

Lent in a Bag

(bags can be picked up outside the Church office, while quantities last)

The Lent in a Bag contains 6 small items to be used as symbols to focus individual, family or group meditations and conversations during the Season of Lent. There is no assigned order, although if you want your seeds to grow by Easter, plan on planting them early in Lent! Questions are intended to start conversations.

Suggestions for using the contents of this bag:

- Choose one night of the week and invite those around your table to pick one of the symbols as a starting point for a “table conversation”.
- For individual devotion (daily or weekly), choose one of the symbols for reflection as you make your way through the season of Lent. How does your interpretation of the symbol change over time?

Week 1: Sand

Just between his baptism and the beginning of his adult ministry, Jesus went into the wilderness for 40 days, ‘to be tested’. The desert is a dangerous place and Jesus was hungry, cold, and tired. He was also tempted and tormented, but He didn’t give up. When things get tough, how do we remember God is there for us? What constitutes wilderness in your life? What have you learned there? What might you learn there?

Read the story of Jesus wandering in the desert. (Luke 4: 111) Open the sand and touch it.

Week 2: Seeds

Watching the growth of seeds reminds us of the miracle of hope and transformation that is coming in the promise of Easter. The seeds change; they decay as they transform into a new life – a new life that we can’t really imagine when we plant it. Where is there mystery? What transformation do you hope for during the season of Lent?

Talk about change. What things can you think of that change? Read the Parable of the Mustard Seed and the Parable of the Leavened Bread. (Matthew 13: 31-32, 33)

Week 3: Rock

While in the wilderness, Jesus was invited to transform stone into bread. Though he resisted the temptation there and then, he became justly renowned for feeding people who were hungry for food, or for love, or for a word of encouragement, or for simple acceptance. Might there be a stony place in you that needs transforming (changing)?

When you are angry or sad, it may feel like your heart has become a rock. How does that feel? How can you help someone who has a “rock” in their heart? How does it feel to help other? Think about a time where you helped someone.

Read the story of Zacchaeus. (Luke 19:110) Jesus transforms us and helps us make better choices. Is there a place in your life you could make better choices?

Week 4: Shell

Historically, the season of Lent was when new Christians were prepared for baptism. Jesus began His ministry after His baptism. As someone who has been or will be baptized (or will be baptized), what is your ministry? Are you following Jesus’ example? What are you doing for justice and peace in the world?

Read the story of Jesus’ baptism. (Luke 3: 2122) Share memories of your child’s or your own baptism.

Week 5: Human Figure

Because Jesus was, as we confess, fully human, he gets us, understands us from inside our skin, and knows from experience that we’re each capable of great things, Godly things. And no matter what we do, he keeps on inviting us to join us in his work which has become our own. Jesus knows that we can do good things on earth, just like he did. In Lent, we are counting down 40 days (not including the weekends) until Easter. What can you do to be more like Jesus at home? At school? Everywhere?

Read the story of Jesus washing the disciple’s feet. (John 13: 117) How can we live like Jesus?

Week 6: Candle

Winter can be cold and dork. Spring is a time where we think of sunshine and flowers blooming. Jesus is called the “Light of the World”. Jesus told his disciples to be a light in the world too and make a difference. So where do you shine? What do you think you are good at? What is your talent? How can you encourage someone to see the good you in themselves?

Read Matthew 5:14-16 and Sing “This little light of mine.”

