

A Lenten Awakening: Ideas for the Lenten Journey

We invite you to experience Lent in a way that enables you to grow more fully awake to God and God's loving presence, power, and call. With that goal in mind, we encourage you to join us on the Lenten journey. Here are some ideas that can help us along the way:

5 Questions to Ask Yourself*:

1. What will my being more fully awake to God on Easter morning look like? How will I be different?
2. Is there a habit or sin in my life that repeatedly gets in the way of loving God with my whole heart or loving my neighbor as myself? How will I address that issue over the next 40 days?
3. What are some things in my life that I tell myself I need but I don't? Can I give one or two of them up for 40 days?
4. Is there a spiritual discipline—praying the hours, *lectio divina*, stations of the cross, etc.—that I've always wanted to try? How might I alter my daily routine to include one of these disciplines? And how can I engage all my senses—sight, sound, taste, smell, touch—as I practice them?
5. How do I want Lent 2022 to affect not only the next 40 days but also the next 40 years?

4 Personal Devotional Practices to Try:

1. Spend time in quiet and solitude each day, turn off and away from distractions, acknowledging God is with you.
2. Use a daily devotional resource for prayer times in Lent. (Among the many: sacredspace.ie is a great online resource and pray-as-you-go.org is a wonderful devotional app.)
3. Keep a daily journal of prayers, reflections on life, and/or thoughts arising in reading Scripture.
4. Keep a wonder and thanksgiving journal. Each morning, list three to five things that make you smile as you look to the day ahead. Each evening, list three to five things that brought a sense of wonder, awe, and/or joy to your heart.

3 Ways to Partner with Others in the Journey:

1. Commit to being present at worship services (online, if necessary) each week through Easter.
2. Participate in a weekly Christian Education class, Bible Study, or Small Group.
3. Partner with someone through Lent, encouraging each other in prayer, in following through on your Lenten commitments, and sharing together your hopes, concerns, and thanks with God.

2 Options for Opening Our Hearts to Our Neighbors:

1. Choose a way to offer the love of Christ each week to people in your life: through a visit, meal, or treats, by writing a thank you note or sending a card, or by making a phone call.
2. Engage more fully in the ministry of our church or in service beyond. The pandemic has led to a general drop in volunteerism and in deeper connections in society. Here at Salem and beyond, the needs and opportunities are great. Prayerfully consider and commit to stepping up your offering of time, talent, and treasure as we extend the love of God together to our neighbors.

A Prayer for Ourselves and for Others Each Day

1. Choose a Psalm, a Scripture, or a prayer to pray each day throughout Lent. (Possibilities include Psalm 46, 51, 66, or 139, Isaiah 58, Luke 6:17-39, the Prayer of St. Francis...)
2. Pray this daily: "May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the powerful, loving presence of the Holy Spirit be with me, and be revealed through me, today and forever. Amen."

* Adapted from Rachel Held Evans, "40 Ideas for Lent 2014," *Rachel Held Evans* (blog), March 5, 2014, <https://rachelheldevans.com/blog/40-ideas-for-lent-2014>