading:

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

The Prayers

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us pray.

Leader and People:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

The Leader then prays the Prayer of the Day and one of the other following prayers:

The Prayer of the Day

The prayer of the day is available at the back of this prayer guide or at <http://wolc.com/what-we-do/worship/prayer-for-the-week/>

A Prayer for the Renewal of Life

O God, the King eternal, whose light divides the day from the night and turns the shadow of death into the morning: Drive far from us all wrong desires, incline our hearts to keep your law, and guide our feet into the way of peace; that, having done your will with cheerfulness while it was day, we may, when night comes, rejoice to give you thanks; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A Prayer for Peace

O God, the author of peace and lover of concord, to know you is eternal life and to serve you is perfect freedom: Defend us, your humble servants, in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in your defense, may not fear the power of any adversaries; through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A Prayer for Grace

Lord God, almighty and everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day: Preserve us with your mighty power, that we may not fall into sin, nor be overcome by adversity; and in all we do, direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A Prayer for Guidance

Heavenly Father, in you we live and move and have our being: We humbly pray you so to guide and govern us by your Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations of our life we may not forget you, but may remember that we are ever walking in your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The following prayer for mission may be added:

A Prayer for Mission

Almighty and everlasting God, by whose Spirit the whole body of your faithful people is governed and sanctified: Receive our supplications and prayers which we offer before you for all members of your holy Church, that in their vocation and ministry they may truly and devoutly serve you; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Open Prayer

Use this time to pray for the following or other specific requests:

- *General prayers for Trinity and our mission*
- *Specific prayers for leaders, members, and regular attenders of Trinity*
- *Prayers for other churches in Fort Worth*
- *Prayers for Fort Worth and the world*

Leader: Let us bless the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore.

Amen. (2 Corinthians 13:14)

Scripture Readings for Lent

		Week 1 Mar 5-11	Week 2 Mar 12-18	Week 3 Mar 19-25	Week 4 Mar 26 - Apr 1	Week 5 Apr 2-8	Week 6 Apr 9-15
Sun.		Ps 63 Deut 8:1-10 1Cor 1:17-31 Mk 2:18-22	Ps 24 Jer 1:1-10 1Cor 3:11-23 Mk 3:31-4:9	Ps 93 Jer 6:1-15 1Cor 6:12-20 Mk 5:1-20	Ps 66-67 Jer 14:1-22 Gal 4:21-5:1 Mk 8:11-21	Pss 118 Jer 23:16-42 1Cor 9:19-27 Mk 8:31-9:1	Pss 29 Zech 9:9-12; 12:9-11; 1Tim 6:12-16 Mt 21:12-17
Mon.		Ps 41 Deut 8:11-20 Heb 2:11-18 Jn 2:1-12	Ps 56 Jer 1:11-19 Rom 1:1-15 Jn 4:27-42	Ps 80 Jer 7:1-20 Rom 4:1-12 Jn 7:14-36	Ps 89:1-18 Jer 16:10-21 Rom 7:1-12 Jn 6:1-15	Ps 31 Jer 24:1-10 Rom 9:19-33 Jn 9:1-17	Ps 51 Jer 12:1-16 Phil 3:1-14 Jn 12:9-19
Tues.		Ps 45 Deut 9:4-12 Heb 3:1-11 Jn 2:13-22	Pss 61, 62 Jer 2:1-13 Rom 1:16-25 Jn 4:43-54	Ps 78:1-39 Jer 7:21-34 Rom 4:13-25 Jn 7:37-52	Ps 97 Jer 17:19-27 Rom 7:13-25 Jn 6:16-27	Pss 120-1 Jer 25:1-17 Rom 10:1-13 Jn 9:18-41	Ps 6 Jer 15:10-21 Phil 3:15-21 Jn 12:20-26
Wed.	Pss 32 & 143 Jonah 3:1-4:11 Heb 12:1-14 Lk 18:9-14	Ps 119:49-72 Deut 9:13-21 Heb3:12-19 Jn 2:23-3:15	Ps 72 Jer 3:1-18 Rom 1:28- 2:11 Jn 5:1-18	Ps 119:97-120 Jer 8:8-9:6 Rom 5:1-11 Jn 8:12-20	Ps 101 Jer 18:1-11 Rom 8:1-11 Jn 6:27-40	Ps 119:145-17 6 Jer 25:30-38 Rom 10:14-21 Jn 10:1-18	Ps 55 Jer 17:5-17 Phil 4:1-13 Jn 12:27-36
Thurs.	Ps 37 Deut 7:6-11 Titus 1:1-16 Jn 1:29-34	Ps 50 Deut 9:23-10:5 Heb 4:1-10 Jn 3:16-21	Ps 70 Jer 4:9-28 Rom 2:12-24 Jn 5:19-29	Pss 42-43 Jer 10:11-24 Rom 5:12-21 Jn 8:21-32	Ps 69 Jer 22:13-23 Rom 8:12-27 Jn 6:41-51	Pss 131-132 Jer 26:1-16 Rom 11:1-12 Jn 10:19-42	Ps 102 Jer 20:7-11 1Cor 10:14-17, 11:27-32 Jn 17:1-26
Fri.	Ps 31 Deut 7:12-16 Titus 2:1-15 Jn 1:35-42	Ps 40 Deut 10:6-22 Heb 4:11-16 Jn 3:22-36	Ps 73 Jer 5:1-19 Rom 2:25-3:18 Jn 5:30-47	Ps 88 Jer 11:1-20 Rom 6:1-11 Jn 8:33-47	Ps 102 Jer 23:1-8 Rom 8:28-39 Jn 6:52-59	Ps 22 Jer 29:1-13 Rom 11:13-24 Jn 11:1-27	Ps 54 Gen 22:1-14 1Pet 1:10-20 Jn 13:36-38; 19:38-42
Sat.	Ps 30 Deut 7:17-26 Titus 3:1-15 Jn 1:43-51	Ps 55 Deut 11:18-28 Heb 5:1-10 Jn 4:1-26	Ps 75 Jer 5:20-31 Rom 3:19-31 Jn 7:1-13	Ps 87 Jer 13:1-11 Rom 6:12-23 Jn 8:47-59	Ps 108 Jer 23:9-15 Rom 9:1-18 Jn 6:60-71	Ps 137 Jer 31:27-34 Rom 11:25-36 Jn 11:28-44	Pss 88; 27 Job 19:21-27a Heb 4:1-16 Rom 8:1-11

The Prayers of the Day

Ash Wednesday – Mar 1

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing you have made and forgive the sins of all who are repentant: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may receive from you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

First Week in Lent (Mar 5-11)

Almighty God, whose blessed Son was led by the Spirit to be tempted by Satan; come quickly to help us who are assaulted by many temptations; and, as you know the weaknesses of each of us, let each one find you mighty to save; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

Second Week in Lent (Mar 12-18)

O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy: Be gracious to all who have gone astray from your ways, and bring them again with repentant hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of your Word, Jesus Christ your Son; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Third Week in Lent (Mar 19 – Mar 25)

Almighty God, you know that we have no power in ourselves to help ourselves: Keep us both outwardly in our bodies and inwardly in our souls, that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Fourth Week in Lent (Mar 26 - Apr 1)

Gracious Father, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ came down from heaven to be the true bread which gives life to the world: Evermore give us this bread, that he may live in us, and we in him; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Fifth Week in Lent (Apr 2-8)

Almighty God, you alone can bring into order the unruly wills and affections of sinners: Grant your people grace to love what you command and desire what you promise; that, among the swift and varied changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday (Apr 9)

Almighty and everliving God, in your tender love for the human race you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon him our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us the example of his great humility: Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his suffering, and also share in his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Monday in Holy Week (Apr 10)

Almighty God, whose dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Tuesday in Holy Week (Apr 11)

O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life: Grant us so to glory in the

cross of Christ, that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Wednesday in Holy Week (Apr 12)

Lord God, whose blessed Son our Savior gave his body to be whipped and his face to be spit upon: Give us grace to accept joyfully the sufferings of the present time, confident of the glory that shall be revealed; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Mundy Thursday (Apr 13)

Almighty Father, whose dear Son, on the night before he suffered, instituted the Sacrament of his Body and Blood: Mercifully grant that we may receive it thankfully in remembrance of Jesus Christ our Lord, who in these holy mysteries gives us a pledge of eternal life; and who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Good Friday (Apr 14)

Almighty God, we pray you graciously to behold this your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, and given into the hands of sinners, and to suffer death upon the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Holy Saturday (Apr 15)

O God, Creator of heaven and earth: Grant that, as the crucified body of your dear Son was laid in the tomb and rested on this holy Sabbath, so we may await with him the coming of the third day, and rise with him to newness of life; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Trinity Presbyterian Church

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Trinity exists to embrace, embody, and extend the redemptive message of Jesus to the people and places of Fort Worth and beyond.

We are a church plant of Fort Worth Presbyterian Church and a part of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA).