METROPOLITAN

CHRISTIAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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FEBRUARY 18TH – APRIL 4, 2026
OUR PILGRIMAGE TO THE CROSS

1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th Sundays: Worship 10:30 A.M. – Virtually, Church School Various Times

PRAYER MEETING & BIBLE STUDY
Wednesdays: 6:00PM - Virtually

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AN OVERVIEW

- **ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE**: February 18th, @ 12:00PM – Metropolitan CME Church
- **CORPORATE PRAYER, WEDNESDAY EVENINGS AT 6:00PM:** All members are requested and encouraged to covenant with the pastor in corporate prayer for the Spiritual Discipline of the Church, Spiritual Revival of the Church, and Growth of the Church.
- **THE PULPIT ON SUNDAYS:** Sermons will be delivered by Pastor Page that speak to our struggles with sacrifice and denying self interests, which hinders our submission to God through Jesus Christ. These sermons will inspire us to understand the mandate on our lives to increase our discipleship and make disciples for solid kingdom building.

- **HOLY WEEK SERVICES:** The Houston District's Ministers Alliance will hold virtual services – Wednesday, April 1st – Bible Study; Thursday, April 2nd – Holy Communion; Friday, April 3rd – Seven Last Words @ 7PM each night – Locations and further details to be determined.

THE LENTEN FAST 2026

Please join us for a Lenten Fast. The entire church family, extended family, friends, etc. are asked to join us during the forty days of the Season of Lent in fasting and praying ***(Beginning Ash Wednesday, February 18, 2026, through the Saturday prior to Resurrection Sunday, April 5, 2026)****. Please select from the various "Fast" models listed below. If you have already missed the first few days, please join us now.*

"Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil and after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. And the tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.'" ***Matthew 4:1 – 3***

In the Bible, fasting is mentioned in both the Old and New Testaments and was utilized for a number of purposes:

- *To aid in the development of a humble attitude (Ezra 8:21; Psalm 69:10) ,*
- *To gain guidance and help from God (Exodus 34:28; II Samuel 12:16-23; II Chronicles 20:3-4),*
- *To express earnest supplication in times of mourning or distress (Ezra 8:21-23),*
- *As a means of expressing one's devotion to God (Matthew 6:16-18; Luke 18:9-14),*
- *To recognize Special Days (Acts 27:9; Luke 18:12)*

It is important to note that in each situation where Fasting is mentioned, there is a specific purpose for that Fast. A sincerity and committed attitude is required on the part of the participant. If the Fast is without purpose, sincerity or committal, it is done in vain and brings no positive results. However, fasting with sound purpose and genuine commitment reaps many benefits (Isaiah 58:3-9).

Fasting has been used throughout the ages to prepare the people of God for the great things God has in store for them. As we pray through this season of transition and Divine imagination, I am calling, I am asking, I am requesting that the entire church become involved in some form of prayer and fasting. The following are several types of fasts that can be used to develop spiritual power and clarity.

Fast #1 – Fasting to confront destructive forces

February 18 – February 28	Eat all meals before 6:00PM
March 1 – March 7	Eat only two meals a day before 6:00PM
March 8 – March 14	Eat only one meal a day before 6:00 PM
March 15 – March 21	Drink only juices, water and/or tea
March 22 – March 28	Eat only fruits before 6:00PM
March 29 – April 4	Slowly begin to add vegetables to your diet

Fast #2 – The Daniel Fast (Taken from the book of Daniel) When Daniel was captured by the Babylonians, he asked of the Babylonians if he, along with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, could fast, eating only fruits and vegetables so they would be prepared to confront the Babylonian king.

February 18 – March 7	Eat all meals before 6:00PM
March 8 – March 14	Eat only two meals a day before 6:00PM
March 15 – March 21	Eat only fruit and vegetables before 6:00PM
March 29 – April 4	Eat only one meal a day before 6:00PM

Fast #3 - Our beverages will be water, juices, fruit-based smoothies and protein shakes. Please refrain from: coffee, carbonated drinks (including sparkling water, sparkling juice and soda pop), alcoholic beverages, milk (unless for medicinal intake), tea, milk shakes, lattes, and hot cocoa.

February 18 – February 28	No sweets (cakes, pies, cookies, candy, pastries)
March 1 – March 7	No bread or pasta (corn bread, wheat or white bread, rolls, macaroni, spaghetti, etc.)
March 8 – March 14	No flesh (beef, chicken, fish, veal, turkey, lamb, etc), milk* (unless for medication) or cheese
March 15 – March 21	If you can, please eat only raw fruits, vegetables and nuts only. Feel free to enjoy water, juices, protein drinks and fruit smoothies.
March 22 – March 28	No electronic media (i.e., internet, social network sites, etc., IPods, IPads, MP3 players, etc.) - instead use time for bible study or reading helpful literature.
March 29 – April 4	No television – instead share quality time with family and loved ones

Fast #4 – Removing certain foods or items from your diet or life. One type of fasting is to remove certain foods, such as fried foods, sweets, sodas, or refined sugar and/or flour, from your diet.

Please consult your physician before proceeding with fasting. If you take medication or have any particular ailment, it is important to first communicate with your physician.

THOUGHTS FROM THE PASTOR

THE LENTEN JOURNEY:
A PILGRIMAGE TO THE CROSS

His Passion and Death

"THIS IS THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT JESUS CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD."
MARK1:1 (CEV)

"God demonstrates His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."
Romans 5:8

Back in the days of the Great Depression, a Missouri man named John Griffith was the controller of a great railroad drawbridge across the Mississippi River. One day in the summer of 1937, he decided to take his eight-year-old son, Greg, with him to work. At noon, John Griffith put the bridge up to allow ships to pass and sat on the observation deck with his son to eat lunch. Time passed quickly. Suddenly he was startled by the shrieking of a train whistle in the distance. He quickly looked at his watch and noticed it was 1:07 -- the Memphis Express, with four hundred passengers on board, was roaring towards the raised bridge! He leaped from the observation deck and ran back to the control tower. Just before throwing the master lever, he glanced down for any ships below. There a sight caught his eye that caused his heart to leap poundingly into his throat. Greg had slipped from the observation deck and had fallen into the massive gears that operate the bridge. His left leg was caught in the cogs of the two main gears! Desperately John's mind whirled to devise a rescue plan. But, as soon as he thought of a possibility, he knew there was no way it could be done.

Again, with alarming closeness, the train whistle shrieked in the air. He could hear the clicking of the locomotive wheels over the tracks. That was his son down there-- yet there were four hundred passengers on the train. John knew what he had to do, so he buried his head in his left arm and pushed the master switch forward. That great massive bridge lowered into place just as the Memphis Express began to roar across the river. When John Griffith lifted his head with his face smeared with tears, he looked into the passing windows of the train. There were businessmen casually reading their afternoon papers, finely dressed ladies in the dining car sipping coffee, and children pushing long spoons into their dishes of ice cream. No one looked at the control house, and no one looked at the great gear box. With wrenching agony, John Griffith cried out at the steel train: "I sacrificed my son for you people! Don't you care?" The train rushed by, but nobody heard the father's words, which recalled Lamentations 1:12: "It is nothing to you, all who pass by?"

For 46 weeks of each year, it often seems nothing to us who pass by Calvary. We see it, and yet, we miss it. We go on indulging in our sins, our habits, and our idiosyncrasies, not realizing that our addictions, our immoralities and vices, our imperfections and frailties cost God His Son's life. Even more repeatedly, we merely excuse ourselves under the auspices: "I am not perfect," "I have been like this for too long," "I'm not the only one doing it," "God does not expect me to be perfect," "I am only human," "My sin is no worse than anybody else's," "God will forgive Me."

And HE WILL FORGIVE US, but that forgiveness did not come as easily as we pretend it did. Our guilt cost God His Son's life, and we too habitually take that fact for granted and pass by as if it is nothing to us. We are often grossly guilty of abusing the cross of Christ with our careless, haphazard, sloppy attitudes about sin and the sacrifice that God made so that we could be redeemed . . . often sinning merely because we know that we can and that forgiveness is so easy . . . often blaming Pontius Pilate or the Jews for His death, when in actuality, it was our individual sins that condemned Him to death.

But, unlike the passengers on the train who were saved because John Griffith sacrificed his son, IT SHOULD BE SOMETHING TO US who pass by, and the Lenten season furnishes us the prospect of focusing on that. It is our intermission to fasten our affection on the concessions that God made in Christ.

Lent brings us face to face with a journey into our souls as we reflect, evaluate, and measure our commitment to the cross of Christ. Lent affords us the occasion for not only penitence and penance, but it also affords us the incident for self-evaluation: HAVE I DENIED MYSELF, TAKEN UP THE CROSS, AND FOLLOWED HIM. Lent brings us face to face with our sinfulness and with the sacrifice that Christ made at Calvary. Lent ushers us into the recesses of our hearts, souls, and spirits as we confess, remember, repent, and give thanks for the cross and all that it means. Lent is a season of remembering; it is a season of sacrificing; it is a season of penitence; it is a season of Thanksgiving.

The Lenten journey takes us into the dark corners of our minds, our souls, our closets to know:

Alas! and did my Savior bleed
And did my Sovereign die?
Would He devote that sacred head
For such a worm as I?

Was it for crimes that I had done
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity! grace unknown!
And love beyond degree!

Thus might I hide my blushing face
While His dear cross appears,
Dissolve my heart in thankfulness,
And melt my eyes to tears.

But drops of grief can ne'er repay
The debt of love I owe:
Here, Lord, I give my self away
'Tis all that I can do.

SPENDING TIME WITH GOD

Intimacy

It's a sensual word; calling to mind sounds, textures, flavors, colors and fragrances. When I met my husband, he wore certain cologne. When he wasn't physically around me, I could tell he'd been close by ... in the elevator, in the lobby where we met, in the hallway. His fragrance made me look more intently for him.

God is the Creator of every splendid and glorious thing. Personal times of communion and intimacy with God can be greatly enhanced through involving our physical senses. We do it all the time in our corporate times of worship. We experience God's awesome Presence when we hear the choir sing; feel the embrace of the greeters; see the dancers dance; taste the bread and the wine. We sense His Splendor, His Majesty, His Glory.

The Fragrance Of Intimacy

The entire congregation of Israel knew when the priests were preparing to come before God. They inhaled the aroma of incense. The heavily perfumed air signaled to them that something powerful was taking place the exchange between God and man. If you'd like to bring fragrance into your "secret place," candles and fresh flowers placed on the desk where you read your Bible and write in your journal are wonderful. When choosing a bouquet, the most fragrant flowers are Roses, Stock, Carnations, Freesia and Paperwhites.

The Sound Of Intimacy

What type of music ushers you into God's presence? What sounds quiet your wandering mind and cause you to reflect on His Greatness? Purchase a small desktop CD player and play that music during your quiet time. If music doesn't do it for you, invest in a CD that plays the sound of singing birds, babbling brooks and the majestic ocean waves.

The Taste Of Intimacy

Some people love to drink coffee or tea while journaling, reading the Word and listening to God. One noted author literally sets a place for God with another coffee cup. Taking communion need not be reserved for First Sundays. For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes." 1 Corinthians11:25, We drink the cup and eat the bread in remembrance of Him. There's healing in communion. Place a beautiful goblet and saucer in your secret place to remind you that you may take communion as often as you desire.

The Look Of Intimacy

On the first day of a prayer class at my church, our teacher, Rev. Nance, challenged us to take prayer from drudgery to delight. Our first charge was to "spruce up" our place of prayer. If we didn't have a place of prayer, our charge was to carve one out -- then spruce it up! Whatever inspires you, use it to decorate your prayer closet. Whether it be simple landscape artwork, a scripture-engraved plaque or a glorious wall banner; do whatever it takes to create a place that beckons you to "come away" with Jesus.

The Touch Of Intimacy

When I go into my prayer closet, I'm like Linus with his blanket! There's a special crocheted throw that I wrap around myself and throw special pillows on the floor. I feel like I'm wrapped in God's arms, warm, safe and secure. God commands us to love Him with all our minds, souls and strength. That's everything we are, inside and outside. We have places designated for our cars, our crafts, our projects. Today, carve out a simple place in your home where you steal away to rendezvous with the Lover of Your Soul. It'll be the best improvement you've ever made to your Abode.

THE SEASON OF LENT

Dennis Bratcher

The season of Lent has not been well observed in much of evangelical Christianity, largely because it was associated with "high church" liturgical worship that some churches were eager to reject. However, much of the background of evangelical Christianity, for example the heritage of John Wesley, was very "high church." Many of the churches that had originally rejected more formal and deliberate liturgy are now recovering aspects of a larger Christian tradition as a means to refocus on spirituality in a culture that is increasingly secular.

Originating in the fourth century of the church, the season of **Lent** spans 40 weekdays beginning on Ash Wednesday and climaxing during Holy Week with Holy Thursday (Maundy Thursday), Good Friday, and concluding Saturday before Easter, Lent was originally the time of preparation for those who were to be baptized, a time of concentrated study and prayer before their baptism at the Easter Vigil, the celebration of the Resurrection of the Lord early on Easter Sunday. But since these new members were to be received into a living community of Faith, the entire community was called to preparation. Also, this was the time when those who had been separated from the Church would prepare to rejoin the community.

Today, Lent is marked by a time of prayer and preparation to celebrate Easter. Since Sundays celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, the six Sundays that occur during Lent are not counted as part of the 40 days of Lent, and are referred to as the Sundays **in** Lent. The number 40 is connected with many biblical events, but especially with the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness preparing for His ministry by facing the temptations that could lead him to abandon his mission and calling. Christians today use this period of time for introspection, self examination, and repentance. This season of the year is equal only to the Season of Advent in importance in the Christian year, and is part of the second major grouping of Christian festivals and sacred time that includes Holy Week, Easter, and Pentecost.

Lent has traditionally been marked by penitential prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Some churches today still observe a rigid schedule of fasting on certain days during Lent, especially the giving up of meat, alcohol, sweets, and other types of food. Other traditions do not place as great an emphasis on fasting, but focus on charitable deeds, especially helping those in physical need with food and clothing, or simply the giving of money to charities. Most Christian churches that observe Lent at all focus on it as a time of prayer, especially penance, repenting for failures and sin as a way to focus on the need for God's grace. It is really a preparation to celebrate God's marvelous redemption at Easter, and the resurrected life that we live, and hope for, as Christians.

Carnival, which comes from a Latin phrase meaning "removal of meat," is the three day period preceding the beginning of Lent, the Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday immediately before **Ash Wednesday**, which is the first day of the Lenten Season (some traditions count Carnival as the entire period of time between Epiphany and Ash Wednesday). The three days before Ash Wednesday are also known as **Shrovetide** ("shrove" is an Old English word meaning "to repent"). The Tuesday just before Ash Wednesday is called **Shrove Tuesday**, or is more popularly known by the French term **Mardi Gras**, meaning "Fat Tuesday," contrasting to the fasting during Lent. The entire three day period has now come to be known in many areas as Mardi Gras.

Carnival or Mardi Gras is usually a period of celebration, originally a festival before the fasting during the season of Lent. Now it is celebrated in many places with parades, costumes, dancing, and music. Many Christians' discomfort with Lent originates with distaste for Mardi Gras, which in some cultures, especially the Portuguese culture of Brazil and the French culture of Louisiana, has tended to take on the excesses of wild and drunken revelry. There has been some attempt in recent years to change this aspect of the season, such as using Brazilian Carnival parades to focus on national and cultural history. Many churches now observe Mardi Gras with a church pancake breakfast or other church meal, eating together as a community before the symbolic fasting of Lent begins.

Ash Wednesday, the seventh Wednesday before Easter Sunday, is the first day of the season of Lent. Its name comes from the ancient practice of placing ashes on worshippers' heads or foreheads as a sign of humility before

God, a symbol of mourning and sorrow at the death that sin brings into the world. It not only prefigures the mourning at the death of Jesus, but also places the worshipper in a position to realize the consequences of sin.

The color used in the sanctuary for most of Lent is purple or dark violet. These colors symbolize both the pain and suffering leading up to the crucifixion of Jesus as well as the suffering of humanity and the world under sin. But purple is also the color of royalty, and so anticipates through the suffering and death of Jesus the coming resurrection and hope of newness that will be celebrated in the Resurrection on Easter Sunday.

Some church traditions change the sanctuary colors to red for Maundy Thursday, a symbol of the disciples and through them the community of the church. Since Eucharist or communion is often observed on Maundy Thursday in the context of Passover, the emphasis is on the gathered community in the presence of Jesus the Christ.

Traditionally, the sanctuary colors of Good Friday are black, symbolizing the darkness brought into the world by sin. It also symbolizes death, not only the death of Jesus but the death of the whole world under the burden of sin. In this sense, it also represents the hopelessness and the endings that come as human beings try to make their own way in the world without God. (See The Days of Holy Week). Black is used through Holy Saturday, although it is always replaced by white before sunrise of Easter Sunday.

THE JOURNEY OF LENT

There are many ways for a congregation to mark the journey of Lent. One of the most effective ways that can be expanded in many variations is to use a rough wooden cross as a focal point for the season. The type of cross and how it is constructed will depend on exactly how it will be used. The cross is usually erected in the Sanctuary on Ash Wednesday as a visible symbol of the beginning of Lent. It is usually draped in black on Good Friday. The same cross can also become a part of the congregation's Easter celebration as it is then draped in white or gold, or covered with flowers (see The Flowering Cross).

One effective way to make use of the cross is to use it as a Prayer Cross during Lent. A hammer, square nails, and small pieces of paper are made available near the cross. At a designated time of prayer during the Sundays in Lent, people are invited to write their prayer requests on the paper, and then nail them to the cross. The quiet time of prayer with only the sounds of the hammer striking the nails can be a moving time for reflection on the meaning of Lent, and a powerful call to prayer. The prayer requests can be removed and burned as part of a Tenebrae or Stations of the Cross service during Holy Week to symbolize releasing the needs to God.

REFLECTIONS ON LENT

We enjoy celebrating Palm Sunday. The children get to make paper palm branches and for many is one of the few times they get to take an active role in "big church." We wave the palm branches and celebrate. And we all love Easter Sunday! It is a happy time, with flowers, new clothes, and the expectation of Spring in the air.

But it is too easy and promotes too cheap a grace to focus only on the high points of Palm Sunday and Easter without walking with Jesus through the darkness of Good Friday, a journey that begins on Ash Wednesday. Lent is a way to place ourselves before God humbled, bringing in our hands no price whereby we can ourselves purchase our salvation. It is a way to confess our total inadequacy before God, to strip ourselves bare of all pretense to righteousness, to come before God in dust and ashes. It is a way to empty ourselves of our false pride, of our rationalizations that prevent us from seeing ourselves as needy creatures, of our "perfectionist" tendencies that blind us to the beam in our own eyes.

Through prayer that gives up self, we seek to open ourselves up before God, and to hear anew the call "Come unto me!" We seek to recognize and respond afresh to God's presence in our lives and in our world. We seek to place our needs, our fears, our failures, our hopes, our very lives in God's hands, again. And we seek by abandoning ourselves in Jesus' death to recognize again who God is, to allow His transforming grace to work in

us once more, and to come to worship Him on Easter Sunday with a fresh victory and hope that goes beyond the new clothes, the Spring flowers, the happy music.

But it begins in ashes. And it journeys though darkness. It is a spiritual pilgrimage that I am convinced we must make one way or the other for genuine spiritual renewal to come. I have heard the passage in 2 Chronicles 7:14 quoted a lot: ". . .if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land." This usually is quoted in the context of wanting revival or renewal in the church, and the prayer is interpreted as intercessory prayer for others. But a careful reading of the passage will reveal that the prayer that is called for here is not intercessory prayer for others; it is penitential prayer for the faith community, for **us**. It is not to call for others to repent; it is a call for **us**, God's people, to repent. It is **our** land that needs to be healed, it is **our** wicked ways from which we need to turn, **we** are the ones who need to seek God's face.

Perhaps during the Lenten season we should stop praying for others as if we were virtuous enough to do so. Perhaps we should take off our righteous robes just long enough during these 40 days to put ashes on our own heads, to come before God with a new humility that is willing to confess, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." Maybe we should be willing to prostrate ourselves before God and plead, "Lord, in my hand no price I bring; simply to the cross I cling." That might put us in a position to hear God in ways that we have not heard Him in a long time. And it may be the beginning of a healing for which we have so longed.
O Lord, begin with me. Here. Now.

THE DAYS OF HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday Maundy Thursday Good Friday Holy Saturday

Holy Week is the last week of Lent, the week immediately preceding Easter Sunday. It is observed in many Christian churches as a time to commemorate and enact the suffering (Passion) and death of Jesus through various observances and services of worship. While some church traditions focus specifically on the events of the last week of Jesus' life, many of the liturgies symbolize larger themes that marked Jesus' entire ministry. Observances during this week range from daily liturgical services in churches to informal meetings in homes to participate in a Christian version of the Passover Seder.

In Catholic traditions, the conclusion to the week is called the Easter Triduum (a *triduum* is a space of three days usually accompanying a church festival or holy days that are devoted to special prayer and observance). The Easter Triduum begins Thursday evening of Holy Week with Eucharist and concludes with evening prayers Easter Sunday.

Increasingly, evangelical churches that have tended to look with suspicion on traditional "High-Church" observances of Holy Week are now realizing the value of Holy Week services, especially on Good Friday (see Low Church and High Church). This has a solid theological basis both in Scripture and in the traditions of the Faith. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German theologian who was executed by the Nazis, wrote of the *Cost of Discipleship* and warned of "cheap grace" that did not take seriously either the gravity of sin or the radical call to servanthood: "When Jesus bids a man come, he bids him come and die."

It is this dimension that is well served by Holy Week observances, as they call us to move behind the joyful celebrations of Palm Sunday and Easter, and focus on the suffering, humiliation, and death that is part of Holy Week. It is important to place the hope of the Resurrection, the promise of newness and life, against the background of death and endings. It is only in walking through the shadows and darkness of Holy Week and Good Friday, only in realizing the horror and magnitude of sin and its consequences in the world incarnated in the dying Jesus on the cross, only in contemplating the ending and despair that the disciples felt on Holy Saturday, that we can truly understand the light and hope of Sunday morning!

In observing this truth, that new beginnings come from endings, many people are able to draw a parable of their own lives and faith journey from the observances of Holy Week. In providing people with the opportunity to experience this truth in liturgy and symbol, the services become a powerful proclamation of the transformative power of the Gospel, and God at work in the lives of people.

The entire week between Palm Sunday and Holy Saturday is included in Holy Week, and some church traditions have daily services during the week. However, usually only Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday are times of special observance in most churches.

PALM SUNDAY (OR PASSION SUNDAY)

This Sunday observes the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem that was marked by the crowds who were in Jerusalem for Passover waving palm branches and proclaiming him as the messianic king. The Gospels tell us that Jesus rode into the city on a donkey, enacting the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9, and in so doing emphasized the humility that was to characterize the Kingdom He proclaimed. The irony of His acceptance as the new Davidic King (Mark 11:10) by the crowds that would only five days later cry for His execution should be a sobering reminder of the human tendency to want God on our own terms.

Traditionally, worshippers enact the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem by the waving of palm branches and singing songs of celebration. Sometimes this is accompanied by a processional into the church. In many churches, children are an integral part of this service since they enjoy processions and activity as a part of worship. This provides a good opportunity to involve them in the worship life of the community of Faith.

This Sunday is also known as **Passion Sunday** to commemorate the beginning of Holy Week and Jesus' final agonizing journey to the cross. The English word *passion* comes from a Latin word that means "to suffer," the same word from which we derive the English word *patient*. Increasingly, many churches are incorporating an emphasis on the Passion of Jesus into services on this Sunday as a way to balance the celebration of Easter Sunday. Rather than having the two Sundays both focus on triumph, Passion Sunday is presented as a time to reflect on the suffering and death of Jesus in a Sunday service of worship. This provides an opportunity for people who do not or cannot attend a Good Friday Service to experience the contrast of Jesus' death and the Resurrection, rather than celebrating the Resurrection in isolation from Jesus' suffering. However, since Sunday services are always celebrations of the Resurrection of Jesus during the entire year, even an emphasis on the Passion of Jesus on this Sunday should not be mournful or end on a negative note, as do most Good Friday Services (which is the reason Eucharist or Communion is not normally celebrated on Good Friday).

MAUNDY THURSDAY, OR HOLY THURSDAY

There are a variety of events that are clustered on this last day before Jesus was arrested that are commemorated in various ways in services of worship. These include the last meal together, which was probably a Passover meal, the institution of Eucharist or Communion, the betrayal by Judas (because of the exchange with Jesus at the meal), and Jesus praying in Gethsemane while the disciples fell asleep. Most liturgies, however, focus on the meal and communion as a way to commemorate this day.

During the last few days, Jesus and His disciples had steadily journeyed from Galilee toward Jerusalem. On the sunlight hillsides of Galilee, Jesus was popular, the crowds were friendly and the future was bright. Even His entry into Jerusalem had been marked by a joyous welcome. But in Jerusalem there was a growing darkness as the crowds began to draw back from the man who spoke of commitment and servanthood. There was an ominous tone in the murmuring of the Sadducees and Pharisees who were threatened by the new future Jesus proclaimed.

Even as Jesus and his disciples came together to share this meal, they already stood in the shadow of the cross. It was later that night, after the meal, as Jesus and His disciples were praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, that Jesus was arrested and taken to the house of Caiaphas the High Priest. On Friday He would die.

There is some difference in the chronology of these events between the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) and John's account (see Synoptic Problem). In the Synoptics, this last meal was a Passover meal, observing the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt when death "passed over" the Hebrew homes as the 10th plague fell upon the Egyptians. Yet, in John's account the Passover would not be celebrated until the next day. And while the Synoptics recount the institution of Communion during this final meal, John instead tells us about Jesus' washing the disciples' feet as a sign of servanthood.

In any case, this Thursday of Holy Week is remembered as the time Jesus ate a final meal together with the men who had followed Him for so long. We do not have to solve these questions to remember and celebrate in worship what Jesus did and taught and modeled for us here, what God was doing in Jesus the Christ. And the questions should not shift our attention from the real focus of the story: the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Traditionally in the Christian Church, this day is known as Maundy Thursday. The term **Maundy** comes from the Latin word *mandatum* (from which we get our English word *mandate*), from a verb that means "to give," "to entrust," or "to order." The term is usually translated "commandment," from John's account of this Thursday night. According to the Fourth Gospel, as Jesus and the Disciples were eating their final meal together before Jesus' arrest, he washed the disciples' feet to illustrate humility and the spirit of servanthood. After they had finished the meal, as they walked into the night toward Gethsemane, Jesus taught His disciples a "new" **commandment** that was not really new (John 13:34-35):

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, you also ought to love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

The colors for Maundy Thursday are usually the colors of Lent, royal purple. Some traditions, however, use red for Maundy Thursday, the color of the church, in order to identify with the community of disciples that followed Jesus. Along the same line, some use this day to honor the apostles who were commissioned by Jesus to proclaim the Gospel throughout the world.

The sharing of the Eucharist, or sacrament of thanksgiving, on Maundy Thursday is the means by which most Christians observe this day. There is a great variety in exactly how the service is conducted, however. In some churches, it is traditional for the pastor or priest to wash the feet of members of the congregation as part of the service. Increasingly, churches are observing some form of the Passover Seder as a setting for the Eucharist of Maundy Thursday (see Introduction to a Christian Seder and Haggadah for a Christian Seder). Some churches simply have a "pot-luck" dinner together concluded with a short time of singing and communion.

In some church traditions all of the altar coverings and decorations are removed after the Eucharist is served on Maundy Thursday. Since the altar in these traditions symbolize the Christ, the "stripping of the altar" symbolizes the abandonment of Jesus by his disciples and the stripping of Jesus by the soldiers prior to his crucifixion. This, like the darkness often incorporated into a Good Friday service, represents the humiliation of Jesus and the consequences of sin as a preparation for the celebration of new life and hope that is to come on Resurrection Day. Some churches only leave the altar bare until the Good Friday Service, when the normal coverings are replaced with black.

However it is celebrated, the Eucharist of Maundy Thursday is especially tied to the theme of remembering. As Jesus and his disciples followed the instructions in the Torah to remember God's acts of deliverance in their history as they shared the Passover meal together, so Jesus calls us to remember the new act of deliverance in our history that unfolds on these last days of Holy week

GOOD FRIDAY, OR HOLY FRIDAY

Friday of Holy Week has been traditionally been called Good Friday or Holy Friday. On this day, the church commemorates Jesus' arrest (since by Jewish customs of counting days from sundown to sundown it was already Friday), his trial, crucifixion and suffering, death, and burial. Since services on this day are to observe Jesus' death, and since Eucharist is a celebration, there is traditionally no Communion observed on Good Friday. Also, depending on how the services are conducted on this day, all pictures, statutes, and the cross are covered in mourning black, the chancel and altar coverings are replaced with black, and altar candles are extinguished. They are left this way through Saturday, but are always replaced with white before sunrise on Sunday.

There are a variety of services of worship for Good Friday, all aimed at allowing worshippers to experience some sense of the pain, humiliation, and ending in the journey to the cross. The traditional Catholic service for Good Friday was held in mid-afternoon to correspond to the final words of Jesus from the cross (c. 3 PM, Matt 27:46-50). However, modern schedules have led many churches to move the service to the evening to allow more people to participate. Usually, a Good Friday service is a series of Scripture readings, a short homily, and a time of meditation and prayer. One traditional use of Scripture is to base the homily or devotional on the **Seven Last Words of Jesus** as recorded in the Gospel tradition.

Father, forgive them . . . (Luke 23:34)
This day you will be with me in paradise (Luke 23:43)
Woman, behold your son . . .(John 19:26-27)
My God, my God . . . (Matthew 27:46, Mark 15:34)
I thirst. (John 19:28)
It is finished! (John 19:30)
Father into your hands . . . (Luke 23:46)

Some churches use the **Stations of the Cross** as part of the Good Friday Service. This service uses paintings or banners to represent various scenes from Jesus' betrayal, arrest, trial, and death, and the worshippers move to the various stations to sing hymns or pray as the story is told. There is a great variety in how this service is conducted, and various traditions use different numbers of stations to tell the story.

Another common service for Good Friday is **Tenebrae** (Latin for "shadows" or "darkness"). Sometimes this term is applied generally to all church services on the last three days of Holy week. More specifically, however, it is used of the **Service of Darkness** or **Service of Shadows**, usually held in the evening of Good Friday. Again, there are varieties of this service, but it is usually characterized by a series of Scripture readings and meditation done in stages while lights and/or candles are gradually extinguished to symbolize the growing darkness not only of Jesus' death but of hopelessness in the world without God. The service ends in darkness, sometimes with a final candle, the Christ candle, carried out of the sanctuary, symbolizing the death of Jesus. Often the service concludes with a loud noise symbolizing the closing of Jesus' tomb (see The Empty Tomb). The worshippers then leave in silence to wait.

Some churches observe communion on Good Friday. However, traditionally Eucharist is not served on Good Friday since it is a celebration of thanksgiving. Good Friday is not a day of celebration but of mourning, both for the death of Jesus and for the sins of the world that his death represents. Yet, although Friday is a solemn time, it is not without its own joy. For while it is important to place the Resurrection against the darkness of Good Friday, likewise the somberness of Good Friday should always be seen with the hope of Resurrection Sunday. As the well- known sermon title vividly illustrates: "It's Friday. But Sunday's a'comin'!"

HOLY SATURDAY

This is the seventh day of the week, the day Jesus rested in the tomb. In the first three Gospel accounts this was the Jewish Sabbath, which provided appropriate symbolism of the seventh day rest. While some church traditions continue daily services on Saturday, there is no communion served on this day.

Some traditions suspend services and Scripture readings during the day on Saturday, to be resumed at the Easter Vigil after sundown Saturday. It is traditionally a day of quiet meditation as Christians contemplate the darkness of a world without a future and without hope apart from God and his grace.

It is also a time to remember family and the faithful who have died as we await the resurrection, or to honor the martyrs who have given their lives for the cause of Christ in the world. While Good Friday is a traditional day of fasting, some also fast on Saturday as the climax of the season of Lent. An ancient tradition dating to the first centuries of the church calls for no food of any kind to be eaten on Holy Saturday, or for 40 hours before sunrise on Sunday. However it is observed, Holy Saturday has traditionally been a time of reflection and waiting, the time of weeping that lasts for the night while awaiting the joy that comes in the morning (Psalm 30:5).

FASTING AND PRAYING: THE PURPOSE, THE POWER, THE RESULTS

From the pulpit during Lent 2015 – Time for fasting again – fasting now more than once each year:

Isaiah 58 (Contemporary English Version) ***True Religion***

[1]Shout the message! Don't hold back. Say to my people Israel: You've sinned! You've turned against the LORD. [2]Day after day, you worship him and seem eager to learn his teachings. You act like a nation that wants to do right by obeying his laws. You ask him about justice, and say you enjoy worshiping the LORD. [3]You wonder why the LORD pays no attention when you go ***without eating and act humble***. ***But on those same days that you give up eating, you think only of yourselves [a] and abuse your workers***. [4]You even get angry and ready to fight. No wonder God won't listen to your prayers! [5]Do you think the LORD wants you to ***give up eating and to act as humble as a bent-over bush***? ***Or to dress in sackcloth and sit in ashes?*** Is this really what he wants on a day of worship? [6]I'll tell you what it really means to worship the LORD. Remove the chains of prisoners who are chained unjustly. Free those who are abused! [7]Share your food with everyone who is hungry; share your home with the poor and homeless. Give clothes to those in need; don't turn away your relatives. [8]Then your light will shine like the dawning sun, and you will quickly be healed.

I Timothy 4:6-13(Contemporary English Version) ***Paul's Advice to Timothy***

[6]If you teach these things to other followers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus. You will show that you have grown up on the teachings about our faith and on the good instructions you have obeyed. [7]Don't have anything to do with worthless, senseless stories. Work hard to be truly religious. [8 -9]As the saying goes, "Exercise is good for your body, but religion helps you in every way. It promises life now and forever." These words are worthwhile and should not be forgotten. [10]We have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of everyone, but especially of those who have faith. That's why we work and struggle so hard. [a] [11]Teach these things and tell everyone to do what you say. [12]Don't let anyone make fun of you, just because you are young. Set an example for other followers by what you say and do, as well as by your love, faith, and purity. [13]Until I arrive, be sure to keep on reading the Scriptures in worship, and don't stop preaching and teaching. [14]Use the gift you were given when the prophets spoke and the group of church leaders [b] blessed you by placing their hands on you. [15]Remember these things and think about them, so everyone can see how well you are doing. [16]Be careful about the way you live and about what you teach. Keep on doing this, and you will save not only yourself, but the people who hear you.

Matthew 17:14-21 (New American Standard Bible) ***The Demoniac***

[14](M)When they came to the crowd, a man came up to Jesus, falling on his knees before Him and saying, [15]"Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is a (N)lunatic and is very ill; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. [16]"I brought him to Your disciples, and they could not cure him." [17]And Jesus answered and said, "You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him here to Me." [18]And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured at once. [19]Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not drive it out?" [20]And He said to them, "Because of the littleness of your faith; for truly I say to you, (O)if you have faith the size of (P)a mustard seed, you will say to (Q)this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and (R)nothing will be impossible to you. [21]["[a](S)***But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."***]

- Many of us look at fasting as a convenient way to twist God's arm to do something or earn enough spiritual points to get what we want.
- Some of us fast out of a sense of Lenten piety.
- Some fast just because it is what you do during Lenten
- And of course, some fast for all the right reasons

- Whatever the reason, it seems fitting on this the first Sunday in Lent and as we continue our series of sermons on prayer that we look more closely at fasting and praying.

- Some of us fast but do no more praying than we do during any other time of year. Fasting and praying go together.

- What about our prayer lives – are we spending more quality time praying? If prayer changes things . . . then why don't we do more of it.

- Today, we look at Fasting and Praying: the purpose, the power, and the results.

First, the purpose of fasting

Why do we fast, what is fasting all about, what is the purpose?

1. There is a need to crucify the Flesh...

James 4:1-3: [1]Why do you fight and argue with each other? Isn't it because you are full of selfish desires that fight to control your body? [2]You want something you don't have, and you will do anything to get it. You will even kill! But you still cannot get what you want, and you won't get it by fighting and arguing. You should pray for it. [3]Yet even when you do pray, your prayers are not answered, because you pray just for selfish reasons.

The first purpose of fasting is to get our flesh out of the way so the Spirit of God can move in our lives.

- Fasting removes barriers to communication with God and strengthens the spiritual man

- It is a determination to remove the obstacles between us and God and to totally submit our lives to the will of God.

- Romans 8:6 -- Mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace

- 1 Cor. 9:27 -- But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified. (NKJV)

- 1 Cor 9:25--Athlete disciplines himself... like wrestling.

- Satan wants us to be poor, to give free reign to our appetites.

- Food industry, drugs, entertainment all pander to the runaway appetites in our society

- In our prosperous nation, we have problems with fasting and praying because everything around us is designed to appeal to our flesh and carnal desires.

- When we earnestly seek God through fasting and praying, we push flesh aside, deny the appetites, the control they seek to have over us, and allow our spirit man who desires God to develop and be strengthened.

- Fasting enables us to break hold of the flesh... opens us to the Spirit of God... when this happens, we get answers to prayers we did not get before.

- James 4:1-3 gives 2 reasons we don't have: (1) we don't ask... we try our own plans and procedures, handle it ourselves. (2) We ask amiss ... with the wrong motives...to consume it on our lusts.

- Some of our requests come from flesh, selfishness, not spirit man.

- Even in fasting, we sometimes want to give up the things that are easy for us to sacrifice.

The second purpose for fasting is so that we may HEAR THE VOICE OF GOD

- In Daniel 9:2,3,21,22 -- Daniel fasted to hear the voice of God

Some years later, Darius the Mede, [a] who was the son of Xerxes, [b] had become king of Babylonia. And during his first year as king, I found out from studying the writings of the prophets that the LORD had said to Jeremiah," Jerusalem will lie in ruins for seventy years." [c] 3 -4Then, to show my sorrow, I went without eating and dressed in sackcloth [d] and sat in ashes. I confessed my sins and earnestly prayed to the LORD my God:

- Acts 2:17-- We are to have visions and dreams by the Spirit of God. ***We give up food to FEAST on God.***

The third purpose of fasting is so that we may deny our physical desires in order to satisfy our cravings for God.

- Fasting provides disciples opportunities to truly seek God.

- Psalm 42:1-2 "A white-tailed deer drinks from the creek; I want to drink God, deep draughts of God. I'm thirsty for God alive. I wonder, "Will I ever make it – arrive and drink in God's presence?"

- Fast to "drink God".

- Fasting enables the believer to feast on God.

- We "eat the Lord" – CRAVING, desiring Him, wanting Him, receiving Him, enjoying Him.

- God is the most desirable being in the whole universe. He is good, merciful, compassionate, forgiving, saving, restoring, healing, providing, strengthening, rebuilding, renewing, reversing our fortune from horrible to the best, fun, creative, wonderful, incredibly amazing, awesome, great to be with, life, joy, peace.

- Every time our stomach growls or our cravings come, we are reminded how hungry we are for God.

The fourth reason for fasting is to HUMBLE ourselves before God

- The Bible records two instances when people fasted. First, people fasted to express sorrow over their sin. Unlike today where repentance is often sadly understood as nothing more than "sorry Lord", true repentance involves deep sorrow over sin. (See Paul's example in Acts 9).

- Second, people, especially God's people fasted to plead God's mercy. People in dire need fasted. Nations sought God's mercy through fasting and prayer.

Finally, we fast to become more effective in life and ministry

- Fasting is like defragmenting a computer. It is a necessary process.

- Defragmenting the computer enhances performance.

- Fasting provides a similar effect to the spiritual life of a believer.

- Isaiah 58 quotes God's promises to those who fast the right way. We find nine promises when we truly fast: (Refer to Old Testament text)

1. Spiritual breakthrough – revelation-truth takes over demonic-darkness in our lives (v. 8a, 10b: then light will shine like the dawning sun – your light will shine in the dark.
2. Wholeness and Strength (v. 8b,11b: your honesty will protect you as you advance; the Lord will always guide you and provide good things
3. God-filled life!!! (v. 8c: The Lord will defend you from behind
4. Answered Prayer (v. 9: When you beg the Lord for help, He will answer
5. Divine Guidance (v. 11: The Lord will always guide you
6. Satisfaction (v. 11b: He will make you healthy; you will be like a garden that has plenty of water or like a stream that never runs dry.
7. Freshness and Growth.
8. Effective Life and Ministry (v. 12: You will rebuild those houses left in ruins for years; you will be known as a builder and repairer of city walls and streets.
9. Joy in the Lord (v. 14: [14]Then you will truly enjoy knowing the LORD. He will let you rule from the highest mountains and bless you with the land of your ancestor Jacob. The LORD has spoken!

- Fasting by itself has no spiritual significance. When understood and practiced with these spiritual purposes, fasting blesses us tremendously.

- As we close let's briefly look at the power of fasting and praying: save the rewards, the results until the 4th Sunday.

- In order to see something of the power of prayer and fasting, we need to turn to our gospel passage: Matthew 17:21

- Jesus knew there would come a time when He would not be physically present any longer with His disciples / with the church. Perilous times would come when supernatural strength would be needed. "Then they will fast IN THOSE DAYS."

- Jesus returns from His transfiguration, having been aside in the mountains with Peter, James and John. Upon His return down, they are met by the other disciples and the crowd of people who were following Jesus to see the miracles He might perform. And the first thing that we see waiting for Jesus is:

  1. AN UNMET NEED.

     There was a need that Jesus' disciples could not meet - it was beyond their resources (human or spiritual). Previous to this, Jesus had already given His disciples the authority to heal the sick and cast out demons in His Name. And they went about preaching Jesus' message of the Kingdom of God, and they healed and delivered just as Jesus said that they would.

     BUT NOW they have struck a need that is obviously too great for them. This young man, so violently afflicted with a devil that tormented him - and the disciples, no matter what they attempted, had been unable to deal with it. There was an UNMET NEED.

     Let's not be too quick to criticize the disciples for their inability here. Haven't we all been in those places where we have tried with all that we have to find an answer in our lives, or in the life of some other poor friend needing help? We've tried everything; we've exhausted all our spiritual resources, and still the need is left seemingly unmet. The sickness remains; the situation is unchanged; the person is unaffected/unsaved/unchallenged. The need is unmet! What are we to do?

2. AN UNANSWERED QUESTION. READ v19.

The disciples had answers to prayer before. They had ministered effectively at times – they had SOME successes. So what was different this time? "Why could WE not cast out this demon?" "Oh, Lord, we tried everything we knew. We prayed just as we have heard You pray for people. We got louder and louder, and sweatier and sweatier. What went wrong? We were so frustrated! Where did we go wrong?"

The disciples had an unanswered question: "Why could WE not cast him out?" But to their question, Jesus gives:

3. AN UNEXPECTED REPLY. READ v20-21.

Not all versions carry this reply.

[19]Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not drive it out?" [20]And He said to them, "Because of the littleness of your faith; for truly I say to you, (O)if you have faith the size of (P)a mustard seed, you will say to (Q)this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and (R)nothing will be impossible to you. [21]["[a](S)***But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."***]

New King James Version: Jesus says, "Lads, you only need a little bit of that faith of yours and you can move mountains - let me encourage you. Don't doubt the power of faith in God for a moment. HOWEVER (I'm going to let you in on a little tip), this kind of demonic problem does not go out EXCEPT BY PRAYER AND FASTING."

There are needs that are especially great - obstacles that have a whole different dimension of difficulty about them. SOME things require a specific breakthrough in the heavenly places - they are spiritual problems, spiritually discerned, and they require spiritual power to break them.

And Jesus says that there is a way to obtain the spiritual power to break through such needs - and here is the substance of the message to you today

GODLY PRAYER, WITH FASTING, RELEASES BREAKTHROUGH SPIRITUAL POWER.

When Jesus was led up into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit to be tempted by the devil, He entered into a prolonged season of prayer and FASTING - 40 days in all (without bread or water). And Luke records (4:14) that after that time He returned "IN THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT". Now Jesus was continually anointed of God (since His baptism) - but something was clearly released in a whole new dimension through that period of prayer and fasting. Otherwise Luke wouldn't have mentioned it the way that he does.

GODLY PRAYER, WITH FASTING, RELEASES BREAKTHROUGH SPIRITUAL POWER.

Now Jesus knew this great value of fasting, and it seems that He developed a lifestyle of prayer and fasting. It is clear He had been fasting prior to this incident with the demon-possessed boy (He cast it out and said the reason He'd been able to was because "this kind only come out by prayer and fasting". What's the implication? Jesus had been fasting.

Jesus was ready for every occasion of life and ministry BECAUSE He developed a lifestyle of prayer with fasting. THERE IS GREAT POWER RELEASED THROUGH THESE PRINCIPLES.

Daily Scripture Readings
Lent, 2025

February 18 to April 4, 2026

Date	Psalm	OT	Epistle	Gospel
Wed Feb 18	am: 5; 147:1–11 pm: 27; 51	Amos 5:6–15	Heb 12:1-14	Luke 18:9-14
Thur Feb 19	am: 27; 147:12–20 pm: 126; 102	Hab. 3:1–10 (11–15) 16–18	Phil. 3:12–21	John 17:1–8
Fri Feb 20	am: 22; 148 pm: 105; 130	Ezek. 18:1–4, 25–32	Phil. 4:1–9	John 17:9–19
Sat Feb 21	am: 43; 149 pm: 31; 143	Ezek. 39:21–29	Phil. 4:10–20	John 17:20–26
Sun 1 Feb 22	am: 84; 150 pm: 42; 32	Dan. 9:3–10	Heb. 2:10–18	John 12:44–50
Mon Feb 23	am: 119:73–80 pm: 121; 6	Gen. 37:1–11 1	1 Cor. 1:1–19	Mark 1:1–13
Tues Feb 24	am: 34; 146 pm: 25; 91	Gen. 37:12–24	1 Cor. 1:20–31	Mark 1:14–28
Wed Feb 25	am: 5; 147 pm: 27; 51	Gen. 37:25–36	1 Cor. 2:1–13	Mark 1:29–45
Thur Feb 26	am: 27; 147:12–20 pm: 126; 102	Gen. 39:1–23	1 Cor. 2:14—3:15	Mark 2:1–12
Fri Feb 27	am: 22; 148 pm: 105; 130	Gen. 40:1–23	1 Cor. 3:16–23	Mark 2:13–22
Sat Feb 28	am: 43; 149 pm: 31; 143	Gen. 41:1–13	1 Cor. 4:1–7	Mark 2:23—3:6
Sun 2 Mar 1	am: 84; 150 pm: 42; 32	Gen. 41:14–45	Rom. 6:3–14	John 5:19–24
Mon Mar2	am: 119:73–80; 145 pm: 121; 6	Gen. 41:46–57	1 Cor. 4:8–20 (21)	Mark 3:7–19a
Tues Mar 3	am: 34; 146 pm: 25; 91	Gen. 42:1–17	1 Cor. 5:1–8	Mark 3:19b–35

Date	Psalm	OT	Epistle	Gospel
Wed Mar 4	am: 5; 147:1–11 pm: 27; 51	Gen. 42:18–28	1 Cor. 5:9—6:11	Mark 4:1–20
Thur Mar 5	am: 27; 147:12–20 pm: 126; 102	Gen. 42:29–38	1 Cor. 6:12–20	Mark 4:21–34
Fri Mar 6	am: 22; 148 pm: 105; 130	Gen. 43:1–15	1 Cor. 7:1–9	Mark 4:35–41
Sat Mar 7	am: 43; 149 pm: 31; 143	Gen. 43:16–34	1 Cor. 7:10–24	Mark 5:1–20
Sun 3 Mar 8	am: 84; 150 pm: 42; 32	Gen. 44:1–17	Rom. 8:1–10	John 5:25–29
Mon Mar 9	am: 119:73–80; 145 pm: 121; 6	Gen. 44:18–34	1 Cor. 7:25–31	Mark 5:21–43
Tue Mar 10	am: 34; 146 pm: 25; 91	Gen. 45:1–15	1 Cor. 7:32–40	Mark 6:1–13
Wed Mar 11	am: 5; 147:1–11 pm: 27; 51	Gen. 45:16–28	1 Cor. 8:1–13	Mark 6:13–29
Thur Mar 12	am: 27; 147:12–20 pm: 126; 102	Gen. 46:1–7, 28–34	1 Cor. 9:1–15	Mark 6:30–46
Fri Mar 13	am: 22; 148 pm: 105; 130	Gen. 47:1–26	1 Cor. 9:16–27	Mark 6:47–56
Sat Mar 14	am: 43; 149 pm: 31; 143	Gen. 47:27–48:7	1 Cor. 10:1–13	Mark 7:1–23
Sun 4 Mar 15	am: 84; 150 pm: 42; 32	Gen. 48:8–22	Rom. 8:11–25	John 6:27–40
Mon Mar 16	am: 119:73–80; 145 pm: 121; 6	Gen. 49:1–28	1 Cor. 10:14–11:1	Mark 7:24–37
Tue Mar 17	am: 34; 146 pm: 25; 91	Gen. 49:29–50:14	1 Cor. 11:2–34	Mark 8:1–10
Wed Mar 18	am: 5; 147:1–11 pm: 27; 51	Gen. 50:15–26	1 Cor. 12:1–11	Mark 8:11–26
Thur Mar 19	am: 27; 147:12–20 pm: 126; 102	Exod. 1:6–22	1 Cor. 12:12–26	Mark 8:27–9:1
Fri Mar 20	am: 22; 148 pm: 105; 130	Exod. 2:1–22	1 Cor. 12:27–13:3	Mark 9:2–13
Sat Mar 21	am: 43; 149 pm: 31; 143	Exod. 2:23–3:15	1 Cor. 13:1–13	Mark 9:14–29

Date	Psalm	OT	Epistle	Gospel
Sun 5 Mar 22	am: 84; 150 pm: 42; 32	Exod. 3:16–4:12	Rom. 12:1–21	John 8:46–59
Mon Mar 23	am: 119:73–80; 145 pm: 121; 6	Exod. 4:10–20 (21–26) 27–31	1 Cor. 14:1–19	Mark 9:30–41
Tues Mar 24	am: 34; 146 pm: 25; 91	Exod. 5:1–6:1	1 Cor. 14:20–33a, 39–40	Mark 9:42–50
Wed Mar 25	am: 5; 147:1–11 pm: 27; 51	Exod. 7:8–24	2 Cor. 2:14–3:6	Mark 10:1–16
Thur Mar 26	am: 27; 147:12–20 pm: 126; 102	Exod. 7:25–8:19	2 Cor. 3:7–18	Mark 10:17–31
Fri Mar 27	am: 22; 148 pm: 105; 130	Exod. 9:13–35	2 Cor. 4:1–12	Mark 10:32–45
Sat Mar 28	am: 43; 149 pm: 31; 143	Exod. 10:21–11:8	2 Cor. 4:13–18	Mark 10:46–52

Daily Readings Continue with Readings for Holy Week 2

Daily Scripture Readings
Holy Week, 2026

April 1 – April 4, 2026

See also Readings Adapted from the *Revised Common Lectionary*:
Daily Readings for Holy Week

Date	Psalm	OT	Epistle	Gospel
Sun Mar 29	am: 84; 150 pm: 42; 32	Zech. 9:9–12	1 Tim 6:12-16	Luke 19:41–4
Mon Mar 30	am: 119:73–80 pm: 121; 6	Lam. 1:1–2, 6–12	2 Cor. 1:1–7	Mark 11:12–25
Tues Mar 31	am: 34; 146 pm: 25; 91	Lam. 1:17–22	2 Cor. 1:8–22	Mark 11:27–33
Wed Apr 1	am: 5; 147:1–11 pm: 27; 51	Lam. 2:1–9	2 Cor. 1:23–2:11	Mark 12:1–11

Thur Apr 2	am: 27; 147:12–20 pm: 126; 102	Lam. 2:10–18	1 Cor. 10:14–17	Mark 14:12–25
Fri Apr 3	am: 22; 148 pm: 105; 130	Lam. 3:1–9, 19–33	1 Pet 1:10-20	John 19:38-42
Sat Apr 4	am: 43; 149 pm 31; 143	Lam. 3:37–58	Heb 4:1-16	

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This Lenten Booklet was produced by Metropolitan CME Church

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