

LENT



A Few Words About Lent

Though the specific details surrounding the origin of Lent are unknown, the observance of the season was firmly established in the Church by the 4th century. The intention was always that Lent be seen as a journey beckoning the traveler to the destination of Easter, the day Jesus, our King, defeated death and secured life for us. Easter is the time we celebrate life – life in its fullness – and are reminded of the truth that, if we belong to Jesus, we too have died to sin and been raised to new life in him (Rom. 6.3-4). Easter then, is the celebration of the reality of our new identity – the day we confess loudly and joyfully that “if anyone is in Christ, new creation! The old has passed away, behold the new has come!” (2 Cor. 5.17). So understood rightly, Lent is our preparation for this celebration, a preparation that takes the form of repentance. Put another way, Easter is when we feast upon the truth of Jesus’ victory of life for us, while Lent is a time of considering and repenting of all the ways we’ve betrayed or forgotten the new life Jesus has given to us.

Keeping with the metaphor, Lent is a journey of rediscovery and recovery of who we are as followers of Jesus with its grand destination being the celebration of Easter. It’s a journey of turning away from those idolatries that have captured our hearts and a turning back to the One who came to captivate our hearts with his life and joy. **(It is important to note at this point that Lent is not the only time we are to focus on repentance. Repentance is not a one-time activity for the Christian but rather an ongoing, daily activity. But just as we should always thank God for the birth of Jesus, we still observe an annual reminder of The Incarnation, Christmas, to focus on its implications and celebrate it more fully. So it is with the observance of Lent and Easter.)**

Lent then is about the heart. It is about asking ourselves what is our greatest treasure. For as Jesus told us, “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matt. 6.18). The Lenten Journey is a time when we are to become more intentional, with the Lord’s help, about inquiring as to where our hearts are and what they are seeking, i.e. are they seeking after the treasure of God’s kingdom (Matt. 6.33)?

Table of Contents

Lenten Dates & Services	2
FWPC's Lenten Prayer Guide	2
Why a Daily Prayer Guide?	3
Why a Prayer Guide?	3
Prayers for the Morning	4
Prayers for Midday	5
Prayers for Early Evening	6
Prayers for the Close of the Day	7
A Guide for the Lord's Prayer	8
Songs of the Season	12
The Apostles' Creed	17

Introduction

FWPC Lenten Schedule

Wednesday, February 18, 12:00-12:30	Ash Wednesday Service
Sunday, March 29, 10:00 a.m.	Palm Sunday
Monday, March 30–Wednesday, April 1, 6:30 p.m.	Holy Week Service
Monday, March 30–Wednesday, April 1, 7:00 p.m.	Holy Week Meal
Thursday, April 2, 6:30-7:30 p.m.	Maundy Thursday Service
Friday, April 3, 6:30-7:30 p.m.	Good Friday Service
Sunday, April 5, 10:00 a.m.	Easter Service (no 9am classes)

FWPC's Lenten Prayer Guide

The goal of this Lenten Prayer Guide is this: To be used by the Spirit of God to form us more and more in the image of Christ as we seek the Father in prayer and we give ourselves to his Word. In Christ, we are God's children, and by the Spirit we are enabled to cry out, "Abba! Father!" Yet even then, prayer does not come easy to the Christian. We struggle to pour out our hearts because so often we do not have the words. Hence, this prayer guide, filled with prayerful words that come directly from God's Word. It is the hope of the Session that as we listen to and speak God's Word that the Lord Jesus, God's Eternal Word, will shape not only our words to him, but our very lives in His image. So, take up this prayer guide and use it to lead you (or your family) to God's throne of grace where there is sufficient help in time of need.

A Note to Families

This prayer guide can be a great tool for times of family worship. We suggest that those who are able take turns reading each portion (Scripture readings, prayers, etc.). If your children aren't able to read yet, you could read a line and have them repeat it so that everyone is involved in both hearing and speaking God's word with one another. During the prayers, you may provide a time for kids to contribute even one word or phrase so everyone is praying out loud together. Confession is an opportunity to model confessing sin and being deepened in God's forgiveness to your children. We encourage you to explore how this prayer guide might best help your family's worship and devotion to Christ, seeking to make it joyful rather than drudgery.

Why a Daily Prayer Guide?

God loves rhythm. The same sun rises and sets each day. The same four seasons come and go every year. Yet within this rhythm, we do not experience the same old routine, rather we find the wonder and beauty of God's creativity that orders all that he has made. And the same is true for us, for God's children thrive, not in unprompted spontaneity, but in the ordinary rhythms and seasons of life. Historically, this truth has been central to the spiritual formation of God's people. It was seen in the holy seasons of Israel, in the daily prayer cycles of the Psalmists and the earliest Christians, and most importantly, in the gatherings of God's people on the Lord's Day. This prayer guide, then, is meant to help us attune our lives to the God-given rhythms of daily prayer. God not only wants our hearts, he also wants our days and our calendars. This is the reason the early church saw fit to shape their days and years by the remembrance of Christ – his return (Advent), his birth (Christmas), his manifestation to the world (Epiphany), his cross (Lent), his Resurrection (Easter), and his gift of the Spirit (Pentecost).

Why A Prayer Guide?

A prayer guide is not meant to squelch our freedom in prayer. On the contrary, it is meant to give us words to pray that those words might become our own. The best way we learn to pray is by being immersed in the biblical language of prayer – speaking these prayers again and again with our lips until what we pray flows directly from our hearts and in turn shapes our lives. So how can this prayer guide help?

1. It encourages us to pray daily and intentionally, giving us words to pray, so that we can start praying immediately without spending undue time wondering where to begin.
2. It shows us how to pray Scripturally, specifically to pray the Psalms (The Prayer Book of the Christian).
3. It helps us to pray together. Even when we are not praying corporately, we can still pray together as we commit to use this guide as a way to shape our common daily prayers. Using this guide serves as a reminder that we belong to a particular community called to seek the one Lord who loved us and gave himself for us on the tree.

Prayers for the Morning

Opening Prayer

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand.

Psalms 90:1

Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

Confession of Sin – Psalm 51:1-2

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions.
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

Daily Scripture Readings for the Season

Sunday: Mark 8:22-28

Monday: John 12:20-36

Tuesday: John 13:31-35

Wednesday: John 15:1-17

Thursday: John 16:25-33

Friday: 2 Corinthians 4:1-18

Saturday: 2 Corinthians 5:1-10

A period of silence follows.

Prayers for Ourselves, Our Church, Our Neighbors & Our World

Use this time for intercessory prayer.

The Lord's Prayer

Prayer for the Season

Heavenly Father, you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Look with compassion upon the heartfelt desires of your servants, and purify our disordered affections, that we might be ready to behold your eternal glory in the face of Jesus Christ in the great day to come when all will be well. Amen.

Prayers for Midday

Opening Prayer

Our help is in the name of the LORD, for he is the Maker of Heaven and earth.

Psalm 9:1-2

I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart; I will recount all of your wonderful deeds. I will be glad and exult in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.

Confession of Sin – Psalm 51:12-15

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

A period of silence follows.

Noontime Reading from Holy Scripture

Sunday: Psalm 3

Monday: Psalm 6

Tuesday: Psalm 13

Wednesday: Psalm 25

Thursday: Psalm 30

Friday: Psalm 116

Saturday: Psalm 115

The Lord's Prayer

Prayer for the Season

Heavenly Father, you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Look with compassion upon the heartfelt desires of your servants, and purify our disordered affections, that we might be ready to behold your eternal glory in the face of Jesus Christ in the great day to come when all will be well. Amen.

Prayers for the Early Evening

Opening Prayer

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. Amen.

Psalm 81:8-10

Hear, O my people, while I admonish you! O Israel, if you would but listen to me! There shall be no strange god among you; you shall not bow down to a foreign god. I am the LORD your God, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. Open wide your mouth and I will fill it.

Confession of Sin – Psalm 6:1-3

O LORD, rebuke me not in your anger, nor discipline me in your wrath. Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am languishing; heal me, O LORD, for my bones are troubled. My soul is also greatly troubled. But you, O LORD – how long?

Daily Scripture Readings for the Season

Sunday: Mark 8:22-28

Thursday: John 16:25-33

Monday: John 12:20-36

Friday: 2 Corinthians 4:1-18

Tuesday: John 13:31-35

Saturday: 2 Corinthians 5:1-10

Wednesday: John 15:1-17

A period of silence follows.

Prayers for Ourselves, Our Church, Our Neighbors & Our World

Use this time for intercessory prayer.

The Lord's Prayer

Song of the Season

The Songs of the Season are found on pages 12-16.

Prayer for the Season

Heavenly Father, you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Look with compassion upon the heartfelt desires of your servants, and purify our disordered affections, that we might be ready to behold your eternal glory in the face of Jesus Christ in the great day to come when all will be well. Amen.

Prayers for the Close of the Day

Opening Prayer

In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for you alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.

Psalms 84:1-2

How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD of hosts! My soul longs, yes, faints for the courts of the LORD; my heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God.

A Reading from Holy Scripture – Isaiah 26:3-4

You keep them in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because they trust in you. Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD GOD is an everlasting rock.

A period of silence follows.

The Apostles' Creed

Prayer for the Season

Heavenly Father, you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Look with compassion upon the heartfelt desires of your servants, and purify our disordered affections, that we might be ready to behold your eternal glory in the face of Jesus Christ in the great day to come when all will be well. Amen.

A Guide for the Lord's Prayer with Scripture References

Adapted from the Westminster Larger Catechism and based on the Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven – Let us rejoice that we are children of God, that we may draw near to God as our loving Father and beseech Him on the behalf of ourselves and others, knowing that all is in absolute dependence upon His sovereign care.

1 John 3:1 – See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.

Ephesians 1:18 – “...having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints...”

Galatians 4:6 – And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”

Romans 11:36 – For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

Hallowed be thy name – Let us respect our Father as we call upon Him, having hearts which yearn to glorify Him in our thoughts, words, and actions.

1 Peter 1:15-16 – but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”

Hebrews 12:10 – ...he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness.

Colossians 1:10a – “...so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him...”

Thy kingdom come – Let us pray that through the propagation of the gospel, all God's children (both Jew and Gentile) are brought into His church. Let us pray that Christ's church is sustained in society by civil governing authorities and nurtured by His Word and Spirit through faithful officers who purely dispense the ordinances of Christ. Let us pray for the hastening of Christ's return and our reigning with Him forever in a kingdom where death, sin, and Satan are destroyed.

Romans 11:25-26 – I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And in this way all Israel will be saved,

1 Timothy 2:1-2 – First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.

2 Thessalonians 1:11-12 – To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Revelation 12:10-11 – And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony,

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven – Let us pray that God's grace softens our hard hearts and makes us able and willing to know, do, and submit to His will in all things.

Psalms 119:1-3 – Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the LORD! Blessed are those who keep his testimonies, who seek him with their whole heart, who also do no wrong, but walk in his ways!

Romans 12:1-2 – I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Give us this day our daily bread – Let us pray that God sustains our temporal needs as His Fatherly wisdom sees fit, and that we do not seek to use them unlawfully or place our dependence upon our own ingenuity in acquiring those blessings.

Philippians 4:6 – do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

James 4:3 – You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

1 Timothy 6:6-8 – But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us – Let us pray for the grace of God's forgiveness, for ourselves and others, recognizing that all of us are sinners who owe a debt to God's justice we cannot pay. Only God, through the obedience and satisfaction of Christ, acquits us and accepts us in the Beloved. Let us pray that we are filled with God's peace and joy, knowing that He pardons our daily failings and gives us assurance of forgiveness evidenced in our willingness to forgive others.

Romans 3:19, 23 – Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 3:24-25 – and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.

Psalms 51:7 – Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Matthew 18:34-35 – And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers until he should pay all his debt. So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil – Let us pray that God would so overrule the sinfulness of our flesh and the power of the world and Satan that we are kept from being tempted to sin. Let us pray that when we are tempted, God powerfully enables us to stand in that time of temptation. Let us pray that when we do fall God raises us to recovery and uses our fall for our sanctification, that our salvation may be perfected. And let us pray for the day when we may be fully freed from sin and evil forever. For God's **is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.**

John 17:15 – I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.

Psalms 51:10 – Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

1 Peter 5:8-10 – Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.

Songs of the Season

Come Thou Fount

Come Thou fount of every blessing
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace
Streams of mercy never ceasing
Call for songs of loudest praise
Teach me some melodious sonnet
Sung by flaming tongues above
Praise the mount I'm fixed upon it

Mount of Thy redeeming love
Here I raise mine Ebenezer
Hither by Thy help I'm come
And I hope by Thy good pleasure
Safely to arrive at home
Jesus sought me when a stranger
Wandering from the fold of God
He to rescue me from danger
Interposed His precious blood

O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be
Let Thy grace Lord like a fetter
Bind my wandering heart to Thee
Prone to wander Lord I feel it
Prone to leave the God I love
Here's my heart Lord take and seal it
Seal it for Thy courts above

CCLI Song # 108389 | John Wyeth, Robert Robinson
© Words & Music: Public Domain



Jesus, Lover of My Soul

Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high.
Hide me, O my Savior, hide,
Til life's storm is past;
Safe into the haven guide;
Receive my soul at last.

Other refuge have I none,
I helpless, hang on Thee;
Leave, oh leave me not alone,
Support and comfort me.
All my trust on Thee is stayed,
All help from Thee I bring;
Cover my defenseless head
In the shadow of Thy wing.

Thou, O Christ, are all I want,
Here more than all I find;
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,
Heal the sick, and lead the blind.
Just and holy is Thy Name,
I am all unrighteousness;
False and full of sin I am;
Thou art full of truth and grace.

Plenteous grace with Thee is found,
Grace to cover all my sin;
Let the healing streams abound;
Make and keep me pure within.
Thou of life the fountain art,
Let me take of Thee;
Spring Thou up within my heart;
For all eternity.



By Thy Mercy

Jesus, Lord of life and glory,
Bend from heaven thy gracious ear;
While our waiting souls adore thee,
Friend of helpless sinners, hear:

From the depth of nature's blindness,
From the hardening power of sin,
From all malice and unkindness,
From the pride that lurks within,

*Chorus: By thy mercy, O deliver us, good Lord
By thy mercy, O deliver us, good Lord, good Lord.*

When temptation sorely presses,
In the day of Satan's power,
In our times of deep distresses,
In each dark and trying hour.

When the world around is smiling,
In the time of wealth and ease,
Earthly joys our hearts beguiling,
In the day of health and peace. *Chorus*

In the weary hours of sickness,
In the times of grief and pain,
When we feel our mortal weakness,
When all human help is vain.

In the solemn hour of dying,
In the awful judgment day,
May our souls, on thee relying,
Find thee still our Rock and Stay. *Chorus*

Words: James John Cummins, Music: Greg Thompson
© 2004 Greg Thompson Music.



Thy Mercy My God

Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song,
The joy of my heart. and the boast of my tongue;
Thy free grace alone, from the first to the last,
Hath won my affections, and bound my soul fast.

Without Thy sweet mercy I could not live here;
Sin would reduce me to utter despair;
But, through Thy free goodness, my spirits revive,
And He that first made me still keeps me alive.

Thy mercy is more than a match for my heart,
Which wonders to feel its own hardness depart;
Dissolved by Thy goodness, I fall to the ground,
And weep to the praise of the mercy I've found.

Great Father of mercies, Thy goodness I own,
And the covenant love of Thy crucified Son;
All praise to the Spirit, Whose whisper divine
Seals mercy, and pardon, and righteousness mine.

All praise to the Spirit, Whose whisper divine
Seals mercy, and pardon, and righteousness mine.

CCLI Song #3422560 | John Stocker, Sandra McCracken

© Words: Public Domain

© 2001 Integrity Worship Music, Paper News Publishing



His Mercy Is More

*Praise the Lord! His mercy is more!
Stronger than darkness, new every morn
Our sins they are many, his mercy is more*

What love could remember no wrongs we have done?
Omniscient, all knowing, he counts not their sum.
Thrown into a sea without bottom or shore;
Our sins, they are many, his mercy is more.

What patience would wait as we constantly roam?
What father, so tender, is calling us home?
He welcomes the weakest, the vilest, the poor;
Our sins, they are many, his mercy is more.

*Praise the Lord! His mercy is more!
Stronger than darkness, new every morn
Our sins they are many, his mercy is more*

What riches of kindness he lavished on us.
His blood was the payment, his life was the cost.
We stood 'neath a debt we could never afford;
Our sins, they are many, his mercy is more.

*Praise the Lord! His mercy is more!
Stronger than darkness, new every morn
Our sins they are many, his mercy is more*

CCLI Song # 7065053 | Matt Boswell, Matt Papa
© 2016 Getty Music Hymns and Songs, Love Your Enemies Publishing,
Messenger Hymns (Admin. by Music Services, Inc.)



The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended into hell.[†]
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven,
and sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From there he shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic[‡] church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

[†] By referring to Jesus's descent into hell, the Christian embraces two truths. First, Jesus suffered the anguish and pain of hell on behalf of his people while on the cross. Secondly, Jesus experienced the reign of death by remaining in the tomb after the crucifixion.

[‡] The term "catholic" refers to the universal and true church, meaning that Christ's church has no temporal, racial, economic, geographic, or language barriers and that His church adheres to the doctrine confessed by the early church councils.



Fort Worth Presbyterian Church