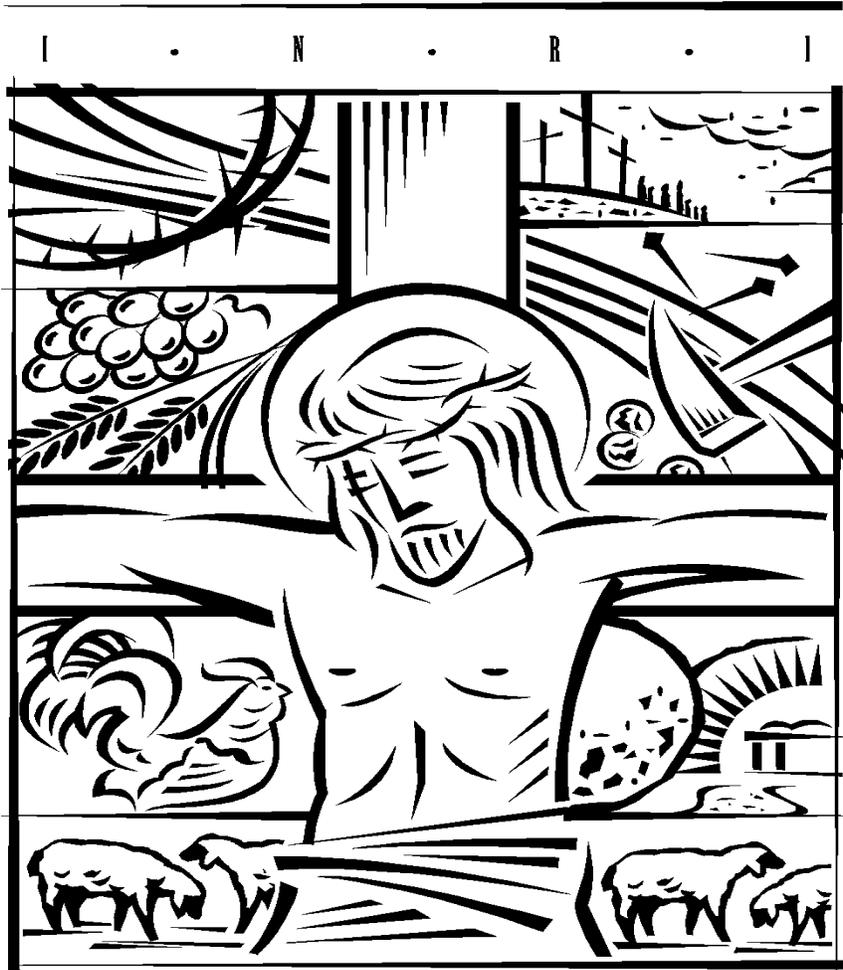


Pilgrim Lutheran Church and School

“40 Ways in 40 Days”

Ideas for Lent



*40 ways to grow as a follower of Christ
during the 40 days of Lent.*

Welcome to the season of Lent

Throughout the Bible a period of time marked by the number 40 is a time of trial, testing, and growth. For example, in Noah's day it rained for 40 days and 40 nights, in Moses day the Israelites wandered in the wilderness for 40 years, and in David's day the giant Goliath taunted the Israelites for 40 days. The Bible is filled with examples of 40 incremental periods of trial, testing and growth. Lent lasts for a period of 40 days, not counting Sundays, and has that same sentiment of challenge that leads to beneficial result. It's a season of repentance that leads to a time of joy. *The 40 days of Lent will often be as beneficial as we make them.* To that end, this booklet is being offered to help you consider and take part in a number of exercises to strengthen your faith.

"Life Together" The season of Lent provides an opportunity to regroup and get back on track. Our Lenten Midweek Worship will celebrate our Life Together, responding to contemporary ideologies that challenge our faith in the "Postmodern Era" with the timeless teaching of Jesus. The teachings and the example of Jesus' life will help to restore us to faithful Life Together with Him and with each other. The goal of this booklet is to offer good ways to follow Christ and bless His people during the season of Lent. Here they are, 40 ways to journey with Jesus this Lent.

#1.) Midweek Worship

Our Lenten Worship this year focuses on Life Together with Jesus in a world that's coming apart. You'll learn to respond to contemporary ideologies, you'll reconnect with the accounts of the Passion of Jesus, you'll draw meaningful application for life today, and you'll grow with other believers. Make it a point to attend every midweek worship service this year.

#2.) Fasting

After consulting a doctor, take time to consider fasting as a way to draw near to God this Lent. Fasting can be as simple as just missing one meal. Take that time to pray, to read, to exercise or to connect with a friend, but mostly use it as a reminder of all Jesus "gave up" for you.

#3.) Write a Wrong

Take time to write an apology note or encouraging note to someone in your life who needs an apology or at least an honest word about your godly intentions to improve your way of relating with him/her. A personal letter now-a-days can have a very positive impact.

#4.) Pray/Memorize a Hymn Stanza

You may want to consider buying a hymnal or using a hymnal from church. Take time to pick out a hymn that speaks to you and has a prayer. Take time to memorize a stanza that you can use as a prayer. There are some old hymnals at the resource table available for free.

#5.) Give up Something for Lent

Many Christians of all denominations make it a practice to give up something during this season as a reminder to focus on Christ and His sacrifice (all that he gave up for us). Some people give up sweets or eating out at restaurants. Others stop drinking soda or give up shopping at a favorite store. Use the mental reminder of giving up something to help you focus on Christ.

#6.) Have Family Devotions

Set aside a specific time every day to share a devotion with family. If you live alone, set aside a time for yourself, or consider agreeing with a friend or distant family member to share the same devotion at the same time every day. Pilgrim is offering 3 different devotional resources free of charge for your use: Portals of Prayer, Our Daily Bread, and The Lenten Devotional "The Marks of Love."

#7.) Take the \$10 Tender Care Initiative Challenge

Set aside \$10 to stretch as far as possible. Think of a creative way to use that \$10 to do as much good for the Kingdom of God as possible. After you've completed your project, post what you did on the Tender Care Initiative wall at church.

#8.) Serve Someone

Identify one person that God has placed in your life who is in need, identify the need, and then fill it for that person. Then try to spend the next 40 days serving that person as a demonstration of the great sacrifices that Jesus has made for all of us.

#9.) Tell Someone/Invite Someone

Identify one person that God has placed in your life that needs to hear the Gospel. Pray for that person and then think of specific ways and specific Scripture passages that you could use to free, encourage, or bless him/her in Christ.

#10.) Strengthen Someone

Identify one person in our church family that you know whose faith is fading or who needs encouragement. Through prayer and Christian conversation with that person, let God use you to strengthen his/her faith. Seek them out to go the extra mile in support.

#11.) Train Up a Child with Arch Books

Pilgrim has many "Arch Books" for children in the church library. These rhyming Bible story books are a great way to tell children about the Bible and about the events of Jesus' life we remember in the season of Lent. Check them out ... literally!!

#12.) Read the Lent Story

Spend some time in Scripture reading the story of Jesus' final days. Doing this would include reading, Matthew 21-28, Mark 11-15, Luke 19:28- 24, and finally John 15-21.

#13.) Get the Kids Involved - Lent Coloring Project

Pilgrim is offering a coloring project and display for kids. Help yourself to one of the coloring pages at the resource table in church. Have your child complete the project to display at home or return it to the welcome center to be added to our display at church.

#14.) Confession and Absolution

Is there a sin that is weighing you down and you cannot seem to shake it? Did you know that the Pastors at Pilgrim have a Individual Confession and Absolution rite? If you'd like to observe a private time of confession/absolution, come to the Wednesday morning communion service and spend some time in prayerful preparation.

#15.) Live a Less "Sheltered" Life - Long Johns for St. John's

St. John's Homeless Shelter is in need of new adult long johns. You can serve others by shopping for them and returning the items to church. We will deliver all items to St. John's Homeless Shelter for you.

#16.) Tithe

Some Christians are very faithful at tithing, some are trying to work up to tithing (giving 10%) and some simply do not tithe. Regardless of your previous giving patterns, set a goal this Lent to grow in serving by tithing during the 40 days of Lent.

#17.) Pray for People

Be a prayer warrior for people in your life. Call up friends or family and ask them for prayer requests. If someone asks for your help or advice, take a brief moment to offer a prayer for them before your conversation ends.

#18.) For Kids - Attend the Good Friday Children's Service

Pilgrim provides a kid friendly Good Friday worship service. Plan to attend this year. The service will begin at 5:30pm on Friday, April 2.

#19.) Participate in 40 Days of Life

Pilgrim members are invited to participate in the 40 days of life campaign. Those who would like to join in prayer for the safety of pre-born life may receive information about the 40 Days of Life efforts in the entryway.

#20.) Journal – Prayer Journal

Start a faith journal. You can do so many things in a faith journal. Write down sermon thoughts that you found interesting. Write down your favorite Bible passages. Include prayers, questions, and thoughts for God. Your journal can include the names of people you are praying for or a list of different attributes you hope to develop through prayer.

#21.) Write a Lenten "To Do" List or Lenten Bucket List

If you're a person who makes to do lists, this is right up your alley. Make a list or 40 things (or a lesser number) that you'd like to do during the 40 days of lent. Your "Bucket List" would include all the things you hope to accomplish before the season of Lent "kicks the bucket." The list can include spiritual disciplines, practical concerns, weight loss goals, saving money or unique opportunities to grow. Celebrate the sense of accomplishment as you check off items during the season.

#22.) Write a Lenten "To Don't" List or Lenten "Kick the Bucket List"

If you're a person who makes to do lists, this is a different angle. Make a list or 40 things that you'd like to STOP doing during the 40 days of lent. The stop list can include bad language, arriving late, or snacking before bedtime. Celebrate the sense of accomplishment as you eliminate bad habits during the season.

#23.) Door to Door Devotions or Prayer Walk

Take extra Lenten devotion books to share with people in your neighborhood, or take time to walk through your neighborhood praying for each home. Seek to do this at least once/week during lent.

#24.) Show Christian Kindness

Pilgrim hosts regular Planned Acts of Christian Kindness (PACK events). Check out the details for a PACK event in the bulletin and attend the event.

#25.) Share 40 Good Messages

By using email, Facebook or another form of social media, it's not hard to share 40 good messages with others. Think of 40 different people that you could reach simply by forwarding a meaningful observation this Lent.

#26.) Attend a Bible Class

There are always Bible studies happening. Take the time to grow together with others and make some new friends as you study God's Word. The Bulletin has the details.

#27.) Support a Missionary

Make it a point to pray for, contact and support a specific missionary during the days of Lent. Write a personal note the them thanking for going to the place of His calling. Pilgrim supports these missionaries: Michael & Evynn Schlender, Elliot & Serena Derricks, Paul & Alli Federwitz, Sam & Cayla Schaefer, and Nathan & Beth Toenjes.

#28.) Fully Observe Holy Week

Holy Week offers a variety of Christian worship experiences with a variety of styles and emphases. Take advantage of as many opportunities as possible. Options include:

- Maundy Thursday - The service includes an emphasis on communion and the observance of stripping the altar.
- Good Friday's 3 different services with different formats.
- Easter Sunday - Resurrection Celebration.

By attending these many opportunities, Christians get a deeper sense of what Jesus suffered for us.

#29.) Assist with Lenten Worship

Ushers and greeters are needed for our midweek services. If you are interested, just show up ready to help.

#30.) Imposition of Ashes & Baptism

On Ash Wednesday Pilgrim offers the imposition of ashes as a part of the worship experience. Participate in this tradition and later, as you wash off the ashes, consider your baptism and contact any baptismal sponsors to remind them of their baptism.

#31.) Switch from Screens to Faces for a Week

An inappropriate portion of our time is spent in front of screens these days: TV screens, computer screens, the screen of a cell phone or a video game. Make a commitment to not look at a screen for an entire day and use the time spent to enjoy the company of another person. By eliminating the "screen time," you'll have the opportunity to offer someone "face time." Enjoy their company and conversation as a part of your Lent.

#32.) Start a "Cussing Jar" in Your Home

In order to clean up your language, put a jar on the counter at your home. Place a quarter or a dollar in the jar every time someone says an inappropriate word. This could be a cuss word, something disrespectful or a harsh comment. When the season is over, donate the funds to a ministry that speaks the Good News.

#33.) Share a Lenten Devotion

There are many ways you can share a devotion during the Lenten season. Pilgrim is again making Lenten devotions available for you. Perhaps you could share a devotion by taking an extra copy and sharing it with a friend, reading a devotion together with a family member, or emailing a devotional thought that you found helpful.

#34.) Connect with Lutherans for Life

Take time this Lent to be informed about and speak out about life issues. To get more information pick up a tract in the narthex or go to the website of Lutherans for Life (www.lutheransforlife.org).

#35.) Attack a Giant

Listen to what the Bible says about the 40-day challenge of the most famous giant in all the Bible, Goliath (I Samuel 17). - *A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. His height was six cubits and a span.¹⁶ For forty days the Philistine came forward every morning and evening and took his stand.*

Like Goliath, there are many giant issues facing Christians today. You may have a personal "giant" to face. In order for people to accomplish major change and overcome long-term obstacles, they often need to sustain that change for at least 40 days. Is there a major change that you need to make in your life? Could the next 40 days be the perfect God-given opportunity? Prayerfully consider God's prompting to attack a giant.

#36.) Share a Meal

There are more people who regularly eat alone, especially during the Coronavirus pandemic. As Christians we know that a meal is a unique opportunity for friendship and faith building. Take time this Lent to make a meal for someone else. Think about someone whose been divorced or someone who has had a loved one die. Who would be pleasantly surprised by your offer to provide a meal for them?

#37.) Take a “Wilderness” Time Out to Think - Retreat to Advance

Just after His baptism, Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness for 40 days. “Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.” (Matthew 4:1-2) Dedicate a day or part of each day to solitude and intense rethinking. You may want to even travel to a retreat center. If you really want to get away, Camp Luther offers cottages at a reduced rate in the off season. Details are available on their website (www.camluther.com).

#38.) Attend Monday Bible Class

The Monday Bible class is presently studying the book of Acts. With significant information about the geography and historical context for the building of the early church, you’ll gain new appreciation for the Word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit. The class meets every Monday at 9:45am in the sanctuary and is also available online.

#39.) Use a Paschal Candle at Home During Holy Week

At Pilgrim we have a Paschal Candle in the Chancel area. It’s the large white candle. We light this candle at several special occasions as a reminder of the hope of Jesus’ Resurrection: baptisms (new birth), Easter (Jesus’ new life) and funerals (our new eternal life). You may wish to designate Paschal Candle for your home. To do this simply place a large white candle on the dinner table and light it at meal time or devotion time. Explain the significance of this candle in our Holy Week worship. On good Friday the candle is removed from the sanctuary to remind us that Jesus (the Light of Life) had died. On Easter Sunday a procession with this same candle symbolizes the fact that Jesus is alive!

40.) Help Yourself to a Cross on Ash Wednesday

On Ash Wednesday Pilgrim will offer a free wooden hanging cross. Help yourself to one of these crosses or take one as a gift. Hang the cross in your home to serve as a reminder of the sacrifice that Jesus made for you.