

The background of the entire page is decorated with various green leaves of different sizes and shades, scattered around the central text.

FIRST PRESBYTARIAN CHURCH

presents

Lent
Devotional
2022

Buildfaith.org

March 1, 2022

Shrove Tuesday

(the last day before Lent)



Dig In...

What does "shrove" mean?

Shrove is the past tense of shrive.

Shrive means to receive forgiveness for one's sins by confessing. Traditionally this was done before the beginning of Lent so one's season of penitence got off to a nice, clean start. The Anglo-Saxon Ecclesiastical Institutes says, "In the week immediately before Lent, everyone shall go to his confessor and confess his deeds and the confessor shall so shrive him." A confessor is usually a priest. Anyone can make an appointment with a priest to talk about sins. Being shriven is a good thing.

Question ...

Why do people eat pancakes on Shrove Tuesday? Pancakes were just an easy way for people to use up the eggs and fat that were in their pantry storage before the season of Lent started. Once Ash Wednesday arrives, meals were supposed to be simple, and no one was supposed to be eating goodies. Eggs weren't allowed again until Easter.

What are your favorite toppings or mix-ins for pancakes?



And...

Are there other names for Shrove Tuesday?

Shrove Tuesday is known by several names. Here are two:

- Mardi Gras, meaning literally the Tuesday (Mardi) of fat (Gras) or Fat Tuesday
- Carnival, meaning the meat (carne) is removed (levare)

How will you celebrate Shrove Tuesday?

March 2, 2022

Ash Wednesday



Dig In...

Ash Wednesday is the day that begins the season of Lent, which is 40 days (not counting Sundays) of fasting and repentance prior to the celebration of Easter. Ash Wednesday occurs 46 days before Easter. Since Easter moves around on the calendar, so does Ash Wednesday.

What do Christians do to honor this day?

Many Christians attend an Ash Wednesday service at their church. During this service the priest or minister may rub the sign of the cross on their foreheads using ashes. The ashes represent mourning and repentance. Sometimes the ashes are gathered from the burning of the palms from the previous year's Palm Sunday. Christians often fast (don't eat) on Ash Wednesday, or at least do not eat meat on this day.

Question...

On Ash Wednesday, Christians decide if they are going to give up something for Lent as an offer of sacrifice. This usually is something people enjoy, like eating chocolate, playing video games, long showers, or even sleeping in a bed. Some Christians decide to take on something instead of giving something up. They might take on extra praying, extra reading, extra good deeds.

What will you do for Lent?



And...

When we receive ashes, the leader tells us "Dust you are, and to dust you will return" or "Remember that you are but dust, and to dust you will return."

Read Chapter 3 of Genesis to find out who God first speaks these words to.

March 3, 2022

National Anthem Day

In 1931, The Star-Spangled Banner becomes the National Anthem.



Dig In...

Francis Scott Key, an attorney, was serving in the Light Field Artillery during the War of 1812. In 1814, Key traveled to Baltimore where he watched the bombs bursting in air over the harbor and steadily pummeling Fort McHenry. Key waited for dawn to break and smoke to clear. He saw the American flag fully unfurled against the breaking of the day, the fort standing firm, and wrote the words that became our National Anthem.

What is an anthem? A dictionary gives three definitions:

1: a song or hymn of praise or gladness

2: a usually rousing popular song that typifies or is identified with a particular movement or point of view

3a: a psalm or hymn sung antiphonally or responsively

3b: a sacred vocal composition with words usually from the Scriptures

The National Anthem fits in definition #2

Question...

Sing The Star Spangled Banner. Did you know there are more verses to the original song? As a challenge, try singing them all.

One of the verses has this sentence "Blest with victory and peace,
may the
heaven-rescued land, praise the Power that hath made and
preserved us a nation!"

Thank God for our country in your prayers today.



And...

If you wrote a rousing anthem for your family, or your church, or your school...what words would you use? What is important for you to say?

March 4, 2022

Antonio Vivaldi was born this day in 1678



Dig In...

Antonio Vivaldi was born in Venice, Italy, where he spent most of his life. His father taught him to play the violin, and Antonio continued to study and practice the violin, even after he became a priest. He was called the "Red Priest" because of his flaming red hair.

His health was not strong. Vivaldi spent most of his time writing music and teaching. Many people think Vivaldi was the best Italian composer of his time. He wrote concertos, operas, church music, and many other compositions. In all, Antonio wrote over 500 concertos. His most famous set of concertos is The Four Seasons.

Question...

Vivaldi wrote music during the Baroque period. The Baroque period in music history extends roughly from 1600 to 1750. Find out more about other Baroque composers, such as J.S. Bach and G.F. Handel.



And...

Do you play a music instrument? Has your church ever heard you play an instrument or sing?

Look up Psalm 150 and notice all the musical instruments listed there.

You can use your instrument to praise the Lord! If you don't play an instrument yet, Psalm 150 tells us that everything that has breath can praise the Lord.

Listen to each of Vivaldi's The Four Seasons and notice the differences between Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter.



Extra – Today is World Book Day. Find out more about it.

March 5, 2022

Mem Fox was born this day in 1946



Dig In...

She is an Australian author. Mem Fox has written over 40 books for children such as Time for Bed, Whoever You Are, Possum Magic, and The Magic Hat. She encourages people to read aloud with children, and encourages children to read aloud, and to read silently to themselves.

Read, or re-read, a Mem Fox book.

The Bible is a big book containing several books. The Bible has many authors who God inspired to write sections of the Bible.

God and Moses were the authors of the first five books of the Bible.

God and David were the authors of the Psalm.

God and Paul were the authors of much of the New Testament.

God and Luke were the authors of Luke and Acts.

Question...

If you were to write a book, what would it be about? Why not start writing it now? Read it out loud to your family!



And...

Find out more about Australia, the country where Mem Fox lives.

What are your favorite animals that live in Australia?

If it is springtime now in the United States, what season is it now in Australia?

March 6, 2022

First Sunday in Lent



Dig In...

Today, most churches read Psalm 91. Verse 14 says "He is bound to me in love."
(We are bound to God in love.)

Bound means the same as fastened. We are fastened together with God not with rope or glue, but with something stronger: love. We are forever connected to God by love – God's love for us and our love for God.

Question...

Most of the psalms were written by King David. David is called "a man after God's own heart." How might people describe you?

How would you like people to describe you?

During Lent, are you moving closer to God's heart?



And...

King David also wrote Psalm 23. Look it up.

Do you have it memorized?

Can you memorize it by the end of Lent?

March 7, 2022

National Dentists Day

Dig In...

Dentists Day is observed every year, to remind us to say "Thank You" and show appreciation to our dentists. Without our teeth, where would we be? Dentists are doctors who specialize in oral health. They prevent, diagnose, and treat oral diseases. Dentists monitor the growth of your teeth and jaws.

The first woman to graduate from dental school in America was Lucy Taylor in 1866.

In Psalm 139, verses 14-16 we read about how David feels about God's care for his body, and our bodies:

14. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex!

Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it.

15. You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion,
as I was woven together in the dark of the womb.

16. You have always watched over me. Every day of my life was recorded in your book.

Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.

Thank God for creating you marvelously! Thank God for all the ways you've grown since you were a baby, and for all the medical people who have helped you along the way.



Question...

Could you do a better job of cleaning your teeth? While cleaning, think of all the different ways that teeth mash, cut, and grind food.

Think about how God blesses us by providing food.

How do you feel about going to the dentist? Why?



And...

Write a note to your dentist to show your appreciation, and drop it off at their office.

Celebrate Dentists Day by not eating sugars or sweet treats this day.

March 8, 2022

International Women's Day



Dig In...

The full name of this day is "United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace." Today we celebrate women's achievements throughout history and across nations.

Question...

Why is it so important to have International Women's Day?

Think about the great women in your life. Who has inspired you?

Who has supported you?

Think about the great women in the Bible. Look up some women in the Bible.

RUTH has her own book in the Bible, named Ruth. It is the 8th book of the Bible. Read Ruth 1:1-5 to find out who she was.

MARY is the mother of Jesus. Read Matthew 1:18-25

WOMEN were the first witnesses of the empty tomb on Easter morning. Luke 24:10 lists their names.

LYDIA was converted to Christianity by Paul. Read about her in Acts 16:14 and 15.

There are plenty of other women in the Bible, too



And...

Call or FaceTime a woman who is important in your life and wish them a Happy Women's Day.

Think about how the roles of women have changed. Ask an older or elderly woman about how women's roles have changed in her lifetime.

Think about all the roles of women – women can be: mother, wife, teacher, doctor, chef, priest, astronaut, president, bishop....

Do you know a girl or woman who has a first name that is in the Bible?



March 9, 2022

40 days and 40 nights

Dig In...

Many churches sing this hymn at least once during the season of Lent



Forty days and forty nights
Thou wast fasting in the wild;
Forty days and forty nights
Tempted and yet undefiled.

Keep, O keep us, Savior dear,
Ever constant by thy side;
That with thee we may appear
At the eternal Eastertide.

Words by Smyttan 1822-1870

This hymn has five verses, about Jesus in the wilderness being tempted and resisting temptation. You can read about this episode in Jesus' life in the Gospel of Luke, chapter 4, verses 1 to 13.

Question...

Noah and the animals were on the ark during the flood for 40 days and 40 nights. It is in the book of Genesis, chapters 6 through 9. How is the story of Jesus in the wilderness for 40 days and 40 nights LIKE the story of Noah on the ark for 40 days and 40 nights? How are the two stories NOT alike?



And...

Write an extra verse or two for that hymn and sing them.
Write and sing your own hymn.

Next time you see a rainbow, remember the rainbow God sent to Noah as a sign of God's promise.

March 10, 2022

Middle Name Pride Day



Dig In...

A person's parents give them their middle name out of love and affection. This is the ideal day to take the time to embrace that love and find pride in that name.

Middle names date back to ancient Rome but took on the form we know them today in the Middle Ages, when Europeans followed a given name with a baptismal name and a surname. Immigrants to America continued the tradition. Over time, the religious connotations of middle names diminished, and many other names were used.

In Isaiah 43:1 God says, "I have called you by name; you are mine."
God knows your name, all of it, and loves you – you belong to God!

Question...

People who don't know much about their middle name may want to take time to ask their parents why they chose that middle name. If you haven't heard the story of your middle name, ask your parents.

This is a great exercise because you might learn about more than just the name, there may be stories of the family members who lived in generations past.



And...

Celebrate the day by sharing your middle name with people who don't know it! Share your middle name with people, and start your conversation with them by saying, "Have I ever mentioned that my middle name is ____? What is your middle name?"

Who has the same middle name as you?

Is your middle name a name from the Bible?

March 11, 2022

Pandemic starts 2020

Dig In...

Two years ago in America, we realized the seriousness of the COVID 19 virus. News started spreading, and everyone started wearing masks and not going out in crowds. Zoom, FaceTime, on-line worship, and on-line classes became important.



During the worst parts of the pandemic, many people felt afraid or lonely or troubled. In Psalm 25, David openly expresses his thoughts and feelings about all of the things that are going wrong in his life. Instead of letting his feelings of loneliness and suffering overwhelm him, David chose to put his trust in God.

Turn to me and help me, God. I am lonely and hurting. Take away the troubles of my heart. Set me free from my great pain. Look at how I'm hurting! See how much I suffer! Take away all my sins. Look at how many enemies I have! See how terrible their hatred is for me! Guard my life. Save me. Don't let me be put to shame. I go to you for safety. Psalm 25:16–20, NIRV

In the midst of his fear, David recognized that only God could save him. So he called out to the source of true peace and strength and trusted the Lord for safety. Just like David, we can call out to God for help and safety. God can take away the troubles of our hearts and allow us to rest in protection.

Question...

What do you remember about the COVID 19 pandemic?
Wearing a mask protects ourselves and protects others. What other things do we do to protect others?



And...

Have you thought about being a medical professional when you grow up?
What ways can you help people now?

March 12, 2022

Plant a Flower Day



Dig In...

This day is dedicated to the planting of flowers and looking forward to the Spring season. Planting a flower helps make the world a more beautiful place. Seeds can be started inside and set in a sunny window.

Flowers not only add a splash of color; they also serve some very vital jobs. Flowers help feed insects and birds, help feed pollinators such as bees, and some of them provide the raw materials for medicines.

During the season of Lent, there are no flowers on the altar at church. By not having flowers during the season of Lent, it helps us notice and rejoice in the Easter flowers. The Easter lily starts as a bulb in the ground - symbolic of Jesus' tomb. The lily's flower symbolizes his life after death, with its white color symbolizing rebirth and new life.

Question...

Have you ever planted a flower?

Plant several flowers, then give some away to friends and neighbors.

Do you have a favorite flower?

Imagine a new kind of flower and draw a picture of it.

Find out what the word "horticulture" means.



And...

The first people in the Bible lived in a garden. Look up the story of Eve and Adam in the Garden of Eden in the first book of the Bible, Genesis. Imagine a conversation between Eve, Adam, and you!

Extra...

Tonight, many states in America change their clocks an hour. Is it an hour forward or backward? Why?

March 13, 2022

2nd Sunday in Lent



Dig In...

Near the beginning of the church service today, we hear a prayer that begins "O God, whose glory is always to have mercy, be gracious to all..."
There are three important words in that sentence: glory, mercy and gracious/grace.
Stop and think about these words and what they mean.

Question...

What is God's glory?
It is God's mercy and grace.

If you are unkind to me and I am unkind in return – that is justice.
If you are unkind to me and I am not unkind in return – that is mercy.
If you are unkind to me and I treat you the way I'd like to be treated –
that is grace.

How can you show mercy and grace this week? How about during
Lent? Showing grace is being a little more like God.



And...

Every Sunday, near the beginning of the church service, we pray a Collect.
It is a different Collect prayer each Sunday. It is called a Collect because it
collects up (summarizes) the theme for that Sunday.
Notice the Collect each Sunday at church.

March 14, 2022

Pi Day 3.14



Dig In...

Pi Day is celebrated on March 14 (3 – 14, March is the 3rd month) around the world. Pi (Greek letter “ π ”) is the symbol used in mathematics to represent a constant — the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter — which is approximately 3.14159. After measuring circular objects for thousands of years, it has always been determined that a circle is a little more than three times its width across.

Question...

Pi sounds exactly like the word “pie”, so lots of people will celebrate Pi Day by eating pie or pizza-pie. Others will celebrate by eating round foods, like cookies or pancakes. How will you celebrate today?

For Christians, the circle represents eternity and never-ending existence. It also symbolizes Heaven because of its perfect symmetry and its unvarying balance. It suggests the perfection of God, the everlasting nature of God, and the eternal quality of God’s love. God has always loved you, and God will always love you.



And...

March 14 is Albert Einstein’s birthday. Math was important to him. Find out more about Einstein.

March 15, 2022

The Ides of March



Dig In...

The 15th of March is known as the Ides of March, from the Latin phrase meaning "Middle of March."

It is the date Julius Caesar was killed by some of his politicians in the year 44 BC. The story goes that he had been given advice by a fortune teller to "beware the Ides of March" but he ignored the warning.

Question...

What advice would you give to someone? Could you tell them how to do well at school? Do you have ideas about how to get along with people? What is your advice?



And...

The Bible has lots of good advice in it, such as Matthew chapter 7, verse 12 which tells us to "Do to others what you want them to do to you."

What are some other favorite pieces of advice?

Who are some well known prophets in the Bible, who give advice?

March 16, 2022

John 3:16 Day



Dig In...

March 16th is John 3:16 Day. This day is held annually on March 16, since March is the 3rd month and the 16th day to tie in with John 3:16, the biblical verse about God's plan for salvation:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that everyone who believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life." John 3:16.

The goal of celebrating this day is to encourage others to share the greatest news on Earth.

Question...

Do you have John 3:16 memorized?

Can you say it outloud to someone?

Create a greeting card with this Bible verse in it, and mail it to someone.



And...

Read all of chapter 3 of the Gospel of John, to find out who Jesus speaks these words to.

March 17, 2022

St. Patrick's Day



Dig In...

Saint Patrick is the Patron Saint of Ireland. He was born in 387 in the area we now call Scotland, then he was kidnapped as a child and taken to Ireland. He escaped slavery in Ireland, trained to be a priest, and returned to Ireland to serve God. He converted the people of Ireland to Christianity.

Most people wear green on St. Patrick's Day, and celebrate by eating Irish food or green food.

Question...

Saint Patrick wanted to go back to Ireland to introduce the people to Christianity. What place would you like to go back to? Why?

What place would you like to visit, that you have never been to before? Why?

Who introduced you to Christianity?



And...

The shamrock is a symbol of Ireland. It has three leaves, and St. Patrick used it to teach people about what?

March 18, 2022

First Space Walk, 1965



Dig In...

On March 18, 1965 Soviet cosmonaut Alexei Leonov became the first person to leave a space capsule and, tethered to it, float freely in orbit – to space-walk.

Question...

Can you imagine going into space 300 miles and being the first person to float outside earth's gravity? What would the earth look like?

God created all the planets and universes. Would you like to explore space?

Would you rather explore space, or go deep into the sea?
The book of Jonah in the Bible has exciting journeys in it. It's not a long book, you can read it yourself or read it to someone else.



And...

What is the most exciting journey you could imagine? Write a short-story about it, and include illustrations.

March 19, 2022

St. Joseph of Nazareth



Dig In...

St. Joseph was the husband of Mary, the mother of Jesus. According to the earliest Christian traditions, he was a carpenter or woodworker or stonemason. The Gospel of Matthew calls him a “righteous man,” meaning he was an observant Jew who obeyed God’s law

Question...

Joseph was engaged to Mary, but when he discovered that she was pregnant before they were married, he decided to quietly call off the marriage. However, the angel of the Lord told Joseph in a dream that he should go ahead with the marriage because Mary’s child was conceived by the Holy Spirit.

Do you keep promises?

Do you like it when others keep their promises?



And...

Read Luke, chapter 2, verses 41 to 52

When Jesus was twelve years old, Joseph took him and Mary to Jerusalem to visit the Temple . . . and what happened?

March 20, 2022

3rd Sunday in Lent



Dig In...

Today, most churches will read the story of Moses and God talking with each other. Not talking through a phone, but through a burning bush! At the end of the conversation, the bush was not burned up.

Read the story in Exodus, chapter 3, verses 1 to 15.

Question...

God wants to communicate with us all the time. God loves us and wants to tell us many things. That's why we need to pray, and hear what God has to say.

When do you pray?

Do you always talk to God, or do you spend time in silence?

Remember we have two ears and one mouth, so we should listen for God twice as much as we talk... listening is praying, too!



And...

Jesus taught all his friends to pray the Lord's Prayer.

It starts with "Our Father, who art in heaven."

Have you memorized it?

Do you pray it every day?

March 21, 2022

World Poetry Day



Dig In...

Every March 21 is World Poetry Day. It is a day to encourage people to read, write, teach, and publish poetry, and to recognize the great cultural contributions poetry makes to human society. There are many poets! Some famous ones are Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost, William Shakespeare, and Amanda Gorman.

Question...

There are lots of different kinds of poems. Haiku is one of the most popular poetry forms. Haiku is a traditional form of Japanese poetry. Haiku poems consist of 3 lines. The first and last lines of each Haiku have 5 syllables and the middle line has 7 syllables. The lines rarely rhyme. Here is a Haiku about beaches:

Sand scatters the beach
Waves crash on the sandy shore
Blue water shimmers

Can you write some poems and read them to your family?
Can you write some poems and mail them to your relatives?



And...

Is there poetry in the Bible?

Yes, six books in the Bible are known as books of poetry, originally written in the Hebrew language: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, and Lamentations. These books are almost entirely made up of poems, songs, and wise sayings that the ancient Jews (and the Christians who follow) use to make wise decisions and worship God.

Take a look at some poetry in the Bible.

March 22, 2022

World Water Day



Dig In...

World Water Day, marked each year on March 22, is an opportunity to celebrate the immense progress made to improve access to clean water. It's also a chance to spotlight the urgent and new concerns of today: currently 850 million people lack basic access to a clean water source

Question...

Water means different things to different people. What does water mean to you? How is water important to your home and family life, your livelihood, your cultural practices, your wellbeing, your local environment? Can you think of ways to save water and not waste any water?

Has your house or your entire neighborhood ever had to go without water? What do you remember about that time?



And...

Can you think of Bible stories that highlight water? How about Noah? Do you remember Moses walking through the Red Sea? Have you heard about the time Jesus walked on water?

What others come to mind?

Find them in the Bible and read them

March 23, 2022

Singing in church



Dig In...

God's people are more than just invited to sing; the Bible commands us to sing "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God" (Colossians 3:16) and "Be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart" (Ephesians 5:18-19) are just two places.

Christianity started as a singing religion. When we sing a hymn or song together in church, we become participants rather than observers of worship. When you join your individual voice to the others in the congregation, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. At church you are not an audience, you are part of the congregation gathered to pray, sing, and worship.

Question...

The Bible tells us that at the end of the Last Supper on Maundy Thursday, Jesus sang a song with his disciples. (Matthew 26:30, Mark 14:26) Do you wonder what they sang?

Do you wonder what it was like to sing with Jesus?

Paul and Silas prayed and sang songs when they were in prison. (Acts 16:25)

Are there religious songs you have memorized? Memorize a few more!



And...

"Is anyone cheerful? Let them sing songs of praise." (James 5:13)

Write a new song of praise.

Sing it!

March 24, 2022

International Chocolate-Covered Raisin Day



Dig In...

National Chocolate-Covered Raisin Day celebrates raisins coated in a shell of either milk chocolate or dark chocolate.

Moviegoers have been snacking on chocolate-covered raisins for many, many years.

In Australia they are called Chocolate-Covered Sultanas. This is simply a different name for the lighter-colored golden raisins popular in Australia.

Question...

Raisins are an excellent source of calcium, potassium, iron, fiber and vitamin B. But, what are raisins? Investigate how they grow and how we get them.

Are raisins mentioned in the Bible? Yes, look for 1 Samuel 30:12 and 1 Chronicles 12:40. There are a few others.



And...

Did you give up chocolate for Lent?

You'll have to wait until Easter to eat a box of chocolate-covered raisins, or make a batch. Perhaps you'll share them with friends after Easter.

March 25, 2022

Kate DiCamillo's birthday



Dig In...

Kate DiCamillo was born on this day in 1964 in Philadelphia. She has written approximately 20 books such as: Tale of Despereaux, Because of Winn-Dixie, Mercy Watson, and The Tiger Rising. She has won many awards for her young people's books, and some of her books have been made into movies.

Question...

Do you have a favorite author? Why do you enjoy those books?
If you were going to write a book, what would it be about? Would you want illustrations in your book?

Have you started writing it?

In DiCamillo's Because of Winn-Dixie, the main character's father is a preacher. Are any of your relatives deacons, priests, or bishops?
Would you like to be an ordained minister when you grow up?



And...

The Bible is one big book made of several smaller books. How many books are in the Old Testament? How many books are in the New Testament?
How many books does the whole Bible have all together?

March 26, 2022

Make Your Own Holiday



Dig In...

Make Your Own Holiday Day encourages you to make a special day for anything you want. Come up with a new celebration day of your own! You can make a holiday for a funny, or interesting, or quirky, or offbeat, or important thing, or idea of your choosing. The possibilities are endless.

In the 1800s, Sarah Hale decided there should be a national day of thanks. She wrote letters to politicians, governors, and the president about her idea. President Abraham Lincoln agreed that America should have a Thanksgiving Day. President Franklin D. Roosevelt made it an official national holiday in 1941.

Who knows – maybe your holiday will catch on.

Question...

What holiday would you create? Why?

How should it be celebrated?

Is there a special food or certain color that should be part of your holiday event?

Who would you invite to join in the festivities?

Create invitations!



And...

In the book of Ecclesiastes, chapter 3, verse 1 it says, "For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven."
. What holiday might God want you to create and celebrate?

March 27, 2022

4th Sunday in Lent



Dig In...

Today, most churches will read the Bible story called “the Prodigal Son” in Luke, chapter 15, verses 11 to 32. The story is about 3 people: a wasteful son, a son who followed rules, and a forgiving loving Dad. Some people don’t call it “The Prodigal Son”, they call it “The Forgiving Father” because the Dad in the story forgives and loves just like the way God forgives and loves, and the Dad does what God wants all of us to do.

Question...

What does the word “forgive” mean to you?
Is it difficult or easy to forgive?
Is it difficult or easy to ask for forgiveness?
Keep praying to God and ask to become more forgiving.



And...

This story is a parable. Find out what a parable is.
Does the Bible have other parables? Yes, many. Here are a few from Luke chapters 14, 15, 16:



- Lowest Seat at the Feast (Luke 14:7-14)
- Invitation to a Great Banquet (Luke 14:16-24)
- The Cost of Discipleship (Luke 14:28-33)
- Lost Sheep (Luke 15:4-7)
- Lost Coin (Luke 15:8-10)
- The Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32)
- The Shrewd Manager (Luke 16:1-8)
- The Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31)

March 28, 2022

Nathaniel Griggs patents the washing machine 1797



Dig In...

On this date in 1797, Nathaniel Griggs of New Hampshire was granted the first American patent for a washing machine.

Before the invention of washing machines, washing clothes by hand meant transporting water by hand from a well or pump, heating the water on a fire, soaking, beating, scrubbing, rinsing, wringing items, then hanging them outside to dry. The entire process could take an entire day.

Nathaniel Griggs machine was an improvement, but when electricity was discovered, household chores became even easier.

Question...

Do you have a washer and/or dryer at your home? Do you know how to use them?

Are you helpful at home?

If you could invent something, what would it be? Let your imagination have fun.

Draw a picture of your new invention



And...

Jesus washes the feet of his disciples before the Last Supper. Why? Read about it in John, chapter 13, verses 1 to 17.

March 29, 2022

Seasons of the church year



Dig In...

You know about the seasons of the year: winter, spring, summer, and autumn. The church year has seasons, too. The liturgical (worship) seasons are: Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, and Pentecost. The seasons help us remember God's salvation story. Each season has its own colors that we use for vestments, robes, and decorations in the church.

Here are the church seasons and colors:

Advent season – blue or purple, because we are waiting for royalty

Christmas season – white, yellow, or gold because the light (Jesus) has come to the world

Epiphany season – green, because we are growing in Christ and spreading the news about him

Lent season – purple, because we are repenting and examining our life

Easter season – white, because we are celebrating the joy of new life

Pentecost Day – red, because of the flame of the Holy Spirit

Pentecost season – green, for the longest season of growing in our faith

The seasons focus on and celebrate the life of Christ. Jesus is the reason for every season. Readings from the Bible are specially chosen for each Sunday in all Episcopal churches.

Question...

The rhythm of the liturgical seasons stretches back through the centuries. You are part of a long long long faith tradition. How does that make you feel?

People all over the world are celebrating the same church seasons and focusing on things that are eternal...the same as you.

God understands English and ALL the languages of the world. How does it make you feel to be connected to others you'll never meet?



And...

Try to memorize the seasons of the liturgical year in order: Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, or A.C.E.L.E.P.

What season are we currently in?

Do you have a favorite church season?

Do you have a favorite year season like winter, spring, summer, or autumn?

March 30, 2022

National Doctors Day



Dig In...

National Doctors Day honors the medical professionals for their dedication and contributions to society and the community. On National Doctors Day, we say Thank You to our doctors for all that they do for us and our loved ones. This special day was first celebrated in America in 1933 in Georgia. Doctors treat our injuries and help keep us healthy.

Question...

Are you good at caring for others? Would you like to become a doctor?

Write and send a note to your doctor to show your appreciation.

The next time you see your doctor, ask how many years of college it took to become a doctor.



And...

Did you know that one of Jesus' first disciples was a doctor?

The Bible refers to him as a physician. What is his name?

Extra...

What is the Hippocratic Oath, and what does it mean?

March 31, 2022

National Tater Day



Dig In...

This day celebrates all kinds of potatoes which provide vitamins, minerals, and fiber. Potatoes are quite versatile, which might explain why so many people like them. They are the number one consumed vegetable in the United States. There are many ways to eat the over 200 different kinds of potatoes in the United States. This day originated in Kentucky where they have celebrated Tater Day since the early 1940s.

Question...

If you have eaten French Fries, then you have eaten a potato. What other ways have you eaten potatoes? Can you prepare a meal for your family that includes potatoes?

Potatoes are versatile. Are you versatile? Are you adaptable and creative?

Can you easily pivot and find alternative choices? Do others describe you as innovative?



And...

Find out how potatoes grow.
Can they be planted in your garden?
Read through Genesis, Chapter 1. What day did God probably create potatoes?

Extra...

This is the last day of March.
What are the most memorable things that happened this month?

April 1, 2022

April Fools' Day



Dig In...

April Fools' Day is a fun day to play harmless good-natured practical jokes. It is a day for everyone who wants to have fun. People have enjoyed playing practical jokes all the way back to Ancient Roman times.

Jokesters reveal their practical joke by shouting "April Fools?"

Question...

Ask your parents and other adults what April Fools jokes or tricks they did when they were a youngster.

Is it odd to think of adults as once being young jokesters?

Did anyone mention that they switched out the sugar and salt to trick their parents? It is the most common

April Fools trick.

What surprise might you plan for today?



And...

Do you like surprises, jokes, and tricks?

Some people don't like things like this. No two people are exactly alike.

How are you and your friends alike? Not alike?

There are no April Fool's pranks in the Bible, but there are tricksters. Delilah tricks Samson in Judges 16. Jacob tricks his father Isaac in Genesis 27. Joseph's brothers trick their father Jacob in Genesis 37.

Warning...

One thing to be absolutely sure about if you do an April Fools prank, is that you don't hurt anyone or damage property. Check with your parents or teachers first, if you're not sure.

April 2, 2022

National Peanut Butter and Jelly Day



Dig In...

National PB&J Day celebrates the most popular sandwich in America. PB&J can be created in hundreds of different varieties.

PB&J sandwiches got their start in America in the 1930s, but became very popular in the 1940s. Soldiers in World War 2 had peanut butter, jelly, and bread as part of their food rations. They continued to make PB&J sandwiches when they returned home, because they are tasty, affordable, and easy.

Question...

Do you like smooth or chunky peanut butter?

Which jelly or jam is your favorite?

Do you slice a sandwich diagonally to form two triangles?

Or do you slice it in the middle to form two rectangles?

Do some research to find out how peanuts grow. Do they grow on bushes? Could you grow them near your house?

Do you say Thank You to God before you eat? Either silently or outloud? Thank God for your food and all your blessings!



And...

Get along with your friends as well as peanut butter and Jelly get along! Celebrate your friends today and all the people who are the PB to your J!

And...

The Bible says "people cannot live by bread alone..." We need peanut butter and Jelly!

Warning...

Lots of people are allergic to peanuts and peanut butter. Be careful not to do anything to harm them.

April 3, 2022

5th Sunday in Lent



Dig In...

Today, most churches will read the story about Jesus at supper in the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. During the supper, Mary put perfumed oil on Jesus' feet. It was expensive oil that cost a whole year's worth of earnings. Mary felt that Jesus was worth more than anything money could buy. He is the greatest treasure.

Question...

Read the story of this supper in the Gospel of John, chapter 12, verses 1 to 8. Mary honored Jesus with her gift.

How can we honor Jesus?

What gift do we have for Jesus?

What gifts do we have for ministry and service?



And...

Martha's gift to Jesus that evening was supper. She prepared and served the food.

Do some research and find out what a typical meal was like at that time. Perhaps you could prepare (or help prepare) a meal for someone.

!

April 4, 2022

The Commemoration of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Junior



Dig In...

You probably already know a great deal about Martin Luther King because of the holiday on his birthday in January. Each year on April 4, the entire Episcopal Church remembers him on the day he died in 1968. MLK knew that God created each person as special and unique. Since God loves and cares about everyone just the same, then we should love and treat everyone just the same, too. What a person looks like shouldn't be important; we are all God's children. God looks at our hearts, not on our skin. MLK's dream for America was that people would not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.

Question...

What are your dreams for America and for the world?

What are your dreams for your own life?

What do you imagine is God's dream for your life?

In the Declaration of Independence, written in 1776, it says "all men (and women) are created equal." What would MLK think about that? What do you think about it?



And...

Martin Luther King and his father were both named for a famous Catholic priest who inspired important changes in the church approximately 500 years ago. Do some research about Martin Luther and what he did in Germany.

Extra – today is the birthday of Maya Angelou. Do some research to find out who she is.

!

April 5, 2022

National Read a Roadmap Day



Dig In...

Today we celebrate the paper maps that get us from one place to another when we unfold them and use them for directions. This day reminds us to sharpen our map-reading skills, our sense of direction, and an idea of scale, which helps us stay aware and alert. Roadmaps are an especially useful tool if the battery runs low on our smart-device or if there is no satellite connection.

Question...

Can you point to North, South, East, and West from where you are sitting right now?

Do you remember the names of all the streets between your home and school? and church?

Draw a map of your neighborhood.

Draw a map of your route to church. Include any streams or bodies of water.

How many miles is it from your home to the nearest hospital?



And...

Find out what a cartographer is.

The earliest road maps are in the book called "Britannia Atlas." They were drawn by Scotsman John Ogilby in 1675.

Look inside the Bibles in your home. Do any of them have maps of Bible lands in them? Usually they are in the last few pages of a Bible. Look for places you recognize, like Bethlehem. Jerusalem.



April 6, 2022

Henson and Peary reach the North Pole in 1909



Dig In...

On this day in 1909, Robert Peary was the first American Explorer to reach the North Pole. Peary, his assistant Matthew Henson, and a team of Eskimos traveled by dogsled across the frozen ice-cap at the top of the Earth.

In April, the average daytime temperature at the North Pole is -8 degrees Fahrenheit and the average night temperature is -15 degrees Fahrenheit.

Question...

Being an explorer takes courage. Do you have courage? Robert Peary and his team faced hardships along the way. Have you ever faced hardships? How did you handle them? What happened because of those hardships? Did you learn things?

Did the experience build character?

Would you have gone to the North Pole in 1909?

Would you go now that there are helicopter trips?



And...

Peary won many awards. Imagine you are Peary, and write his acceptance speech for an award.

Imagine you have won an award for your talents or hard work. What would you say in your acceptance speech?

In the Bible, several people are courageous because of God. David showed courage when he fought Goliath. Daniel showed courage in the Lions Den. Look up these stories.

April 7, 2022

National Burrito Day



Dig In...

This day celebrates affection for burritos. The traditional Mexican dish is popular all over the world, but it has only been offered in American restaurants since the 1930s. Burrito means “little donkey” in Spanish, probably because the rolled up burrito looks like the bedrolls and packs that donkeys used to carry. Burritos can be eaten for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. The oldest mention of the word “burrito” in print was found in a book that was printed in 1895, although burritos are probably much older than that.

Question...

Do you like your tortilla to be flour or corn?

What do you like inside your breakfast burrito?

What do you like inside your lunch or dinner burrito?

Ask your family and friends these questions and make a chart of the various answers.

Eat burritos today!



And...

Burritos are wrapped up, and so are you.

You are wrapped in God's love for you!

The book of Jude begins in chapter 1, verse 1 “From Jude to those who are in God, wrapped in the love of God, and kept for Jesus Christ.”

When you pray for someone, you are wrapping them in prayer and enfolding them in God's love... which is a burrito that never falls apart.



April 8, 2022

National Zoo Lovers Day



Dig In...

Today is the day to plan a trip to a zoo. The United States has approximately 350 zoos. Next time you visit an area with a zoo, stop by the zoo. The first zoos were invented 2500 years before Jesus was born, in Mesopotamia and Egypt. The earliest modern public zoo was opened in Paris, France in 1793. The word "zoo" is short for zoological garden. As you visit a zoo, wonder what animals currently exist in the world that we haven't discovered yet.

Question...

Have you ever visited a zoo?

What are your favorite animals?

Do any animals frighten you?

Do you have any animals that live in your home?

If you could become an animal for a day, what kind of animal would you choose?

Imagine a new animal and draw a picture of it.

God asked Adam to name all the creatures. Look in Genesis 2: 19-20.



And...

Noah built a huge boat to save animals from drowning in a big flood.

If you have Legos or other blocks, build an ark like Noah (but smaller).

Give thanks to God for all the wonderful animals in our world.

April 9, 2022

The day before Palm Sunday



Dig In...

Tomorrow is Palm Sunday, when we remember Jesus riding into Jerusalem where people greet him with palm branches.

Many churches tomorrow will sing this hymn "All glory, laud, and honor, to thee, Redeemer, King!... Thou are the King of Israel, thou David's royal Son."

What? His father isn't David!

It means King David was one of Jesus ancestors – great, great, great, great . . . great grandfather.

Look in Matthew 1:6-16 to see all the generations of relatives between King David and Jesus.

Think back to Christmas, Mary and Joseph went to Bethlehem because Bethlehem is the City of David, and Mary's baby would be part of David's family, one of David's descendants.

Question...

God told David (2 Samuel 7:12-16) that someone from David's family would always be king. Jesus is king of our hearts; he came to save us.

Just as God promised David, David's descendants and kingdom will endure forever.

Jesus is, and always will be, king. Our hearts are his royal throne.

Can you get out craft supplies and make a crown for yourself?

Will you go to church tomorrow?

Can you remember any Christmas songs that mention Bethlehem? or David?



And...

Ask your parents and older relatives about your ancestors.

Can you make a chart of your family's generations of relatives? Keep it someplace special and show it to your children!

!

April 10, 2022

Palm Sunday



Dig In...

This was a big parade. Jesus made quite an entrance! There was no television back then – people had heard about him, but most had never seen him before. He had traveled all over Israel helping people, doing miracles, and teaching them about God's love. Now the waiting was over – the promised King was arriving and people were cheering.

When Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey the people threw their coats on the ground before him as a sign of respect. They waved palm branches as a symbol of victory and triumph.

Question...

Jesus was not like a "normal" king. He did not have a big fancy horse or a big army to go with him in this parade on Palm Sunday.

What does a traditional king look like?

What is his job?

What do you imagine a parade would look like for a king that everyone loved?



And...

The people welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem by shouting "Hosanna!" The word means "save" and "rescue."

At church today, did the congregation say or sing the word "Hosanna"? On future Sundays, listen to hear if the word "hosanna" is used on other Sundays, or every Sunday.

Imagine someone famous or special coming to where you live. What would it be like?

Make a list of people you would be really excited to see.

April 11, 2022

Monday in Holy Week Jesus Cleanses the Temple



Dig In...

The day after Palm Sunday, Jesus went to the Temple in Jerusalem. He found people there who were cheating visitors out of their money. Jesus turned over their tables and threw them out of the Temple, because their hearts were far from God. He preached to the people about keeping the Temple as a place for prayer. This story is found in the Gospel of Luke, chapter 19, verses 45-48

Question...

After this, Jesus and the disciples go to the town of Bethany.
Imagine their conversation as they walked.

Do you wonder what they were feeling?

What would it have been like to be one of the people who got
thrown out of the Temple?

What makes you angry?

Can anger be a good thing AND sometimes a bad thing?



And...

Build a model of the Temple using Legos or any blocks you have.

Jesus purifies the Temple and purifies us. How?

He restores the Temple into a house of prayer. Pray for your church.



Extra...

Today is National Pet Day. Do you have a pet?

April 12, 2022

Tuesday in Holy Week
Day of Preparation



Dig In...

This day can be a day of preparation for Easter, in the same way that Jewish families in Bible times cleaned in preparation for Passover. Sounds like Spring Cleaning! Clean and prepare your home as if Jesus was coming to visit. This can be done by all ages of people. And all ages can help things stay tidy. Use the day to get back on track with whatever you gave up, or added, for Lent. Does your home have a cross in it? Maybe you have a statue of Jesus? If not, maybe you can make one.

Question...

Does your family usually purchase an Easter Lily to put in your home?

Consider getting one for someone who needs to hear good news.

Does everyone in your family have an age-appropriate Bible?
Perhaps it's a good time to bring home new Bibles.



And...

There are many movies and films about the life of Jesus.
Make some popcorn and watch one.

Extra...

Today is National Library Workers Day
Make a trip to the library soon.



April 13, 2022

Wednesday in Holy Week
Spy Wednesday



Dig In...

During the last week of Jesus life, his friend Judas betrayed him. Jesus spends his days teaching and preaching in the Temple. The chief priests and scribes were in a hurry to arrest and kill Jesus because they wanted to do it before Passover, just a couple days away. Judas arranges for Jesus enemies to catch him. Judas becomes a spy and plans to let his friendship with Jesus down. Judas will receive 30 pieces of silver when he does this sad thing

Question...

How do you feel when a friend lets you down?

Are you a good friend?

What advice would you give someone about being a good friend?

How do you show appreciation for your friends?



And...

Judas tells the officials that the person he will kiss is Jesus. It's a signal, so they will arrest the correct person.

Look up the word "betray."



Extra...

Today is the birthday of Thomas Jefferson.
Research him and the things he accomplished.

April 14, 2022

Thursday in Holy Week
Maundy Thursday



Dig In...

Maundy means commandment. Jesus gave the disciples a new commandment to "Love one another as I have loved you." (John 13:34)

Jesus has this conversation at their last supper. At every communion service we attend, we remember that at the Last Supper, Jesus taught that the bread and wine are his body and blood.

Also at the Last Supper, Jesus washed the feet of the disciples to show us that we should serve each other and care for each other. Jesus invited the disciples to pray in the Garden of Gethsemane with him, but they soon fell asleep.

Question...

Help someone – do something for someone in need.
Share a meal. Either invite people, or take food to people in need.

Do you remember to thank God for food at meals?
What ways can we love one another as Jesus has loved us?



And...

Are you an altar server, or acolyte, at your church? Find out how to become one.

April 15, 2022

Friday in Holy Week
Good Friday



Dig In...

This is the most solemn and sorrowful day of the church year. In the early morning hours of Good Friday, Jesus was arrested. This is also when Judas betrayed Jesus by kissing his cheek. Later that morning, Jesus stood trial where he was whipped, beaten, spat upon, and then made to carry his own cross up the hill where he was nailed to it. A crown of thorns was forced on his head. Later that afternoon, Jesus died. He was removed from the cross, wrapped in cloths, and put in a nearby tomb.

It is okay to feel sad on Good Friday.

Question...

Jesus died and rose to forgive us and to give us everlasting life. Friends and family members who have died, rise to new life in heaven because of Jesus.

Jesus taught us to forgive people, even if they have been hurtful. Imitate that forgiveness, with God's help.

What makes Good Friday good?



And...

Use sidewalk chalk to draw a Holy Week picture on your driveway or sidewalk.

If the weather is bad, use chalk on black construction paper.

April 16, 2022

Saturday in Holy Week



Dig In...

After Jesus died, he was put in a tomb. Joseph of Arimathea was a wealthy man who donated the tomb. The tomb was like a cave, carved out of stone. The guards rolled a big rock in front of the opening to make sure that no one could get in or out. They knew that Jesus was dead, but they didn't want anyone to sneak out his body. Because this day was the Jewish Sabbath, all activity stopped, and Jesus' followers had to wait until the next day to properly put spices and ointment on his body.

Question...

Holy Saturday seems like a dark day. Churches that have services this night, usually start the service in darkness. At first they light one candle, then several, and then turn on the lights – because Jesus is the light of the world. Jesus is light and life. Can you think of movies or stories when things seems to have gone very badly for a character, then all goes well? How do you feel when things go wrong? How do you feel when bad things turn around and end up good?



And...

Some people think of Holy Saturday as a cocoon and Easter as a butterfly. Why?

What does the word "resurrection" mean?

April 17, 2022

Easter Day

Today, most churches will sing joyful Easter songs.

Here are a couple verses from a popular Easter hymn:

Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia!
our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!
who did once upon the cross, Alleluia!
suffer to redeem our loss, Alleluia!

Sing we to our God above, Alleluia!
praise eternal as his love, Alleluia!
praise him, all ye heavenly host, Alleluia!
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Alleluia!
Words to this hymn are from
Lyra Davidica and Charles Wesley.

The word "Alleluia" means "praise the Lord" a term of great joy!
The Lord is risen; the Kingdom has come; our joy is complete; and we greet the risen Lord with
shouts of "Alleluia!"

When you are in church today, notice something from each of your five senses.

Sight – what do you see at church today? Anything different? Who did you see at church today?

Sound – what do you hear? loud things AND quiet things? Did you hear anyone coughing? Did you
hear an infant?

Smell – what do you smell today? Perfumes? Flowers? Candles? Can you smell the wine at
communion?

Taste – what does communion taste like? Did anyone near you offer a mint? Is there a snack after
church?

Touch – what surfaces did you touch today? Soft items? Papers? Communion? Robes or vestments?
Notice things for your 5 senses each time you're at church.