

What is Lent?

In its simplest form, Lent is a 40-day period (excluding Sundays, which are feast days) leading up to Easter Sunday.

The early church began the season of Lent as a sort of "new believers class" in preparation for a member's first baptism and communion on Easter Sunday. New believers would fast and rid themselves of the sinful habits of their former selves. Church leadership would use this time to evaluate the believer's life by asking family members and neighbors about the person: Are they kind? Are they generous? What do you know about their relationship with the Lord? Over the years, the whole church would join in the practice of Lent as a "reset" to their commitment to Christ and the church. "It calls on us to put to death the sin and indifference we have in our hearts toward God and our fellow persons. And it beckons us to enter once again into the joy of the Lord – the joy of a new life born out of a death to the old life." Here we are, inviting you to do the same...RESET.

This year, we've already given you a few tools to guide you through your walk with Christ: the Bible Reading Plan and the Family R.E.S.E.T. tool. Now consider emptying yourself of something you desire or crave, something you tend to focus on, or something you rely on more than you should. Some traditional fasts are food, caffeine, or sweets. Other fasts may include social media, news, sleep, or shopping. The goal is to empty our lives of commotion, clutter, and noise to make room for Christ to speak through His Word. Rather than simply subtracting something from our lives, this is an opportunity to make room for something greater. Therefore, we should consider ways to leverage the fast to engage in deeper prayer, study, community, meditation, and worship. We know fasting may be a difficult concept for our children to process. So we have provided a weekly practice that moves us beyond ourselves and focuses on Christ and His Kingdom.

Lent Practies

Ash Wednesday (2/18) and First Sunday (2/22): Practice sacrifice. Give up something you enjoy to remember Jesus' greater sacrifice for us. Whether it's skipping a treat, choosing water, passing on snacks, or waking up earlier to pray, each small sacrifice helps us value Christ more than comfort.

Second Sunday (3/1): Practice praying for others. Ask God to protect missionaries, particularly North American Missionaries, as we give to the Annie Armstrong Offering during this season. to use you to remind neighbors of His love, strengthen your church, and draw friends and classmates to Jesus.

Third Sunday (3/8): Practice giving. During the Easter season, we give to the Annie Armstrong Offering to support NAMB missionaries. As we reflect on Christ's love, prayerfully consider how God may be leading us to give through our regular tithes and special offerings.

Fourth Sunday (3/15): Practice making space. Choose to set aside distractions so you can focus on Christ. It may look like turning off screens, driving in silence, or going to bed a little earlier to spend time praying or reading your Bible.

Fifth Sunday (3/22): Practice being charitable. Notice needs and respond with generous action. It can look like giving groceries, donating gently used items, earning money to support missions, providing baby essentials for moms, or preparing simple care kits for those experiencing homelessness. Charity is using what you have to meet real needs and show love in practical ways.

Palm Sunday (3/29): Practice selflessness. Put others before yourself. It's asking how you can help and doing it without complaining, choosing kindness toward your siblings, taking time to say thank you, letting others go first, and looking for simple ways to bless someone. When we think of ourselves last, we reflect true kindness and grow in joy.