

THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

FEBRUARY 21, 2021

MARK 1:9-15 | GENESIS 9:8-17

Have you ever tried something new that was hard at first? ... Did anyone help you as you were learning? ... Did they expect you to be perfect from the beginning?

Today is the first Sunday in Lent. Lent is a season when we think about what we can do to be better people and follow Jesus. Sometimes we even give something up or start doing something new that will help us to follow Jesus more closely. Starting something new can be scary or hard, but we don't do it alone. God is with us! God doesn't wait for us to be perfect and get it all right, but meets us right where we are. When Jesus started telling the good news that heaven was near, God was there from the beginning. God was there when Jesus was baptized, God was there when Jesus was in the wilderness, and God was there when Jesus started his ministry. And God is with us too, no matter where we are in our lives.

Write a poem together. Start each line with, "God is with me..." and take turns finishing the sentence. While poems don't have to have a meter or rhyme, this is a good opportunity to practice counting syllables, chanting rhythms, and rhyming. (*Example: "God is with me in my home, God is with me on my own. God is with me in the car, God is with me near or far. God is with me here or there, God is with me everywhere."*) You might also write the poem down together.

Dear God, thank you for meeting me exactly where I am. I know that you are always with me no matter where I go. In Jesus' name, Amen.

On the next page is a 40 days of Lent activity. I challenge you and your family to do as many items on the Lent calendar as you can.

Lent
Prayer, Fasting, & Almsgiving

40 days
Walking the Lenten Path...

HOLY WEEK
Easter Sunday! He is Risen!

1st Sunday of Lent
Ash Wednesday

2nd Sunday of Lent

3rd Sunday of Lent

4th Sunday of Lent

5th Sunday of Lent

Holy Saturday

Good Friday

Holy Thursday

Palm Sunday

1 Ash Wednesday

2 Take time to pray each night as a family

3 Start a giving jar and collect money to donate to a charity

4 Say a prayer for people who do not have shelter.

5 Go outside look around you. Thank God for creation.

6 Make a card for someone you know who needs some support.

7 Pray for people who may not feel support, that they may know God's love.

8 Ask Jesus for guidance for your day.

9 Tell a friend about Jesus' love in your life.

10 Pray for our world leaders.

11 Tell your teachers thank you!

12 Jesus shared his life with us? What will you share with God?

13 At dinner have everyone share what they are grateful for.

14 Are you feeling like you did something wrong? Ask God to help you feel forgiven.

15 Donate things you no longer use, toys and clothes, to the FreeStore

16 Take a walk with your family.

17 Take a deep breath today.

18 Pray for people without food.

19 Ask Jesus for help being a good friend.

20 Remember God is always with you

21 Invite a friend to watch Church with you.

22 Pray for peace in the world.

23 Read Mark 12:30-31 How can you do this?

24 Take time to share a smile with someone.

25 Send a card to a relative or family friend.

26 Thank God for the person you sent the card to.

27 Give someone a compliment. How did they react?

28 What can you do to get to know God better?

29 Eat a healthy snack today.

30 Read Matthew 4:1-11 Give up something you like for 2 days.

31 Tell your parents why they are important to you.

32 What can you do to help feed the hungry?

33 Make Easter plans with your family.

34 God always listens!

35 Easter is about new life. What signs of new life do you see?

36 Read John 3:16 discuss what it means to your family?

37 Get communion supplies, bread and juice for Thursday communion.

38 Holy Thursday

39 Good Friday

40 Holy Saturday

THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

FEBRUARY 28, 2021

MARK 8:31-9:8 | PSALM 22:23-31

Are there times when you know what a friend or family member is going to say because they've said it before? Are there times when your family members or teachers tell you to listen because they don't want you to miss something important?"

The disciples weren't always the best listeners, and sometimes Jesus had to repeat himself over and over when they weren't listening. In today's Bible story, God finally had to tell them outright, "This is my Son, the Beloved—listen to him!" Sometimes we don't listen as closely as we should because we're excited about something else. Sometimes we don't listen because we think we know what the person is going to say. Sometimes we don't *want* to hear what they're going to say. Sometimes we just aren't paying attention. But when we don't listen to important people in our lives, whether they're our family or teachers or friends, we miss out. They might be telling us exciting news or giving us good instructions. And we also need to listen to God's word, to the things Jesus said and the things God spoke through the prophets and the things that the Holy Spirit is still speaking to us in our hearts.

Dear God, thank you for all the ways you speak to us through other people, through your Word, and through our own hearts. Help us to listen carefully. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Play the game of "Telephone," whispering a message in a chain, from one person to the other, to see how the original message changes if we aren't careful listeners.

Included in your packet is a Megaphone craft. Color the megaphone and cut it out. Tape it in the shape of a cone. Now you have a megaphone to use as a reminder that God wants us to listen.



Megaphone Craft

THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

MARCH 7, 2021

JOHN 2:13-22 | 1 CORINTHIANS 1: 18-25



What do you see in this picture? What do you think it's about?

This is a symbol called Sankofa. Let's say that together: San... ko... fa. Very good!

In the Akan Twi language, 'San' means to go back, 'ko' means to go, and 'fa' means to look and take. So together, this word Sankofa means to go back and take what you need to move forward. And the Akan people of Ghana represent that with this image of a bird reaching back to take an egg from its back.

In the Bible, we read that some people would ask Jesus for proof that he was God's son, the Messiah that was sent to help them. But so many prophets and people like John the Baptist had already told them who the Messiah would be. Sometimes we need to go back and remember what we've already been given before we ask for something new. We might find that we already have what we need. God shows us the way we're supposed to live. The prophet Micah says, "God has shown you what is good: do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God." (*Micah 6:8, paraphrased.*) But sometimes we forget. Many of the things that are wrong in the world today have happened before because we forgot how to treat each other kindly. But we always have the Bible and our pastors and teachers and family to help remind us.

Dear God, thank you for the people who taught us how to be kind and showed us the way you want us to live. Help us to remember those lessons always. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.



ADINKRA SYMBOL

**LEARN
FROM**

**THE
PAST**

THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

MARCH 14, 2021

JOHN 3:14-21 | EPHESIANS 2:1-10

I hope you know how much you are loved. God made you out of love so you can share love with others in everything you do. There is nothing you can do that will make God love you any more or any less, because God has loved you from the very beginning. Isn't that a wonderful gift?

Play a game of "I love you because..." where children (and adults!) take turns saying what they love about each other. Have one child start by randomly selecting another person. The first person then says "I love you because..." and states a reason they love the person. (*Hint: you can always finish the sentence with "... you are a child of God!"*) Whoever is chosen goes next. You can go as many times as you would like.

In your packet is a cross. Use the stick to decorate your cross. Hang this somewhere you will see it. This will serve as a reminder that God loves you no matter what.

Dear God, thank you for loving me from the very beginning. Help me to start with love in everything I do and say. In Jesus' name, Amen.

THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

MARCH 21, 2021

JOHN 12:20-33 | JEREMIAH 31:31-34

Do you like to play with playdough? ... What kinds of things do you like to make? ... Once you've made something, what do you do with it? (Do you let it dry? Do you put it back in the container? Do you make something new?) ... What I love about playdough is that you can always turn it into something new. It doesn't have to stay that way permanently. If you leave it out, it will get hard and difficult to mold, but we keep it fresh because it's so fun to make something new again and again."

God also makes us new again and again. We aren't just growing and changing our bodies. We also change our hearts and minds over time as we learn new things and have new experiences. Sometimes changing is hard, maybe because we're set in our ways and the playdough of our hearts got a little dried out. Maybe because we're happy where we are and we're scared of messing up. But God is always helping us change and grow into the best person that God wants us to be.

Dear God, you are my sculptor. Thank you for changing my heart, mind, and body into the person you want me to be. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Use the playdoh to create and recreate sculptures, emphasizing that the materials can change shape over and over.

Included in your packet is some playdoh. If you are downloading this off our website I am also included the recipe for some easy playdoh that works great.

Easy Playdoh Recipe

Ingredients – (makes 1 ball of play dough)

- 1 cup of plain flour
- 1/4 cup of table salt
- 1/2 cup of hot water (careful if kids are helping you with this bit)
- 2 tbsp cooking oil
- Food coloring of your choice

Method

1. Combine the dry ingredients in a large mixing bowl.
2. Add the food coloring to your hot water –
3. Carefully pour the colored water into the dry ingredients.
4. Add the oil and mix.
5. Once cool enough use your hands and turn out on to a clean work surface.
6. Knead Knead Knead – the longer you knead the smoother the play dough will become.

PALM SUNDAY

MARCH 28, 2021

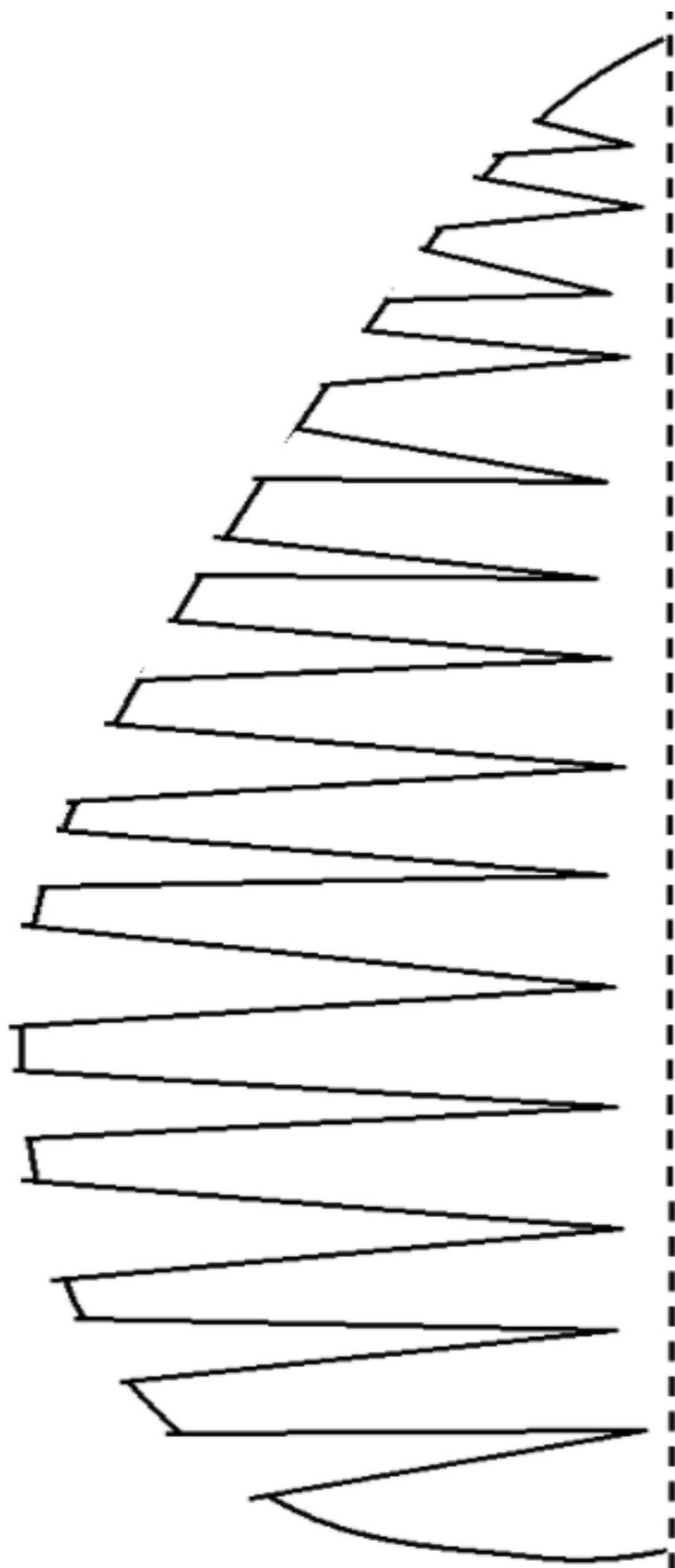
JOHN 12:1-19

This is a long, hard week for Jesus. Today we remember the protest parade he led. On Thursday we'll remember the dinner Jesus had with his friends and how one of those friends betrayed him. On Friday, we'll remember how Jesus was arrested and sentenced to die even though he didn't do anything wrong. Jesus knew this is how the week would end, and so he had to be very brave. Sometimes God needs us to do hard things, but the good news is that God also gives us courage

Dear God, thank you for the courage to do hard things. Help me to be brave even when I am scared. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Activity - act out scenarios where you might need courage. Begin by talking about some situations you might find scary or difficult, then write those on slips of paper to draw out of a basket. Some examples might be visiting the dentist or doctor, flying on a plane, standing up to friends, or sleeping over at a friend's house. Take turns acting out how a person can be courageous when faced with that situation, whether that's facing the fear directly or removing themselves from the situation. Remind kids if they need a friend, they can ask for help. Remember to assure them that they are in a safe space and can take a break if they are feeling overwhelmed, and remind children that courage sometimes looks like walking toward fear, and sometimes it means walking away.

Use the template on the following page to make your own palm.



Paper Palm Leaf

Cut this template along the dotted line.

Fold a piece of green construction paper in half and paper clip the template so the dotted line is along the fold.

Cut through the template and both layers of construction paper along the black lines.

Discard the template (unless you want to make more leaves).

Unfold the construction paper to see your finished palm leaf.

Optional: Tape a green pipe cleaner or thin rolled tube of construction paper to the center as a stem.



EASTER SUNDAY

APRIL 4, 2021

MARK 16:1-8

Have you ever gotten a present you didn't understand? Maybe you opened it and thought, 'What do I do with this? What *is* it? What is the weirdest present you have ever received? Did you say thank you for that weird present, even if you didn't know what it was for?

On the first Easter morning, the women disciples got a really weird present that they didn't know what to do with, either. Remember, on Friday they had watched Jesus die and were very, very sad. On Saturday, they couldn't have the funeral because it was the Sabbath day. So, first thing on Sunday, as soon as they could, they went to the tomb expecting to take care of Jesus' body and prepare him for his funeral. But what happened when they got there? ... Jesus wasn't there! How weird! That's not at all what they expected. And then on top of that, there's a strange man sitting where Jesus should be telling them wild stories about Jesus being alive, even though the women saw him die with their own eyes. The Bible says they were afraid—I would be, too. We don't always understand the gifts God gives us, but thanks be to God for strange miracles like the risen Christ who brings us new life.

Dear God, thank you for miracles we don't always understand. Help us to be on the lookout for new life in the world. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Today you are going to have a puzzle Easter egg hunt. I have put pieces of a puzzle in the eggs included in your packet. Parents hide the eggs but don't tell the kids what is in them. Have the kids find all the eggs. When they open their eggs, ask whether they are puzzled by what's inside, just like the first disciples were puzzled when Jesus wasn't in the tomb. Ask them to guess what picture the puzzle will form when all of the pieces are placed together. Then help them assemble the puzzle. If you are downloading this off our website, you can take any picture and cut it into pieces and put the pieces in the plastic eggs to hide.



Items Needed For Packets

Ziplock Bags

Bags for Packets to be delivered in

Plastic Eggs

Puzzles

Play Doh

Jelly Beans or M&Ms

Megaphones

Puzzles

Green Construction Paper



The SWEET Truth of Easter

- These candies tell a story~the best news you'll ever hear.
- It's about Jesus overcoming death and the cross so that we could be brought near.
- So hold them and turn them and you will see... the "M" become a "W"an "E" and then a "3"
- The "E" stands for... Easter....
 - God's everlasting love and eternal care.
 - It reminds us of the cross and the way God awoke us from evil's snare.
- The "3" represent the 3 days Jesus spent in the grave.... By Jesus death, God's children Jesus saves
- The "M" reminds us of the Mercy the Messiah showed as he lived peace in this place..
 - and the miracle of the resurrection
 - so we can see God's face.
- The "W" reminds us... that God alone is worthy of our devotion and praise and calls us to be a witnesses of love around the world for all of our days.

