



LENT 2023

DAILY PRAYER GUIDE
FEBRUARY 22 - APRIL 8



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"Like a great waterwheel, the liturgical year goes on relentlessly irrigating our souls, softening the ground of our hearts, nourishing the soil of our lives until the seed of the Word of God itself begins to grow in us, comes to fruit in us, ripens in us the spiritual journey of a lifetime."

JOAN D. CHITTISTER

THE LITURGICAL YEAR — A REVIEW

At Grace Pasadena, we are committed to forming habits and practices— a Rule of Life — that root us in the love of God in Jesus Christ. To help us do so, we follow the liturgical, or church, calendar. This tool reminds us that the people of God live by a different rhythm, one that is shaped first and foremost by the story of God’s love for us in Jesus Christ. Developed over many years, the church year is divided into different seasons based on different aspects of the life of Jesus Christ. Each season draws us into deeper contemplation of our Savior’s love and how he is manifesting his love in the here and now. Each season has its own themes, symbols and colors. In short:

Advent. This is the season of promise. We spend time anticipating the coming of God in Jesus Christ. We look back on the promises of God to send a Messiah and we look forward to the fulfillment of Jesus’s promise to come back and set all things right once and for all. There are four Sundays of Advent, and the color is purple. Christmas. This is a season of incarnation. Spanning twelve days, we celebrate the coming of Jesus Christ and the in-breaking of his light in our world. In his coming, we see that God does not remain far from us or despise us, but comes to us as one of us in order to embrace us with his loving grace. The colors of the season are white and gold.

Epiphany. This is a season of revelation. We remember how Jesus showed us who he is through his life, words, relationships and miracles, and that he is indeed the light to all the nations of the world. There are seven to eight Sundays of the season. The color is green.

Lent. This is a season of crucifixion. We remember how Jesus suffered humiliation and death on a cross for our sake because of our sin. This is a somber season, but one that prepares us for the joy of Easter. The season is forty days long; it begins on Ash Wednesday and ends with Holy Week. The color is purple through most of the season. Black is often used on the final days of Lent.

Easter. This is the season of resurrection. We celebrate Jesus’s rising from the dead and his victory over all sin and death. This is the party of all parties, and so the season is fifty days long. The colors are gold and white.

Pentecost. This is the season of the Holy Spirit. After Jesus ascended to heaven, Jesus sent his Holy Spirit to live in us. This is the longest of the seasons, and in this time, we turn our attention to the ways the Holy Spirit orders our lives with the love of Jesus to prepare us for his return. The season is often called “Ordinary Time” from the Latin word for “order.” The color for Pentecost Sunday is red and the green is used the rest of the time.

LENTEN SELF-EXAMINATION

The forty days of Lent is a long season of preparation for the even longer celebration of Easter. The Church has long observed this season. (If you’re curious about the origins of Lent and the benefits of keeping Lent, please see the handout “On Keeping a Holy Lent” by Craig Higgins. A PDF is available on our website.) An important word and action that marks our preparations is “repentance”. Though Christians are called to repentance at all times, the Church, in her wisdom, sets aside certain times of the year to bring particular attention to it.

Repentance is a re-orientation. To repent is to turn away from sin and towards God and his love (Mat. 3:2; Acts 3:19). With Easter as the goal, Lent invites us to turn away from news that is anything less than the Good News of Jesus's death and resurrection. As we re-orient our lives, we bear the fruit of repentance (Mat. 3:8). That is, our lives increasingly testify to God's love in our words, attitudes and actions. An important furnace for re-orientation is self-examination, or laying our lives bare before the Holy Spirit (Psalm 139:23). As Craig Higgins explains, "Lent is a time for focusing on the heart, a time for asking questions about our spiritual health." Higgins offers the following useful questions:

- What are my characteristic sins, and how can I work and pray for change?
- What idols have captured my imagination and desires so that my love for the living God has grown cold?
- In what ways is my devotion to Christ and his church less than wholehearted?

Such self-examination helps us take an honest look at our lives and ways we are either moving towards or away from God. It helps us see the ways our beliefs line up with our words, actions and attitudes. It helps us see all the dark places of our hearts that God wants to dispel with his light and love. Lent, and self-examination in general, can be difficult and ground shaking if we lose sight of the fact that God's intention is to bring new life and joy. It can crush us if Easter is not in sight. Christian self-reflection is not an act of shame or self-destruction, but one that leads to new freedom and life.

LENTEN FASTING

Self-examination is tied to two other important practices: fasting and hospitality, or self-denial and self-giving. These two habits are linked together and complete one another.

Fasting is not always a strictly spiritual exercise. Hunger strikes have been used to protest political injustice. Fasting has also long been used for health reasons, and this kind of fasting is having a moment. Along with eating clean and going keto, many health enthusiasts have latched onto fasting. The thinking goes that limiting food on a periodic basis can unlock all kinds of human potential including weight loss and clarity of mind.

Neither of these modes of fasting are wrong, but the motivations are different than Christian fasting. The hunger strike seeks after power, while dietary fasting seeks after better version of one's self. To a degree, both modes are about the self. Christian fasting is about self-denial.

In Scripture, we see different patterns of fasting. One is a total fast, which restricts all food and liquids, except water. Another is a partial fast, which restricts only some kinds of food or liquids. Either way, the purpose of fasting is to create new room in our lives for God. When we fast, we intentionally deprive ourselves of things, actions and attitudes that make us feel self-sufficient and self-protected. We give up power and any illusions of being good enough on our own.

Fasting puts us in a wilderness place in which our only recourse is to throw ourselves into the hands of God. Israel was thrown into a fast of sorts during their 40 years in the wilderness; over and over again, Israel had to learn to turn

"No act of virtue can be great if it is not followed by advantage for others. So, no matter how much time you spend fasting, no matter how much you sleep on a hard floor and eat ashes and sigh continually, if you do no good to others, you do nothing great."

St. John Chrysostom

to God. Before beginning his ministry, Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness fasting, and at every temptation, he turned to the Father. In this, we see that the very dynamic of fasting is re-orientation from self to God. In other words, fasting puts us in a place where we can confront our sin and hear with fresh ears the Good News that Jesus is our only comfort in life and death and that we belong to him.

Lenten fasting can take different shapes. We recommend fasting by giving up a food, beverage, or activity that you often turn to for comfort. Perhaps this is chocolate, chips, beer or wine. Perhaps it is watching TV or spending time on social networks. As you consider what to abstain from, you may feel the need to abstain from more than one thing. Another way to fast is to give up one meal a day, especially if you're in the habit of eating out. If you would like to practice a full day of complete fasting (no food, but water/juice allowed), we recommend doing so on Ash Wednesday or Good Friday. These are the traditional days for full fasting for many Christians around the world.

Since we do not live the Christian life alone, consider fasting with your City Group, friends, roommates or family. In Scripture, we see individuals fasting as well as entire communities fasting together (2 Sam 1; Acts 14:3).

As you fast, keep in mind the following:

- If you have any history with eating disorders or have a complicated relationship with food or dieting, fasting from food may not be wise. Find another way to fast that will cultivate freedom and joy. As always, if you need help in this area, Grace Pasadena is here for you. Please reach out.
- Sundays are never fast days; they are feast days. Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week, and we celebrate that fact every Sunday, even during Lent. (Lent is forty days because we don't count Sundays.) So take a break from fasting on Sundays and remember with joy that our salvation is a gracious gift from God!
- Fasting is never about the strength of our will power or personal piety. That is to say, failure is part of our fasting experience and fasting is never about the self. Whenever you fail, resist the temptation to condemn yourself. Whenever you feel "successful" in your fast, resist the temptation to boast about your will power. Instead, turn to God and rejoice in his free grace and revel in the knowledge that God alone is your life and strength.

LENTEN HOSPITALITY

As fasting turns us towards God, it also creates space for others and moves us towards them. Fasting always leads to open hearts and lives. Fasting re-orientes us to God and his love, which by nature, must be shared. It can not be said enough that fasting is not about the self or self-improvement, but a re-orientation away from the self.

How does this play out? Something small as fasting from Netflix and social media can lead to more time for fellowship. A little less money spent on yourself leads to a little more generosity to those around you. Experiencing hunger when fasting from a meal can give you new eyes to see the poor and embrace them in deeper solidarity.

Because fasting naturally draws us to others, Christians have used Lent for centuries as a time to cultivate mercy and compassion, or love of neighbor, especially the outcast, poor, oppressed and marginalized. A word that captures this outward movement is hospitality. Fasting leads to and makes space for hospitality.

“Hospitality” needs some, if not a lot, of re-imagining. We hear the word and we often associate it with the hotel and travel industries. We also associate it with tea and cookies or dinner parties. While these are not bad associations and part of hospitality, they do not tell the whole story. Hospitality has vital place in Christian history and practice. As Christine Pohl writes, “Hospitality is a way of life fundamental to Christian identity” and a “central dimension of Christian moral life.”

At it’s heart, Christian hospitality is a deep welcoming of others. This begins in the very life of God. In the Triune God, we see an eternal community of love of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Each person of the Trinity embraces the other. Each blesses the other. God’s very nature is to welcome.

God’s deep welcome extends to his people. From the very beginning in the Garden of Eden, God looks at his people and then invites and welcomes them into deep communion with him. This communion involves sharing his creative work and enjoying his bounty.

This welcome continues after Adam and Eve turn away in sin and then hide from him. What is God’s response? He seeks after them, he calls them, he approaches them, he embraces them and he covers them spiritually, emotionally and physically. He extends hospitality.

Created in God’s image, God’s hospitality is imprinted on us: Adam and Eve extended God’s hospitality to one another not only as husband and wife, but also as co-laborers and stewards. When God calls Abraham and Sarah and makes a covenant with them to establish a new nation, God says that it will be a blessing to all the nations (Gen. 12:3). After God frees Israel from slavery to Egypt, God encodes hospitality to the sojourner (non-Israelite), the widow, the oppressed, and the poor in Israel’s law (Ex. 20:10, 22:21, Lev :25; Deut. 5:14). In doing so, God reminds Israel that he showed great kindness to them while they themselves were sojourners and oppressed in Egypt. The prophets repeatedly remind Israel that it was to be a welcoming light to the nations and a place of reconciliation (Is. 30:28, 66:12).

All of this is embodied in the life of Jesus and the early Church. Jesus is the light to all nations, not just to Israel. In his ministry, Jesus welcomes all into his presence. He eats with Jews and Gentiles. He heals both. He proclaims his Good News to both. He also welcomes the orphan, widow, poor and outcast. Likewise, the early church was renowned for its hospitality, especially towards the outsider. In his Epistles, the Apostle Paul urges the church to continue welcoming the outsider by pursuing hospitality (Romans 12:13). The writer of Hebrews goes on to say that by welcoming strangers, we may be entertaining angels unawares, like Abraham and Sarah did (Heb. 13:2).

Hospitality was an important social value of Jesus’s time. The Christian innovation was the extension of hospitality to people outside of ones ethnic, religious, cultural and socioeconomic group. God breaks down the barriers that separate us from him, and so Christian hospitality does the same and overcomes barriers separating us from one another. All throughout Scripture, we see how

hospitality brings friends closer together, makes the stranger into friends, and brings dignity to the marginalized.

What keeps us from welcoming friends into deeper relationship and bridging the divide with strangers is more often than not our self-centeredness, selfishness and love of independence. Self-reflection brings this to light and re-orientes us to God. Fasting cultivates new freedom and makes room in our lives for others. Hospitality extends the grace we experience to others. This is one of the many gifts of Lent.

FINAL WORDS

Let’s keep a holy Lent together. Let’s turn our hearts to God and towards one another. Through self-examination, fasting and hospitality, let’s us experience and extend the riches of God’s grace in Jesus Christ.

With much love for you all,

Pastor Marc Choi and the leaders of Grace.

"When people give up chocolate or meat or alcohol or coffee, it is not because we Christians think that if we enjoy something, it must be bad. Coffee, meat, alcohol and especially chocolate are very good things that show God’s goodness, creativity, and provision. Of course, Christians ought to be interested and working toward breaking habits of sin — gossip, lust, judgment, anger, pride, and so on — but this is called repentance, which is certainly not limited to Lent. I’m not giving up Facebook in the same way that I’m repenting of (and trying to give up) anxiety or impatience with my toddler."

TISH HARRISON WARREN

Mornings — Ash Wednesday to Saturday, 2/25

Ash Wednesday
Psalms 95, 32, 143
Heb. 12:1-14
Luk 18:9-14

February 23
Psalm 37:1-18
Titus 1:1-16
John 1:29-34

February 24
Psalms 95, 31
Titus 2:1-15
John 1:35-42

February 25
Psalms 30, 32
Titus 3:1-15
John 1:43-51

Opening Prayer

God of love, we long for your Spirit to both comfort and challenge us, that we may become more holy and more loving. In a world that does not understand repentance, we pray for new understanding; we pray for humility, patience, and discipline that will help us die to sin and live for Jesus. *Amen.*

The Song of Response

*Lift up your hearts through the morning Psalm (or Psalms).
Pray the whole Psalm or focus on a part.*

The Confession

Most holy and merciful Father: We confess to you and to one another, and to the whole communion of saints in heaven and on earth, that we have sinned by our own fault 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, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others, as we have been forgiven. We have been deaf to your call to serve, as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit. Have mercy on us, Lord.

Silence for reflection and response.

Restore us and accomplish in us the work of your salvation. **Amen.**

Listening to Words of Love

Read the Gospel or Epistle for the morning, or both.

Abiding in Love

- Listen to the passage again. Which words resonate loudly?
- Do you hear any words of invitation for this season? How might the Holy Spirit be preparing you for the season ahead?

Closing Prayers

*Offer to God thanksgivings and needs for yourself, church, city and world.
Conclude with the Lord's Prayer and/or the following:*

We are but dust. Have mercy on us and turn your face towards us, that we may live. Make our way straight and lead us home to you all our days.
Amen.

Evenings — Ash Wednesday to Saturday, 2/25

Opening Prayer

I remember your name in the night, O Lord, and keep your law.
— *Psalm 119:55*

Take a moment to remember the name of the Lord. What is stirred in you?

The Song of Response

*Lift up your hearts through the morning Psalm (or Psalms).
Pray the whole Psalm or focus on a part.*

The Confession / from Psalm 51

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! For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Deliver me and fill my mouth with songs of praise. **Amen.**

Silence for reflection and response.

Listening to Words of Love

Read the OT passage or continue to dwell on the Psalm.

Abiding in Love

- How do the evening scriptures invite you to rest?

Lamenting & Giving Thanks

- Identify a sorrow or a loss from the day. Take a moment to mourn, remembering that Jesus weeps with you. Give thanks for his tenderness.

Closing Prayers

*Entrust yourself and the world to God's care and receive the rest he gives.
Conclude with the following:*

We bring to God someone whom we have met or remembered today, and for whom we want to pray.
(say the name/s of those who come to mind)

We bring to God a troubled situation in the world tonight.
(offer up the situations pressing heavily on you)

We bring to God, someone whom we find hard to forgive or trust.
(ask God for his peace, mercy and grace)

We bring to God those who must labor through the night.
(remember first responders, healthcare workers, and others)

We bring ourselves and our world to God and receive the gift of his rest.
Amen.

Ash Wednesday
Psalms 102, 130
Jonah 3:1-4; 11

February 18
Psalm 37:19-42
Deut. 7:6-11

February 19
Psalm 35
Deut. 7:12-16

February 20
Psalm 42, 43
Deut. 7:17-26

Sunday Mornings in Lent

February 26

Psalms 63:1-11, 87
1 Cor. 1:17-31
Mark 2:18-22

March 5

Psalms. 24, 29
1 Cor. 3:11-23
Mark 3:31-4:9

March 12

Psalms 93, 96
1 Cor. 6:12-20
Mark 5:1-20

March 19

Psalms 66, 67
Gal. 4:21-5:1
Mark 8:11-21

March 26

Psalms 118
1 Cor. 9:19-27
Mark 8:31-9:1

The Invitation / Psalm 34:14

“Turn away from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.”

What might turning away from evil look like for you today? How is God turning to you to give you peace?

The Song of Response

Lift up your hearts through the morning Psalm (or Psalms).

Pray the whole Psalm or focus on a part.

The Confession

Almighty God, you despise nothing you have made, and you forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and contrite hearts, that, truly repenting of our sins and acknowledging our brokenness, we may obtain from you, the God of all mercy, full pardon and forgiveness, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Silence for reflection and response.

Listening to Words of Love

Read the Gospel or Epistle for the morning, or both.

Abiding in Love

- How do today's words invite you to self-reflection?
- What words of truth do you hear about yourself and God's love for you? How are you resisting these words or receiving them as a gift?
- Today is a feast day, a time to pause from fasting. What words of celebration and feasting do you hear?

Closing Prayers

On this Lord's Day, pray for deep rest for yourself, neighbor and world. Lift up your needs and the needs of others. Conclude with the Lord's Prayer or the following:

God of revelation, unveil your Kingdom in our midst. Show us who we truly are in you: expose the illusions that distort our vision, deliver us from temptations that contort our living, open our eyes in this time of trial – that resistance may be the secret of our joy and our joy a sign of your shalom. **Amen.**

Sunday Evenings in Lent

The Invitation

As our evening prayer rises before you, O God, so may your mercy come down upon us to cleanse our hearts and set us free to sing your praise now and for ever. **Amen.**

Where do you feel stuck or imprisoned? Remember the Good News that Jesus comes to us to set us free.

The Song of Response

Lift up your hearts through the morning Psalm (or Psalms).

Pray the whole Psalm or focus on a part.

The Confession

Jesus Christ, our sin imprisons us and keeps us from your love. Speak your word and set us free. **Amen.**

Silence for reflection and response.

Listening to Words of Love

Read the OT passage or continue to dwell on the Psalm.

Abiding in Love

- How do the evening scriptures speak to the day behind you?

Lamenting & Giving Thanks

- Identify a sorrow or a loss from the day. Take a moment to mourn, remembering that Jesus weeps with you. Give thanks for his tenderness.

Closing Prayers

Entrust yourself and the world to God's care and receive the rest he gives. Conclude with the following:

We bring to God someone whom we have met or remembered today, and for whom we want to pray.

(say the name/s of those who come to mind)

We bring to God a troubled situation in the world tonight.

(offer up the situations pressing heavily on you)

We bring to God, someone whom we find hard to forgive or trust.

(ask God for his peace, mercy and grace)

We bring to God those who must labor through the night.

(remember first responders, healthcare workers, and others)

We bring ourselves and our world to God and receive the gift of his rest.

Amen.

February 26

Psalm. 103
Deut. 8:1-10

March 5

Psalm. 8, 84
Jeremiah 1:1-10

March 12

Psalm 34
Jeremiah 6:9-15

March 19

Psalms 19, 46
Jeremiah 14:1-9, 17-22

March 26

Psalm 145
Jeremiah 23:16-32

Monday Mornings of Lent

February 27

Psalms 41, 52
Hebrews 2:11-18
John 2:1-12

March 6

Psalms 56, 57, 58
Romans 1:1-15
John 4:27-42

March 13

Psalm 80
Romans 4:1-12
John 7:14-36

March 20

Psalm 89:1-18
Romans 7:1-12
John 6:1-15

March 27

Psalm 31
Romans 9:19-33
John 9:1-17

The Invitation / Psalm 40:4

“Blessed is the man who makes the Lord his trust, who does not turn to the proud, to those who go astray after a lie!”

As the week starts, consider the ways you want to trust God. What might you need to let go of in order to give yourself more fully to God?

The Song of Response

*Lift up your hearts through the morning Psalm (or Psalms).
Pray the whole Psalm or focus on a part.*

The Confession

God of compassion, you are slow to anger and full of mercy, welcoming sinners who return to you with penitent hearts. Receive in your loving embrace all who come home to you. Seat them at your bountiful table of grace, that, with all your children, they may feast with delight on all that satisfies the hungry heart. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. **Amen.**

Silence for reflection and response.

Listening to Words of Love

Read the Gospel or Epistle for the morning, or both.

Abiding in Love

- How do today's words invite you to fast, or self-sacrifice?
- What words remind you of God's providential abundance? What words challenge ideas and beliefs of scarcity?

Closing Prayers

Offer prayers for yourself, neighbor and world; the day and its tasks; the life of Grace Pasadena. Conclude with the Lord's Prayer or the following prayer:

Almighty and ever living God, you invite us deeper into your world, your people, your Lent. May this time be one of outward focus; seeking you in those we often ignore. Help us live a Lent focused on freedom, generosity, and encounter. Give us hearts hungry to serve you and those who need what we have to give. **Amen.**

Monday Evenings of Lent

The Invitation / Psalm 40:17

“As for me, I am poor and needy, but the Lord takes thought for me. You are my help and my deliverer; do not delay, O my God!”

Dwell on the phrase “the Lord takes thought of me”.

The Song of Response

*Lift up your hearts through the morning Psalm (or Psalms).
Pray the whole Psalm or focus on a part.*

The Confession

Jesus Christ, I am poor and needy. You take thought of me, but I seek love elsewhere. Forgive me. You are my help and deliverer. Come quickly with your grace, and let me be quick to receive it. **Amen.**

Silence for reflection and response.

Listening to Words of Love

Read the OT passage or continue to dwell on the Psalm.

Abiding in Love

- How do the evening scriptures speak to the day behind you?

Lamenting & Giving Thanks

- Identify a sorrow or a loss from the day. Take a moment to mourn, remembering that Jesus weeps with you. Give thanks for his tenderness.

Closing Prayers

*Entrust yourself and the world to God's care and receive the rest he gives.
Conclude with the following:*

We bring to God someone whom we have met or remembered today, and for whom we want to pray.
(say the name/s of those who come to mind)

We bring to God a troubled situation in the world tonight.
(offer up the situations pressing heavily on you)

We bring to God, someone whom we find hard to forgive or trust.
(ask God for his peace, mercy and grace)

We bring to God those who must labor through the night.
(remember first responders, healthcare workers, and others)

We bring ourselves and our world to God and receive the gift of his rest.
Amen.

February 27

Psalm 44
Deut. 8:11-20

March 6

Psalms 64, 65
Jeremiah 1:11-19

March 13

Psalms 77, 79
Jeremiah 7:1-15

March 20

Psalm 89:19-52
Jeremiah 16:10-21

March 27

Psalm 35
Jeremiah 24.1-10

Tuesday Mornings of Lent

February 28

Psalms 45
Heb. 3:1-11
John 2:13-22

March 7

Psalms 61, 62
Romans 1:16-25
John 4:43-54

March 14

Psalms 78:40-72
Romans 4:13-25
John 7:37-52

March 21

Psalms 97, 99, 100
Romans 7:13-25
John 6:16-27

March 28

Psalms 124, 125
Romans 10:1-13
John 9:18-41

Opening Prayer / Psalm 69:19

"Answer me, O Lord, for your steadfast love is good; according to your abundant mercy, turn to me."

As you enter prayer with these words, what is stirred in you?

The Song of Response

Lift up your hearts through the morning Psalm (or Psalms).

Pray the whole Psalm or focus on a part.

The Confession

Most merciful God whose Son, Jesus Christ, was tempted in every way, yet was without sin, we confess before you our own sinfulness; we have hungered after that which does not satisfy; we have compromised with evil; we have doubted your power to protect us. Forgive our lack of faith; have mercy on our weakness. Restore in us such trust and love that we may walk in your ways and delight in doing your will. **Amen.**

Silence for reflection and response.

Listening to Words of Love

Read the Gospel or Epistle for the morning, or both.

Abiding in Love

- How do today's words invite you to hospitality, or self-giving? How do they reflect the hospitality God extends to you?
- In what creative ways can you extend hospitality today?

Closing Prayers

Offer prayers for yourself, neighbor and world; the day and its tasks; the life of Grace Pasadena. Conclude with the Lord's Prayer or the following prayer:

Sovereign Lord, your hand has touched the dry bones of our faith, your Word has breathed new life where there was death, your spirit raised us up from where we lay, your love has brought us home and to your Cross, and by your grace we stand forgiven, free. Hallelujah! **Amen.**

Tuesday Evenings of Lent

The Invitation / Exodus 13:21

"And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night."

Dwell on the image of the pillar of fire. Christ is our light in darkness.

The Song of Response

Lift up your hearts through the morning Psalm (or Psalms).

Pray the whole Psalm or focus on a part.

The Confession

Jesus Christ, you are the light of the world, but we have not followed you. We have been bewitched by false lights and false promises. Forgive us and open our eyes again to the light of your love this night. **Amen.**

Silence for reflection and response.

Listening to Words of Love

Read the OT passage or continue to dwell on the Psalm.

Abiding in Love

- How do the evening scriptures speak to the day behind you?

Lamenting & Giving Thanks

- Identify a sorrow or a loss from the day. Take a moment to mourn, remembering that Jesus weeps with you. Give thanks for his tenderness.

Closing Prayers

Entrust yourself and the world to God's care and receive the rest he gives. Conclude with the following:

We bring to God someone whom we have met or remembered today, and for whom we want to pray.

(say the name/s of those who come to mind)

We bring to God a troubled situation in the world tonight.

(offer up the situations pressing heavily on you)

We bring to God, someone whom we find hard to forgive or trust.

(ask God for his peace, mercy and grace)

We bring to God those who must labor through the night.

(remember first responders, healthcare workers, and others)

We bring ourselves and our world to God and receive the gift of his rest.

Amen.

February 28

Psalms 47, 48
Deut. 9:4-12

March 7

Psalms 68
Jeremiah 2:1-13

March 14

Psalms 78:40-72
Jeremiah 7:21-34

March 21

Psalms 94, 95
Jeremiah 17:19-27

March 28

Psalms 124, 125
Jeremiah 25:8-17

Wednesday Mornings of Lent

March 1

Psalms 119:49-72
Heb. 3:12-19
John 2:23-3:15

March 8

Psalms 119:73-96
Romans 1:28-2:11
John 5:1-18

March 15

Psalms 119:97-120
Romans 5:1-11
John 8:12-20

March 22

Psalms 101, 109:1-30
Romans 8:1-11
John 6:27-49

March 29

Psalms 119:145-176
Romans 10:14-21
John 10:1-18

Opening Prayer / *Isaiah 30:15*

For thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, "In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength."

What might returning and rest look like for you in this moment? This day? This season of Lent?

The Song of Response

*Lift up your hearts through the morning Psalm (or Psalms).
Pray the whole Psalm or focus on a part.*

The Confession

Everlasting God, fountain of all life and the true home of every heart: our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Yet we confess that our hearts have been enslaved by selfish passion and base desire. We have sought after many things and have neglected the one thing needful. We have not loved you with our whole hearts; help us to turn to you and find forgiveness. Lead us home, that we may again find in you our life and joy and peace. **Amen.**

Silence for reflection and response.

Listening to Words of Love

Read the Gospel or Epistle for the morning, or both.

Abiding in Love

- Which words from the readings invite you to stillness? What becomes louder as you lean into the stillness?
- How might you carry this stillness with you today and bless others with it?

Closing Prayers

Offer prayers for yourself, neighbor and world; the day and its tasks; the life of Grace Pasadena. Conclude with the Lord's Prayer or the following prayer:

Lord, Jesus, I am stressed. Help me to accept your invitation to come and receive the rest I need. Help me to willingly release my fear, my worries, my agenda and my to-do list. Ease the tension and replenish my body. Silence the voices of doubt and speak your words of truth. Remove the heaviness of my day and pour out abundantly into my life. Fill me with your peace, joy and love. Fill me until the overwhelm is consumed by your grace and my life reflects the beauty of resting in you. **Amen.**

Wednesday Evenings of Lent

The Invitation / *Psalm 42:8*

"By day the Lord commands his steadfast love, and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life."

What songs are you singing this night?

The Song of Response

*Lift up your hearts through the morning Psalm (or Psalms).
Pray the whole Psalm or focus on a part.*

The Confession

Jesus Christ, we are slow to praise your name and give you thanks because we are too occupied with ourselves. Let us taste the sweetness of your forgiveness; fill our mouths with songs of praise. **Amen.**

Silence for reflection and response.

Listening to Words of Love

Read the OT passage or continue to dwell on the Psalm.

Abiding in Love

- How do the evening scriptures speak to the day behind you?

Lamenting & Giving Thanks

- Identify a sorrow or a loss from the day. Take a moment to mourn, remembering that Jesus weeps with you. Give thanks for his tenderness.

Closing Prayers

*Entrust yourself and the world to God's care and receive the rest he gives.
Conclude with the following:*

We bring to God someone whom we have met or remembered today, and for whom we want to pray.
(say the name/s of those who come to mind)

We bring to God a troubled situation in the world tonight.
(offer up the situations pressing heavily on you)

We bring to God, someone whom we find hard to forgive or trust.
(ask God for his peace, mercy and grace)

We bring to God those who must labor through the night.
(remember first responders, healthcare workers, and others)

We bring ourselves and our world to God and receive the gift of his rest.
Amen.

March 1

Psalms 49, 53
Deut. 9:13-21

March 8

Psalms 119:73-96
Jeremiah 3:6-18

March 15

Psalms 81, 82
Jeremiah 8:18-9:6

March 22

Psalms 119:121-144
Jeremiah 18:1-11

March 29

Psalms 128, 129, 130
Jeremiah 25:30-38

Midweek Practice

The movement of Lent draws us inward through fasting and self-reflection and then outwards towards others through hospitality. In this light, we invite you to pray for the City Groups of Grace Pasadena, our city ministry partners, and your neighbors, as well as to be curious about them. May the Spirit continue to open space in us for our neighbors:

- *Week 1: Pray for Grace Pasadena's City Groups (contact Ben Ewen for more information)*
- *Week 2: Pray for Door of Hope (www.doorofhope.us)*
- *Week 3: Pray for Elizabeth House (www.elizabethhouse.net)*
- *Week 4: Pray for Olive Crest (www.olivecrest.org)*
- *Week 5: Pray for your neighbors and reach out to them.*

Use this space to journal any responses stirred in you by the Spirit.

Thursday Mornings of Lent

March 2

Psalms 50
Heb. 4:1-10
John 3:16-21

March 9

Psalms 70, 71
Romans 2:12-24
John 5:19-29

March 16

Psalms 42; 43
Romans 5:12-21
John 8:21-32

March 23

Psalms 69
Romans 8:12-27
John 6:41-51

March 30

Psalms 131, 132, 133
Romans 11:1-12
John 10:19-42

The Invitation / Psalm 119:28

"My soul melts away for sorrow; strengthen me according to your word!"

What sorrows do you carry with you today? As you enter this time, imagine God holding all your sorrows and weeping with you.

The Song of Response

Lift up your hearts through the morning Psalm (or Psalms).

Pray the whole Psalm or focus on a part.

The Confession

God of compassion, in Jesus Christ you did not disdain the company of sinners but welcomed them with love. Look upon us in mercy, we pray. Our sins are more than we can bear; our pasts enslave us; our misdeeds are beyond correcting. Forgive the wrongs we cannot undo; free us from a past we cannot change; heal what we can no longer fix. Grace our lives with your love and turn the tears of our past into the joys of new life with you. **Amen.**

Silence for reflection and response.

Listening to Words of Love

Read the Gospel or Epistle for the morning, or both.

Abiding in Love

- Which words feel challenging to you? What might the Spirit be telling you or leading you to through the challenge?
- Are you fasting? How might today's words encourage you in your fast?

Closing Prayers

Offer prayers for yourself, neighbor and world; the day and its tasks; the life of Grace Pasadena. Conclude with the Lord's Prayer or the following prayer:

Lord God, heavenly Father, in your fatherly grace you did not spare your only Son but gave him up to death on the cross. Pour your Holy Spirit into our hearts that we may find our highest comfort in your grace. Protect us from temptations to sin more, and help us patiently bear whatever hardships may come, so that through him we may have eternal life. **Amen.**

Thursday Evenings of Lent

The Invitation / Psalm 40:17

"As for me, I am poor and needy, but the Lord takes thought for me. You are my help and my deliverer; do not delay, O my God!"

Dwell on the phrase "the Lord takes thought of me".

The Song of Response

Lift up your hearts through the morning Psalm (or Psalms).

Pray the whole Psalm or focus on a part.

The Confession

Jesus Christ, I am poor and needy. You take thought of me, but I seek love elsewhere. Forgive me. You are my help and deliverer. Come quickly with your grace, and let me be quick to receive it. **Amen.**

Silence for reflection and response.

Abiding in Love

- How do the evening scriptures speak to the day behind you?

Lamenting & Giving Thanks

- Identify a sorrow or a loss from the day. Take a moment to mourn, remembering that Jesus weeps with you. Give thanks for his tenderness.

Closing Prayers

Entrust yourself and the world to God's care and receive the rest he gives. Conclude with the following:

We bring to God someone whom we have met or remembered today, and for whom we want to pray.

(say the name/s of those who come to mind)

We bring to God a troubled situation in the world tonight.

(offer up the situations pressing heavily on you)

We bring to God, someone whom we find hard to forgive or trust.

(ask God for his peace, mercy and grace)

We bring to God those who must labor through the night.

(remember first responders, healthcare workers, and others)

We bring ourselves and our world to God and receive the gift of his rest.

Amen.

March 2

Psalms 19, 46
Deut. 9:23-10:5

March 9

Psalm 74
Jeremiah 4:9-10

March 16

Psalms 85, 86
Jeremiah 10:11-24

March 23

Psalm 73
Jeremiah 22:13-23

March 30

Psalms 140, 142
Jeremiah 26:1-16

Friday Mornings of Lent

March 3

Psalm 95
Heb. 4:11-16
John 3:22-36

March 10

Psalm 69
Romans 2:25-3:18
John 5:30-47

March 17

Psalm 88
Romans 6:1-11
John 8:33-47

March 24

Psalm 102
Romans 8:28-39
John 6:52-59

March 31

Psalms 95, 22
Romans 11:13-24
John 11:1-27 or
12:1-10

The Invitation / Psalm 37:4

“Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.”

As you enter this time, dwell on the words “delight” and “desire”. What is stirred in you? What prayers do you notice surfacing?

The Song of Response

*Lift up your hearts through the morning Psalm (or Psalms).
Pray the whole Psalm or focus on a part.*

The Confession

O God, our great shepherd, you tenderly gather us as lambs, carrying us with your all-embracing love. Yet, like sheep, we wander from you: following our own ways, ignoring your voice, distrusting your provisions. Forgive our stubborn rebellion, our hardened hearts, our lack of trust. Refresh us once again by your quiet waters of mercy and restore our souls by your redeeming love. Guide our paths and mark them with love. **Amen.**

Silence for reflection and response.

Listening to Words of Love

Read the Gospel or Epistle for the morning, or both.

Abiding in Love

- What words invite you to delight in God’s love? How might the Holy Spirit be aligning your desires with this delight?
- How do today’s words shift your desires for your neighbors and world?

Closing Prayers

Offer prayers for yourself, neighbor and world; the day and its tasks; the life of Grace Pasadena. Conclude with the Lord’s Prayer or the following prayer:

Lord God, heavenly Father, in the wilderness your Son fed over five thousand people with five loaves and two fish. Graciously remain with us and bless us. Preserve us from greed and the cares of this life that we may seek first your kingdom and your righteousness and in all things remember your Fatherly goodness; through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Friday Evenings of Lent

The Invitation / Exodus 13:21

“And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night.”

Dwell on the image of the pillar of fire. Jesus is the light in darkness.

The Song of Response

*Lift up your hearts through the morning Psalm (or Psalms).
Pray the whole Psalm or focus on a part.*

The Confession

Jesus Christ, you are the light of the world, but we have not followed you. We have been bewitched by false lights and false promises. Forgive us and open our eyes again to the light of your love this night. **Amen.**

Silence for reflection and response.

Listening to Words of Love

Read the OT passage or continue to dwell on the Psalm.

Abiding in Love

- How do the evening scriptures speak to the day behind you?

Lamenting & Giving Thanks

- Identify a sorrow or a loss from the day. Take a moment to mourn, remembering that Jesus weeps with you. Give thanks for his tenderness.

Closing Prayers

*Entrust yourself and the world to God’s care and receive the rest he gives.
Conclude with the following:*

We bring to God someone whom we have met or remembered today, and for whom we want to pray.

(say the name/s of those who come to mind)

We bring to God a troubled situation in the world tonight.

(offer up the situations pressing heavily on you)

We bring to God, someone whom we find hard to forgive or trust.

(ask God for his peace, mercy and grace)

We bring to God those who must labor through the night.

(remember first responders, healthcare workers, and others)

We bring ourselves and our world to God and receive the gift of his rest.

Amen.

March 3

Psalm 51
Deut. 10:12-22

March 10

Psalm 73
Jeremiah 5:1-9

March 17

Psalms 91, 92
Jeremiah 11:1-20

March 24

Psalm 107:1-32
Jeremiah 21:1-8

March 31

Psalms 141, 143
Jeremiah 29:1, 4-13

Saturday Mornings of Lent

March 4

Psalms 55
Heb. 5:1-10
Jn 4:1-26

March 11

Psalms 75, 76
Romans 3:19-21
John 7:1-13

March 18

Psalms 136
Romans 6:12-23
John 8:47-49

March 25

Psalms 107:33-43;
108:1-6
Romans 9:1-18
John 6:60-71

April 1

Psalms 137:1-9, 144
Romans 11:25-36
John 11:28-44 or
12:37-50

The Invitation / Psalm 112:4

"Light dawns in the darkness for the upright; he is gracious, merciful, and righteous."

Take a deep breath and look back on the week. What signs of God's light have you seen this past week of Lent?

The Song of Response

*Lift up your hearts through the morning Psalm (or Psalms).
Pray the whole Psalm or focus on a part.*

The Confession / from Psalm 139:23-24

Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts.
See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.
Amen.

Silence for reflection and response.

Listening to Words of Love

Read the Gospel or Epistle for the morning, or both.

Abiding in Love

- What words of encouragement do you hear in today's words?
- How do today's words prepare you for worship tomorrow and the celebration of Easter?

Closing Prayers

Offer prayers for yourself, neighbor and world; the day and its tasks; the life of Grace Pasadena. Conclude with the Lord's Prayer or the following prayer:

O holy Jesus, most loving Savior, you called out to Lazarus and made him come out of his tomb. May we hear you with our hearts, arise from our sins, and serve you in newness of life; through your mercy, O our God, you are blessed, and live and govern all things, now and forever. **Amen.**

Saturday Evenings of Lent

The Invitation / Psalm 42:8

"By day the Lord commands his steadfast love, and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life."

What songs are you singing this night?

The Song of Response

*Lift up your hearts through the morning Psalm (or Psalms).
Pray the whole Psalm or focus on a part.*

The Confession

Jesus Christ, we are slow to praise your name and give you thanks because we are too occupied with ourselves. Let us taste the sweetness of your forgiveness and fill our mouths with songs of praise. **Amen.**

Silence for reflection and response.

Listening to Words of Love

Read the OT passage or continue to dwell on the Psalm.

Abiding in Love

- How do the evening scriptures speak to the day behind you?

Lamenting & Giving Thanks

- Identify a sorrow or a loss from the day. Take a moment to mourn, remembering that Jesus weeps with you. Give thanks for his tenderness.

Closing Prayers

*Entrust yourself and the world to God's care and receive the rest he gives.
Conclude with the following:*

We bring to God someone whom we have met or remembered today, and for whom we want to pray.
(say the name/s of those who come to mind)

We bring to God a troubled situation in the world tonight.
(offer up the situations pressing heavily on you)

We bring to God, someone whom we find hard to forgive or trust.
(ask God for his peace, mercy and grace)

We bring to God those who must labor through the night.
(remember first responders, healthcare workers, and others)

We bring ourselves and our world to God and receive the gift of his rest.
Amen.

March 4

Psalms 138, 139
Deut. 11:18-28

March 11

Psalms 23, 27
Jeremiah 5:20-31

March 18

Psalms 136
Jeremiah 13:1-11

March 25

Psalms 33
Jeremiah 23:9-15

April 1

Psalms 42, 43
Jeremiah 31:27-34

Holy Week | April 2 - April 8

MORNING READINGS

Palm Sunday

Psalms 24, 29
1 Tim. 6:12-16
Matt. 21:12-17

Monday of Holy Week

Psalms 51:1-20
Phil. 3:1-14
John 12:9-19

Tuesday of Holy Week

Psalms 6, 12
Phil. 3:15-21
John 12:20-26

Wed. of Holy Week

Psalms 55
Phil. 4:1-13
John 12:27-36

Maundy Thursday

Psalms 102
1 Cor. 10:14-17
John 17:1-26

Good Friday

Psalms 95, 22
1 Pet. 1:10-20
Jn. 13:36-38; 19:38-42

Holy Saturday/ Easter Vigil

Psalms 88
Heb. 4:1-16
Romans 8:1-11

The Invitation / 1 Peter 2:24

"He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed."

Take a few deep breaths and let the words wash over you; settle into a posture that helps you stay rooted in the grace Jesus gives freely.

The Song of Response

Lift up your hearts through the morning/evening Psalm (or Psalms).

Pray the whole Psalm or focus on a part.

The Confession

O God, you know my foolishness and my sins are not hidden from you: Lord, have mercy. Let not the flood overwhelm me nor the depths swallow me up; let not the pit shut its mouth upon me: Christ, have mercy. Hear me, O Lord, as your loving kindness is good; turn to me as your compassion is great: Lord, have mercy. **Amen.**

Silence for reflection and response.

Listening to Words of Love

Read the Gospel or Epistle for the morning, or both.

Abiding in Love

- *Mornings:* Focus on the Gospel readings and pay attention to Jesus's words and interactions with the people around him. What do you notice? What do you see about Jesus in a fresh way?
- *Evenings:* Focus on one of the Psalms. What words linger with you? How do you sense the Spirit deepening your prayers?

Closing Prayers

Offer prayers for yourself, neighbor and world; the day and its tasks; the life of Grace Pasadena. Conclude with the Lord's Prayer or the appropriate collect:

Palm Sunday

Almighty and ever-living 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 of Holy Week

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 of Holy Week

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 of Holy Week

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.**

Maundy Thursday

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

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/Easter Vigil

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.**

EVENING READINGS

Palm Sunday

Psalms 103
Zech. 9:9-12; 12:9-11

Monday of Holy Week

Psalms 69:1-23
Jeremiah 12:1-16

Tuesday of Holy Week

Psalms 94
Jeremiah 15:10-21

Wed. of Holy Week

Psalms 74
Jeremiah 17:5-10

Maundy Thursday

Psalms 142, 143
Jeremiah 20:7-11

Good Friday

Psalms 40, 54
Gen. 22:1-14

Holy Saturday/ Easter Vigil

Psalms 27
Job. 4:1-16

