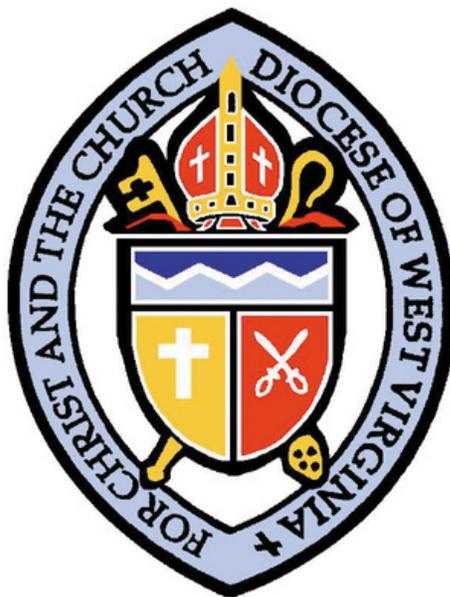


# **LENTEN SEASON 2021**

## **Resource Guide Materials and Activities**

**THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF WV**



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As we approach the season of Lent, I realize many of us may feel as if so much has been given up because of the pandemic. I don't disagree but encourage us to remember Lent is more than giving something up for 40 days. Lent is a Christian practice to find penitence and forgiveness.

As explained in the Book of Common Prayer, early Christians observed “a season of penitence and fasting” in preparation for the Paschal feast, or Pascha (BCP, pp. 264-265). The season now known as Lent (from an Old English word meaning “spring,” the time of lengthening days) has a long history. Originally, in places where Pascha was celebrated on a Sunday, the Paschal feast followed a fast of up to two days. In the third century, this fast was lengthened to six days. Eventually this fast became attached to, or overlapped, another fast of forty days, in imitation of Christ's fasting in the wilderness. The forty-day fast was especially important for converts to the faith who were preparing for baptism and for those guilty of notorious sins who were being restored to the Christian assembly. In the western church, the forty days of Lent extend from Ash Wednesday through Holy Saturday, omitting Sundays. The last three days of Lent are the sacred Triduum of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday. Today, Lent has reacquired its significance as the final preparation of adult candidates for baptism. Joining with them, all Christians are invited “to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word” (BCP, p. 265).

In this collection of materials and activities, you will find various resources to aid in your journey through Lent. There are materials for parish use, family use and individual use. It is my prayer that by providing these, you will be drawn closer to God and you may feel a renewed purpose as you seek God's presence in your life.

Should you have questions or need assistance with using these, please contact Mary Green at [mgreen@wvdiocese.org](mailto:mgreen@wvdiocese.org) or 304-932-7673.

Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Michie Klusmeyer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

The Rt. Rev. W. Michie Klusmeyer, Bishop

# Packet Contents

- Overview of #40Daysof4.
- #40Daysof4 Social Media and Email Promo
- Journal Prompts
- Lenten Prayers
- Simple Acts of Kindness
- Jar of Small Sacrifices
- Family and Children Activities
- Ash Wednesday Mailer
- Ash Wednesday and Lent Devotion Guide

# #40Daysof4.

Each day of the 40 days of Lent, you are invited to use the resources on the following pages to journal, to pray, to show an act of kindness/love and to practice sacrificing-- even the smallest of things.

Journal.Pray.Act.Sacrifice.

# **#40Daysof4.**

**Journal.Pray.Act.Sacrifice.  
The Episcopal Diocese of WV**

# 40 DAYS OF JOURNAL PROMPTS

**Take time each day to focus  
and journal your thoughts about these topics.**

1. Rewrite a favorite scripture in prayer. Highlight the sentences or words of a passage that stand out in your mind and rewrite it back to God.
2. Write a thank you note for something for which you feel especially blessed. Use words or phrases as if you are talking to your best friend.
3. Tell God how much you love him.
4. Write out a list of thanks for everyday things and pray the list to God.
5. Copy a meaningful prayer that someone else has written into your prayer journal. The exercise of writing it in your handwriting provides your brain a way to remember the meaning.
6. Write out a prayer of praise for all God has accomplished in your life. Just make a list of the times you've seen him work and thank him for it.
7. Write a prayer on behalf of a loved one.
8. Pray a prayer of blessing over someone you love.
9. Pray for someone with whom you have a difference of opinion.
10. Take a prayer walk outside and for everything you see, give thanks. Nature gives us much to praise God for. After taking your walk, grab your journal and highlight what you are grateful for.
11. Share what is on your heart and mind today.
12. Pray for a person who has hurt you.
13. Write about a friend who needs prayer.
14. Write down information about the things in your life that cause anxiety/stress and why?
15. Something you feel guilty about and how you can you fix that.
16. What is a habit you need to break?
17. Write your own prayer for patience.
18. Write what you've learned about being your age.
19. Ask for healing for...
20. What thoughts do you battle?
21. How can I be a light? Pray for boldness and humility.
22. What am I dishonest with myself about? Why?
23. What does family mean to you? Describe your family dynamic and what you like and dislike about it.
24. Write a letter to someone you love dearly.
25. Write a letter of thanksgiving to God.
26. Write out a prayer for the "least of these" (Matthew 25:40) and ask God to show you your part in ministering to the homeless, those in need or the elderly. Ask God to specifically show you the special needs you can meet right where you are.
27. List out your priorities or decisions you must make in the next week. Give them to God and ask him to lead you every step of the way.
28. Rewrite your church prayer list needs and pray over them, asking God to meet those needs.
29. Pray for your local leaders, community, church and business. Write out any specific needs of which you are aware and give them to God.
30. Write the Lord's Prayer and then, rewrite the prayer using your own words.
31. How can you become more humble?
32. What is your favorite verse in scripture and why?
33. How can you make time for more prayer?
34. Describe a time God answered your prayer in a better way.
35. In what situation do you need to praise God instead of complaining? Why do you find it so hard?
36. We all have a role to play in God's world. What do you think your purpose is?
37. What does "following Christ" mean to you?
38. When you reflect on your life, what difficult time are you most grateful for?
39. For what God-given gifts are you most grateful?
40. How do you think God sees you?

# LENTEN PRAYERS

(Authors unknown.)

Lord,

You have known us from the beginning of time,  
You have known us in the depths of our dreams and in the darkness of our shame,  
You know us as your beloved.

Help us to own that core identity more and more in this season of repentance and mercy.  
Give us the rock-solid assurance of your unwavering faith in us  
as we seek the same in You.

Amen

Lord,

Let everything I do this day and in this season of Lent  
come from You, be inspired by You. I long to be closer to You.

Help me to remember that nothing is important in my life  
unless it glorifies You in some way. It's so easy to get caught up in the day to day  
of my life and keep saying,

"Tomorrow, I will spend more time in prayer,"

but now my longing meets Your love and I want to do it now.

Help me to rely on You for help. The prayer asks you that I reach perfection.

Please, Lord, remind me that "perfection"  
isn't the crazy, "successful" way I try to live my life,  
but a perfection of my most authentic, real self.

My "perfection" might be holding my many flaws in my open hands,  
asking You to help me accept them. Heal me, Lord, and help me to find You in the darkness of my life.  
Let me reach out in this darkness and feel Your hand and love there to guide me.

Amen

God of Love,

through this Lenten journey,  
purify my desires to serve You.

Free me from any temptations to judge others,  
to place myself above others.

Please let me surrender even my impatience  
with others,

that with Your love and Your grace,  
I might be less and less absorbed with myself,  
and more and more full of the desire  
to follow You, in laying down my life  
according to your example.

Amen

# ACTS OF KINDNESS AND LOVE

**Below, you will find ideas to spur your action; however, don't limit yourself to just these. Also, recognize some will be limited to just those in your household because of the pandemic.**

- **Surprise someone with an unexpected phone call.**
- **Give someone a big hug.**
- **Express empathy to someone who needs it.**
- **Send someone a hand-written letter.**
- **Say 'I love you' with meaning.**
- **Tell someone how wonderful they are and how happy you are to have them in your life.**
- **Ask, "How can I help you?"**
- **Offer to make someone a cup of tea or coffee.**
- **Help with a household chore.**
- **Tell someone about the best part of the day you just spent with them.**
- **Let others sleep in by handling all the morning duties.**
- **Wear or use a gift they gave you in their presence.**
- **Keep that sigh to yourself.**
- **Use a kind voice even if when it is difficult.**
- **Listen for the feelings behind the words.**
- **Give a new mom her own gift.**
- **Respect someone's wishes.**
- **Write messages of love and put them in lunches.**
- **Choose a book they might like and lend it to a friend.**
- **Take the garbage out for a friend or return their cans from the curb to their house.**
- **Send a copy of a photo to the person in it.**
- **Make someone else's bed.**
- **Share your knowledge with someone who needs it.**
- **Share a smile.**
- **Don't be afraid to offer praise or a compliment.**

# ACTS OF KINDNESS AND LOVE, CON'T.

- Say please and thank you.
- Let someone go first through a door.
- Pick up some trash.
- Be extra polite.
- Donate your "read" books to the library.
- Buy a meal for the person behind you.
- Hold up your hand in thanks when other drivers let you through.
- Welcome new people to your neighborhood, school, club, etc.
- Put change in an expiring meter.
- Offer up your seat.
- Return a misplaced or lost item.
- Smile at every stranger. Folks can tell from you eyes!
- Send a care package to the military.
- Pay for a stranger's toll.
- Create Post-It notes with encouraging messages and leave them for people to find.
- Write a thank you note.
- Leave some change at the snack machine.
- Let people through in traffic.
- Acknowledge someone else's kindness to you.
- Let someone go ahead at the checkout.
- Be patient when you want to yell.
- Listen carefully to what someone is really passionate about.
- Ask a customer service person genuinely how they're doing.
- Be extra patient and understanding. We all need it these days!

# **Jar of Small Sacrifices**

**Think about all the things you rely on and how at times, possessions, attitudes, behaviors become a crutch, or worse, an unhealthy part of our lives. Identify at least 10 items you will give up for a day. Look for things that really challenge you.**

**This can be caffeine, alcohol, television, surfing social media, your phone in the evening or at the dinner table, checking a text message while talking with someone or a bad habit--to name a few. Everyone has their own list. Create yours. Challenge yourself by including one dreaded activity, such as sleeping on the floor, not using water from your faucets or another action that allows you to better understand the challenges of those less fortunate.**

**Write each item that you recorded on your list on an individual piece of paper. Fold the 10 pieces and place them in a jar. Each morning, select one paper from the jar and make that your sacrifice for the day. Once you have emptied the jar, repeat the process OR come up with new ideas to place in the jar. Empty and repeat.**

# Children and Family Activities

## Ash Wednesday

- Bury the Alleluia
- Kids can decorate a sign with Alleluia written on it.
- Bury the sign.
- Dig it up on Easter morning, shouting Alleluia!

## Easter Countdown Chain Craft for Praying

- Starting with Ash Wednesday, make a chain with 46 links.
- Tear away one link each day.
- Use this time as an opportunity to pray for those in need.

## Lent & Easter at Home Kits

<https://buildfaith.org/lent-at-home-kits/>

## Holy Week Activities Holy Week at Home Packet

Activities, readings and devotions for Palm Sunday through Easter Sunday

- <https://buildfaith.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/holy-week-at-home-2020-2.pdf>
- <https://buildfaith.org/holy-week-in-a-box/>
- <https://buildfaith.org/make-a-resurrection-set-hands-on-easter-learning/> Palm Sunday Watch
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lTmbTuutBgga> short animated video about Palm Sunday
- Printable Palm Leaves
  - <https://www.catholicicing.com/printable-palms-for-palm-sunday-free/>

## Maundy Thursday Stripping the Altar at home

- <https://buildfaith.org/maundy-thursday-at-home/>

## Easter Sunday Adorning the Cross

- <http://makemeasaint.blogspot.com/2010/04/easter-crafts.html>
- Cut out a cross from cardboard and poke holes in it. Decorate with either fake or real flowers. Display in a window.
- Make and decorate Alleluia banners to hang inside or out.
- A children's sermon to do at home using easily accessible items
  - <https://buildfaith.org/an-easter-childrens-sermon/>

## Books

- *Make Room: A Child's Guide to Lent and Easter* by Laura Alary
- *Petook: An Easter Story* by Caryll Houselander
- *The Tale of the Three Trees* by Angela Elwell Hunt
- *At Jerusalem's Gate* by Nikki Grimes and David Frampton
- *The Colt and the King* by Marni McGee
- *The Story of Easter* by Aileen Fisher
- *The Longest Night: A Passover Story* by Laurel Snyder and Catia Chien

# Ash Wednesday Mailer

(Included in email as an attachment for easy printing and distribution.)



## ASH WEDNESDAY

### *The Bidding*

Dear People of God: The first Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the church to prepare for them by a season of penitence and fasting. This season of Lent provided a time in which converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism. It was also a time when those who, because of notorious sins, had been separated from the body of the faithful were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to the fellowship of the Church. Thereby, the whole congregation was put in mind of the message of pardon and absolution set forth in the Gospel of our Savior, and of the need which all Christians continually have to renew their repentance and faith.

We invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word. And, to make a right beginning of repentance, and as a mark of our mortal nature, let us kneel before the Lord, our maker and redeemer.

*The Blessing of the Ashes (the ashes on this card have been blessed according to this tradition)*

Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth: Grant that these ashes may be to us a sign of our mortality and penitence, that we may remember that it is only by your gracious gift that we are given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

***"Remember that you are dust,  
And to dust you shall return."***

### *The Litany of Penitence*

*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.***

We confess to you, Lord, all our past unfaithfulness: the pride, hypocrisy, and impatience of our lives; Our self-indulgent appetites and ways, and our exploitation of other people; Our anger at our own frustration, and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves; Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts, and our dishonesty in daily life and work, Our negligence in prayer and worship, and our failure to commend the faith that is in us, ***We confess to you, Lord.***

Accept our repentance, Lord for the wrongs we have done: for our blindness to human need and suffering, and our indifference to injustice and cruelty; for all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbors, and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us; for our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us, ***Accept our repentance, Lord.***

Restore us, good Lord, and let your anger depart from me. ***Favorably hear us, for your mercy is great.***

Accomplish in us the work of your salvation, ***That we may show forth your glory in the world.***

By the cross and passion of your Son our Lord, ***Bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection.***

***We beseech thee to grant us true repentance and your Holy Spirit that those things may please you which we do this day, and that the rest of our life hereafter may be pure and holy, so that at the last we may come into your eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.***

# Ash Wednesday and Lent Devotion Handout

(Included in email as an attachment for easy printing and distribution.)

## Scripture Suggestions

Exodus 20:1-17

*The Ten Commandments*

Isaiah 58:6-9a

*Genuine Fasting*

Jeremiah 31:31-34

*A New Covenant*

Matthew 6:5-15

*How to Pray*

Matthew 22:34-40

*The Greatest Commandment*

Mark 8:31-38

*Taking up the Cross*

Mark 9:33-37

*Who is the Greatest?*

Luke 7:36-50

*Your Faith Has Saved You*

John 15:12-17

*Jesus' Commandment*

James 1:19-25

*Hearing and Doing*

1 John 4:7-12

*The Nature of God*

Alternatively, you may find daily readings for the Lenten season by visiting:

[www.lectionarypage.net](http://www.lectionarypage.net)

This resource was developed in response to what we might be able to offer if we cannot physically meet for public prayer on Ash Wednesday due to the ongoing pandemic. It accomplishes that, but it also provides a short and simple guide for personal or family prayer and devotion throughout the Lenten season.

In our Ash Wednesday liturgy, we are invited to the "observance of a holy Lent" by the priest of a congregation. How we individually choose to observe the 40 day period can often be a challenge. This season, however, marks an opportunity for real change in our lives. And sometimes real change begins with baby steps.

This short guide provides a suggested outline for you to follow along with suggested resources. These are merely suggestions; you may wish to include additional prayers or readings appropriate to the season, or you may need to abbreviate a devotion further on some days. Looking at the ashes on the interior page and saying a brief prayer on your way out the door may be all you can manage on a chaotic day. Again, baby steps. And any step towards making time with God is a good step to take.



## Daily Devotions for the Season of Lent



*"Create in me  
a clean heart, O Lord,  
And renew a right spirit  
within me."*

St. James' Episcopal Church  
Lewisburg, WV

## Suggested Order for Daily Devotion

Opening Prayer

Psalm 51:1-8 -or- Psalm 51:9-18

Scripture

Confession

The Lord's Prayer

Closing Prayer

~~Ashes go here~~

## Psalm 51

Psalm 51 can be found on page 266 of the Book of Common Prayer. Consider alternating between verses 1-8 and 9-18 each time you visit the devotion. Other suitable psalm selections include Ps. 1, 25:1-9, 31:9-16, 103:8-14, and 119:9-16.

## Confession

Almighty God, our heavenly Father: We have sinned against you, through our own fault, in thought, and word, and deed, and in what we have left undone. For the sake of your Son our Lord Jesus Christ, forgive us all our offenses; and grant that we may serve you in newness of life, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

## The Lord's Prayer

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

## Possible Selections for Opening and Closing Prayers

Almighty God, forgiving God, compassionate God: Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our brokenness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy: Be gracious to all who have gone astray from your ways, and bring us again with penitent 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.

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.

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.

Almighty God, whose most 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 our Lord. Amen.

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours, utterly dedicated to you; and then use us, we pray, as you will, and always to your glory and for the welfare of your people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

## Ashes Go Here Suggestion:

A textured square of paper can be cut to fit and adhered to the inside with double-sided tape.