

Lent



See. Taste. Hear.
Smell. Touch. Give.

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Introduction

Originally, Lent was the period before Easter when converts were instructed in the Christian faith to prepare them for baptism on Easter. Lent now is a designated time for churches to prepare for the celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The forty days of Lent begin on Ash Wednesday, end on the day before Palm Sunday, and do not include Sundays, since all Sundays are considered small celebrations of the Resurrection. Churches often use the weeks of Lent to study the life, teachings, and miracles of Jesus and other significant Scriptures, and to gather for devotion and prayer.

Lent at Home in Community is an intergenerational resource of six sessions using the Psalms from the six Sundays of Lent in the Revised Common Lectionary (Year B). These Psalm passages are used for sessions titled Seeing, Tasting, Hearing, Touching, Smelling, and Giving. It is written for use at home.

For the Church Leader

You have permission to distribute this resource – printed or digitally – to homes represented in your church. The “For Homes” section below gives instructions for using it at home. Provide additional information that may be helpful for your community.

To encourage relationships in the wider church community, invite homes to gather – in person or through video conferencing – after each session, reflecting on the following prompts:

1. Invite someone to read the session’s Scripture.
2. Talk about the activity for this week’s session.
3. Share how your reading, response, or prayer made you feel.
4. Wonder together about how the experience may have drawn you closer to God and to others.
5. Invite someone to close in prayer.

For Homes

Lent at Home in Community is a six-session resource for your home to use during Lent. The sessions, written for all ages, can be done by individuals or with others within the same home. You may do one, some, or all the sessions. Choose a Lent at Home day for each session, preferably the same day each week. Your church may recommend a day for Lent at Home

Lent at Home in Community

sessions, which may be followed by a virtual or in-person group conversation by all participating.

Allow about 15 minutes for each session, where you will

1. Read a passage from Psalms.
2. Do an activity that responds to the passage.
3. Pray together.

All supplies should be readily available in your home. Make substitutions as needed so that preparation is easy.

Week One: Seeing

Key verses: Psalm 25:4-5



Supplies

Option 1 for Praying in Color: blank pieces of paper, colored pencils or crayons

Option 2 for a walk: none



Read

“Make your ways known to me, Lord; teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth—teach it to me—because you are the God who saves me. I put my hope in you all day long.” Psalm 25:4-5



Respond

Option 1:

Using instructions from Sybil MacBeth’s Praying in Color website

(<https://prayingincolor.com/>) spend some time in silence drawing free-form shapes and pathways and writing people’s names for prayer inside them.

Option 2:

Take a walk outside and record all that you see. What paths can you follow on your walk? Can you take turns as the leader of the walk? What do you see that makes you think of God? For added insight of being in nature, read together “Silence,” a lovely children’s book by Jerome Berryman available at churchpublishing.org/silence



Pray

God of all times and all places. God of sight, taste, sound, touch, smell, and service. Grant us your grace in this season of Lent as we ready our hearts and bodies to remember Christ’s sacrifice and anticipate the celebration of Christ’s resurrection. Provide us with better understanding of new life and unity. Bring us into deeper relationships and greater community, springing from the joy and hope that comes from an intentional walk with Christ. Amen.

Week Two: Tasting

Key verses: Psalm 22:25-26



Supplies

Option 1 for soft pretzels: ingredients for making pretzels (recipe below uses 1 package yeast, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup warm water, 1 tablespoon sugar, 2 cups flour, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt, 1 egg, coarse salt)

Option 2 for a meal: gather ingredients or foods of your choice, paper and crayons for drawing



Read

"I offer praise in the great congregation because of you; I will fulfill my promises in the presence of those who honor God. Let all those who are suffering eat and be full! Let all who seek the Lord praise him! I pray your hearts live forever!" Psalm 22:25-26



Respond

Option 1:

Make soft pretzels in the shape of crossed arms of a praying person. Find a simple recipe here <https://www.highlights.com/parents/recipes/how-make-soft-pretzels>.

Eat pretzels together. How might you offer praise to God before tasting your pretzel? How does salt on the pretzel change the taste?

Option 2:

Prepare and eat a simple meal. Describe or draw the different flavors you can taste. Wonder about who in your community might suffer by not having enough to eat.



Pray

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Week Three: Hearing

Key verses: Psalm 19:1-4



Supplies

Option 1 for silent exercise: timer, paper, pencil

Option 2 for instrumental exercise: music, paper, pencil



Read

“Heaven is declaring God's glory; the sky is proclaiming his handiwork. One day gushes the news to the next, and one night informs another what needs to be known. Of course, there's no speech, no words--their voices can't be heard--but their sound extends throughout the world; their words reach the ends of the earth. God has made a tent in heaven for the sun.” Psalm 19:1-4



Respond

Option 1:

Using a timer, sit silently outside for two minutes. Write down or share all that you hear. Share or write about ways that the sky shows God's glory during the day and at night.

Option 2:

Choose some quiet instrumental music and listen for all the instruments that you hear being played. Write down or share all that you hear. Describe the feelings you have when you listen to this music. Wonder what it might mean for the sound of this music to be heard throughout the ends of the earth.



Pray

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Week Four: Touching

Key verses: Psalm 107:1-3



Supplies

Option 1 for foam painting: tray or cookie sheet, shaving foam, spatula, food coloring or acrylic paint

Option 2 for guessing game: variety of small objects, a bath towel



Read

“Give thanks to the Lord because he is good, because his faithful love lasts forever! That's what those who are redeemed by the Lord say, the ones God redeemed from the power of their enemies, the ones God gathered from various countries, from east and west, north and south.” Psalm 107:1-3



Respond

Option 1:

Spray shaving foam onto a tray or cookie sheet. Smooth foam with spatula. Squirt food coloring or acrylic paint onto surface of foam. Using your fingers, swirl designs into the shaving foam to feel the foam and paint. As you swirl, discuss what you are thankful to God for this week.

Option 2:

Before playing, choose a variety of small objects and spread them out on one half of the towel. Fold the other half over to hide the objects. Divide the folded towel into four sections labeled “east,” “west,” “north,” “south.” To play, take turns choosing a section, putting your hand on the towel in that section, choosing one object, and guessing what it is. Play until everyone has had a turn or all objects have been identified. After the activity, share names of people you know that God has gathered from various countries.



Pray

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Week Five: Smelling

Key verses: Psalm 51:1-2



Supplies

Option 1 for candle experience: scented candles and way to light them

Option 2 for smell guessing: small containers (like jars, cups, glass bowls) covered with foil, with six edible elements (for instance lemon slice, cinnamon, coffee grounds, vanilla, oregano, garlic)



Read

“Have mercy on me, God, according to your faithful love! Wipe away my wrongdoings according to your great compassion! Wash me completely clean of my guilt; purify me from my sin!” Psalm 51:1-2



Respond

Option 1: Light one candle and sit close enough to smell it. Describe the smell. Extinguish the flame and describe the new smell. Repeat with additional candles. Wonder about what it feels like to know that God extinguishes our wrongdoings with great compassion.

Option 2: Invite each person to create one smelling container without letting others know what is in it. Cover with foil, making a small opening. Take turns smelling and describing what you smell even if you can't name it. Share what a container of something “completely clean” might smell like.



Pray

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Week Six: Giving

Key verses: Psalm 31:14-16



Supplies

Option 1 for greeting cards and goody bags: construction paper, markers or crayons, envelopes for greeting cards, wrapped treats or baked goods, plastic bag or container

Option 2 for being helpful: none



Read

"But me? I trust you, Lord! I affirm, "You are my God." My future is in your hands. Don't hand me over to my enemies, to all who are out to get me! Shine your face on your servant; save me by your faithful love!" Psalm 31:14-16



Respond

Option 1:

Create greeting cards or goody bags. For goody bags purchase wrapped treats or bake a goody, place items in a plastic bag or container and include a note. In the greeting card or note include phrases like, "God, shine your face on your servant [filling in their name]" or "God's love is a faithful love." Cards or notes can be signed or anonymous. Leave items at a neighbor's door without telling them you are coming. Make more than one, if desired. Text or call later to make sure they found it.

Option 2:

Consider or discuss what the face of a servant looks like. During the week quietly do something helpful (servant-like) for someone in your household or neighborhood.



Pray

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Who is GenOn Ministries?

GenOn Ministries is a non-profit organization that partners with churches to nurture, grow, and deepen intergenerational Christ-centered community. Our guiding principle is that nurturing an abundant life-giving relationship with God through Jesus Christ is the most important thing the church ever does.

What does GenOn Ministries do?

GenOn offers resources, experiences, training and support to help churches grow Christ-centered relationships and move toward forming deeper intergenerational community.

We offer training, resources, and support for...

Sunday LIFT (Living In Faith Together): Sunday morning intergenerational faith-formation gatherings. Sunday LIFT invites all ages to share food, learn, worship, and have fun in small groups around tables. Using 1-2 key leaders to prepare and guide 45-60-minute sessions, LIFT replaces or supplements traditional Sunday school. Sunday LIFT resources can be purchased in 4-session units or 3-unit sets of 12 sessions for fall, winter, spring and summer. Started in 2018, LIFT is found in churches of all sizes and settings.

All God's Children: The Church Family Gathers: Event-based intergenerational faith-formation gatherings. An intergenerational resource collection since 2013. All God's Children guides 2-hour gatherings for generations to eat, play, study, and worship together to grow intergenerational Christ-centered community. Theme-based Series are available for Advent/Christmas/Epiphany, Lent, summer, Vacation Bible School, and retreats.

LOGOS: A weekly intergenerational experience started over 55 year ago. Through LOGOS, generations learn and grow in faith modeled after the early church from Acts 2:42, in 2.5-3-hour sessions with time for Bible Study, Recreation/Mission, Worship Arts, and Family Time meal. GenOn Ministries provides resources and support for LOGOS, a ministry that is in churches all over the US and Canada.

We offer an intergenerational retreat experience at...

Summer Youth Summits: A week of Christ-centered community to examine faith, grow in commitment to God, and experience a service component. High school youth, young adults, and their leaders attend together in July. GenOn Youth Summits have been held each summer for over 50 years.

All our resources, training, and Youth Summit opportunities are available at www.GenOnMinistries.org. Contact us at info@GenOnMinistries.org or 877-937-2572.