

Lent
2021

First Baptist Church at the Singing Bridge
Frankfort, Kentucky

Introduction

This Lenten guide is for everyone – kids, teenagers, and grownups. Occasionally, you'll come upon places where you're invited to adapt the day's prompt to your age, experience, or preferences.

During the forty days (plus Sundays) in Lent, we remember the time Jesus spent in the wilderness, coming close to God. I can only imagine that Jesus' weeks in the desert were an immersive experience – a time both to rest and refocus as well as an opportunity to listen intently and to look toward the future.

This Lenten season, you too are invited to listen for God with your whole self. Perhaps you will meet God when you are alone, when you are with friends or family (whether digitally or in person), or when you are gathered with the church for worship. Maybe you will meet God through the sacred story or through your senses.* This guide is an invitation to make space to listen for God each day during Lent.

As you begin this season, I'd suggest that you take a moment each morning to read the prompt for the day and to plan when you'll complete the task it suggests. Some days, the task is something you'll want to do during school or work or while you're out and about. On other days, it will be something you'll need to do at a quieter time of day, perhaps after dinner or before bedtime.

Consider recording your responses in a blank notebook or even in a note-taking app on your phone. Sometimes this guide asks a question to jumpstart your thinking and sometimes you're free to write or draw whatever feels appropriate.

Each week, you'll find prompts for Sunday through Thursday. Fridays are set aside for catching up, and Saturdays are for rest. If you get behind during the week, use those days to get back on track. (Also, note that you'll want to read Sunday prompts before you take part in worship, as they're usually inviting you to pay special attention to something as you participate).

Praying that you will come close to God this Lenten season.

Rev. Amanda Standiford

Associate Pastor of Children & Spiritual Formation

* The idea of listening for God in these five particular ways comes from *Faith and Play: Quaker Stories for Friends Trained in the Godly Play Method*, published in 2015 by FGC QuakerPress in Philadelphia.

Ash Wednesday Week: Repent

What should we let go? What should we hold tightly to? What new invitations await us?

Wednesday, February 17 (Ash Wednesday)

Come close to God through the sacred story:

Read Psalm 51:1-17. (Younger kids may want to focus on verses 10-12). This is a poem about telling God we are sorry, and it's often used on Ash Wednesday. What words or phrase from it do you want to take with you today?

Thursday, February 18

Come close to God through your senses:

Take a few minutes to go outside today and take some slow, deep breaths in the cool air. Let the experience of the clean, fresh air in your lungs and against your skin talk to Psalm 51:10. Write or draw something you want to remember about this.

Friday, February 19

Review your week:

Skim your journal entries from this week. If you've missed something, take this opportunity to catch up. Note where you came close to God this week.

Saturday, February 20

Rest:

Rest today, knowing that you are a beloved child of God.

Lent 1: Possibilities

What does God dream for us? For our church? For our world?

Sunday, February 21

Come close to God in worship:

During the prelude, spend a moment thinking about what you are most looking forward to in worship today. Enjoy the moment full of possibilities. Write or draw a response if you'd like.

Monday, February 22

Come close to God through the sacred story:

Read Genesis 9:8-17 or review the story of Noah's family and the ark (the Godly Play Foundation's YouTube channel is a great resource – the story is titled "The Ark & The Flood"). I wonder what you like best about this story?

Tuesday, February 23

Come close to God in solitude:

Find a poem about dreams or possibility to enjoy today. Respond with words or art here.

Suggestions: "Listen to the Mustn'ts" by Shel Silverstein or "Dreaming in the Dust" by Jan Richardson – both available to read for free online!

Wednesday, February 24

Come close to God with another person:

What's one thing you're looking forward to in the coming months? Share your thoughts with someone you talk to today. Enjoy dwelling in possibility!

Thursday, February 25

Come close to God through your senses:

Rainbows remind us of the promise God made to Noah and his family. Look for a rainbow today in nature, in photos, in your decor, or even online. Let it be a symbol of possibilities for you. Or, just draw one here!

Friday, February 26

Review your week:

Skim your journal entries from this week. If you've missed something, take this opportunity to catch up. Note where you came close to God this week.

Saturday, February 27

Rest:

Rest today, knowing that you are a beloved child of God.

Lent II: Roots

Who are we? Who shapes us? To whom do we belong?

Sunday, February 28

Come close to God in worship:

Listen carefully to the music in worship today. Is there a particular song or line that speaks to you about who we are and to whom we belong?

Monday, March 1

Come close to God through the sacred story:

Read Genesis 17: 1-7, 15-16 or review the story of God's promise to Abraham and Sarah. (Search "The Great Family" to find the Godly Play story on YouTube). I wonder where you are in this story?

Tuesday, March 2

Come close to God in solitude:

Look around you. What in your home reminds you of who you are? Do you have photos or heirlooms that tell your story? Your family's story?

Wednesday, March 3

Come close to God with another person:

Take a few minutes to reflect. Who has helped you know that you belong to God? Who has helped you know that you belong at FBC? Reach out to someone who's been part of your journey and say thank you.

Thursday, March 4

Come close to God through your senses:

Though this week's text comes from Genesis 17, Abraham has a very similar encounter with God in Genesis 15. In that story, God tells Abraham that his family will be as many as the stars in the sky. Tonight (weather permitting), spend a few minutes under the stars, remembering that you too are a part of this promise.

Friday, March 5

Review your week:

Skim your journal entries from this week. If you've missed something, take this opportunity to catch up. Note where you came close to God this week.

Saturday, March 6

Rest:

Rest today, knowing that you are a beloved child of God.

Lent III: Guideposts

What does God ask of us? Who helps us find our path?

Sunday, March 7

Come close to God in worship:

Pay special attention today to the Christ candle. Let it invite you to remember what is most important. Draw it here, if you'd like

Monday, March 8

Come close to God though the sacred story:

Read Exodus 20:1-17 or review the story of the 10 Commandments (search "The Ten Best Ways" to find the Godly Play story on YouTube). I wonder what commandment seems easiest to keep? Most difficult?

Tuesday, March 9

Come close to God in solitude:

Practice a breath prayer today.

Choose a name for God and a request for God.

Example: Loving God, come close to me. Write your prayer below.

Silently repeat the name for God as you inhale and the request as you exhale. Let this be your prayer all day today.

Wednesday, March 10

Come close to God with another person:

Some of the commandments God gives us are about how to love God. Many others guide us in how to love one another. Reach out to someone you love today and remind them that you care

Thursday, March 11

Come close to God through your senses:

Walk a path today, whether it's a sidewalk, your driveway, or a hiking trail. As you walk, wonder about the markers that help you know how to stay on the path. What markers does God provide for us to help us know where to go and what to do?

Friday, March 12

Review your week:

Skim your journal entries from this week. If you've missed something, take this opportunity to catch up. Note where you came close to God this week.

Saturday, March 13

Rest:

Rest today, knowing that you are a beloved child of God.

Lent IV: Persistence

What keeps us going in difficult times?

Sunday, March 14

Come close to God in worship:

Listen closely to the prayers offered in worship today. Adopt a sentence or phrase from one of them to continue praying on your own this week.

Monday, March 15

Come close to God through the sacred story:

Read Numbers 21:4-9. This part of Moses' story isn't included in the core Godly Play story, but part of it is told in the children's sermon from September 27, 2020 (available on FBC's YouTube channel). I wonder how Moses was feeling at this point in the story? I wonder how the people were feeling? I wonder where they saw God?

Tuesday, March 16

Come close to God in solitude:

At the end of the day, take some time to reflect, using these questions to guide you: What did you like best about this day? What was difficult? Where did you see God?

Wednesday, March 17

Come close to God with another person:

Sometimes when we're struggling to see what God is doing in our lives, a little encouragement makes all the difference. Reach out to someone you care about today and say something to encourage that person!

Thursday, March 18

Come close to God with your senses:

The people of God got an encouraging reminder of God's care every morning when they collected the manna God provided (even when they were sick and tired of it!). As you eat today, let the taste of something you enjoy remind you of God's love and care for you.

Friday, March 19

Review your week:

Skim your journal entries from this week. If you've missed something, take this opportunity to catch up. Note where you came close to God this week.

Saturday, March 20

Rest:

Rest today, knowing that you are a beloved child of God.

Lent V: Hope

What is already-but-not-yet happening all around us?

Sunday, March 21

Come close to God in worship:

Listen for a word of hope in worship today. Write or draw about it here.

Monday, March 22

Come close to God through the sacred story:

Read Jeremiah 31:31-34. (For kids: Jeremiah was a prophet. God came close to Jeremiah and Jeremiah came close to God, and Jeremiah knew what God wanted him to say. These are words that Jeremiah gave to God's people). I wonder which words in this passage speak hope to you?

Tuesday, March 23

Come close to God in solitude:

What does hope look like? Feel like? Taste like? Smell like? Sound like? Draw or write your answers here.

Wednesday, March 24

Come close to God with another person:

Share a photo, a laugh, or a kind word with someone today.

Thursday, March 25

Come close to God with your senses:

Go outside and look around. What do you see that gives you hope that spring is arriving? Write it down, draw about it, or take a photo.

Friday, March 26

Review your week:

Skim your journal entries from this week. If you've missed something, take this opportunity to catch up. Note where you came close to God this week.

Saturday, March 27

Rest:

Rest today, knowing that you are a beloved child of God.

Lent VI: Go

What does it look like to live into our calling?

Sunday, March 28

Come close to God in worship:

On this Palm Sunday, imagine what it might have been like to greet Jesus as he entered Jerusalem. Draw, write, or even sing about it.

Monday, March 29

Come close to God through the sacred story:

Read Psalm 31:9-16. (For kids, emphasize verses 14-16). Let the last few verses of this passage be your prayer today.

Tuesday, March 30

Come close to God in solitude:

Before Jesus was arrested, he took time to be alone and to pray. Challenge yourself to spend some silent time with God today.

Wednesday, March 31

Come close to God with another person:

Read John 17:20-23 with a family member or friend. This is a prayer Jesus prayed for his disciples and those who would learn from them at his last supper with the disciples. Ask one another what you like best about Jesus' prayer. Wonder together what might be most important thing about it. Write or draw your ideas here.

Thursday, April 1

Come close to God with your senses:

Today is Maundy Thursday, when we remember Jesus' last supper with his disciples. Read John 13:1-18, 31b-35. Write or draw how it might have felt to be in the room with Jesus and the disciples. If you share in the bread and the wine this evening, let that experience shape your reflection as well.

Friday, April 2

Review your week:

Today is Good Friday, the day we remember Jesus' death on the cross. Skim your journal entries from this Lenten season. Note where you have come close to God. Make time to come close to God today in any way you like.

Saturday, April 3

Rest:

Today is Holy Saturday. Note the quiet all around you. Rest knowing that Easter is coming.

Easter

Sunday, April 4

Happy Easter!

He is risen indeed! Finish this journal with words and images of the joy of Easter.

