



# RETURN

DISCIPLINES FOR A LIFE WITH GOD

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**2022** GUIDE FOR  
LENT & EASTER WEEK



"YET EVEN NOW,"  
DECLARES THE LORD,  
"RETURN TO ME  
WITH ALL YOUR HEART,  
WITH FASTING,  
WITH WEeping,  
AND WITH MOURNING..."

JOEL 2:12



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# LENT

In the centuries following Jesus' birth, death and resurrection over 2000 years ago, the Christian Church developed the liturgical calendar as a rhythm to remember and celebrate the Gospel message. Lent is the part of that calendar in which we prepare for the death and resurrection of Jesus. The word "Lent" comes from an Old English word (lencten) which means "spring season." Lent falls towards the end of Winter, where the days grow longer and we anticipate Christ's victory over death in His resurrection.

The Lenten season occurs over 6 weeks - beginning with Ash Wednesday and ending on Easter Sunday. You will notice Lent extends for a total of 46 days as the Sundays that fall during this time are not traditionally considered part of the season. The Lenten narrative is marked by suffering, violence, death, and ultimately, hope and joy in the Resurrection.

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This year at Reunion, our Lenten theme is RETURN, inspired by Joel 2.12-14:

"Yet even now," declares the LORD, 'return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning..."

In embracing this theme, we hope to move forward in our own spiritual lives - closer and more intimate with God - by looking backwards at historic spiritual disciplines. Each week, we will gather on Sunday to reflect on a different spiritual discipline used by Christians for centuries. Our prayer is for a time of deepening connection and intimacy with God amongst us, both individually and collectively, and for that connection to move us towards action in love for our community, city and the world.

The guide offers weekly liturgical prayers to open and close your devotional time, weekly songs to listen to, as well as daily Scripture readings. The Scripture readings are pulled from Gospel In Life's Lent Devotional and paired alongside a Psalm. A four-movement rhythm is suggested to engage the Scriptures and commune with God. The guide begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on the Saturday after Easter.

## FASTING

Traditionally, the Christian practice of this season is marked by some form of fasting for 40 days with breaks on Sundays. Fasting has always been a vital spiritual discipline in the Christian faith and these 40 days reflect Christ's 40 days in the wilderness prior to the start of His ministry.

Here at Reunion, we encourage you to give up something you often turn to for comfort - this could be a food or beverage item, television, social media, or something else. You can give this item up for the full 46 days, or break your fast each Sunday as Sundays are always celebrations of the Resurrection - and, therefore, feast days.

It is important to remember why we fast. We don't fast to earn God's favor or to diet. We fast to remind ourselves of our weaknesses, that we are not self-sufficient. Often we fast from things that are entirely appropriate - even good for us - in other seasons of life in order to reorient ourselves and our posture towards God. When you desire what you gave up as well as the comfort that accompanies it, use this guide to turn to God for sustenance. We also fast to focus our hearts on the true feast - Christ's resurrection. Fasting is an opportunity to, as Augustine writes, reorder our loves - it is about growing our appetite for God who alone can fully satisfy us.

## THE FOUR MOVEMENTS SUGGESTED FOR ENGAGING SCRIPTURE IN THIS GUIDE ARE: SURRENDER, LISTEN, MEDITATE, RESPOND.

The movements suggested in this guide are just that – a suggestion. Feel free to go about your normal rhythms or to utilize a different rhythm. These rhythms are tools to help you commune with God, and they are described below.

### **SURRENDER to the Presence of God**

Take a moment to sit still and quiet yourself – your heart and your mind. Breathe deeply and recognize that you are in the Presence of God. There is nothing you need to do to be in God's Presence. He is near. Use anything that may be helpful to you to feel and enter God's presence – this could be silence or quiet music, deep breathing, or a simple prayer word. The goal is to shut out distractions and be present and open to God and His Word.

### **LISTEN to the Scriptures**

Read through the Scripture 1-2 times. Remember the goal is not to gain information but to experience and cultivate intimacy with God. Read slowly, and ask yourself questions about the text. Some example questions are provided below – we often find it helpful to write down thoughts surrounding these questions as they arrive.

- What does the Scripture tell me about God?
- What does the Scripture tell me about mankind?
- What does the Scripture tell me about God's heart for the people and world around me?
- What does the Scripture tell me about God's heart for me?

### **MEDITATE on the Scriptures**

Quieting yourself and maintaining an open presence to God, revisit the passage once more. If you wrote down anything in response to the Scripture, reflect on that. If any specific words or phrases in the passage stood out, sit with and dwell on them.

### **RESPOND in Prayer**

Talk to God about your reflections – whether it's awe or frustration, gratefulness or anger, be honest with God. The goal is to simply respond to anything God, through His Word, has revealed to you.

## ASH WEDNESDAY REFLECTION: LIVING LENT BY BARBARA CAWTHORNE CRAFTON

We didn't even know what moderation was. What it felt like. We didn't just work: we inhaled our jobs, sucked them in, became them. Stayed late, brought work home – it was never enough, though, no matter how much time we put in.

We didn't just smoke: we lit up a cigarette, only to realize that we already had one going in the ashtray.

We ordered things we didn't need from the shiny catalogs that came to our houses: we ordered three times as much as we could use, and then we ordered three times as much as our children could use.

We didn't just eat: we stuffed ourselves. We had gained only three pounds since the previous year, we told ourselves. Three pounds is not a lot. We had gained about that much in each of the twenty-five years since high school. We did not do the math.

We redid living rooms in which the furniture was not worn out. We threw away clothing that was merely out of style. We drank wine when the label on our prescription said it was dangerous to use alcohol while taking this medication. "They always put that on the label," we told our children when they asked about this. We saw that they were worried. We knew it was because they loved us and needed us. How innocent they were. We hastened to reassure them: "It doesn't really hurt if you're careful."

We felt that it was important to be good to ourselves, and that this meant that it was dangerous to tell ourselves no. About anything, ever. Repression of one's desires was an unhealthy thing. I work hard, we told ourselves. I deserve a little treat. We treated ourselves every day.

And if it was dangerous for us to want and not have, it was even more so for our children. They must never know what it is to want something and not have it immediately. It will make them bitter, we told ourselves. So we anticipated their needs and desires. We got them both the doll and the bike. If their grades were good, we got them their own telephones.

There were times, coming into the house from work or waking early when all was quiet, when we felt uneasy about the sense of entitlement that characterized all our days. When we wondered if fevered overwork and excess of appetite were not two sides of the same coin – or rather, two poles between which we madly slalomed. Probably yes, we decided at these times. Suddenly we saw it all clearly: I am driven by my creatures – my schedule, my work, my possessions, my hungers. I do not drive them; they drive me. Probably yes. Certainly yes. This is how it is. We arose and did twenty sit-ups. The next day the moment had passed; we did none.

After moments like that, we were awash in self-contempt. You are weak. Self-indulgent. You are spineless about work and about everything else. You set no limits. You will become ineffective. We bridled at that last bit, drew ourselves up to our full heights, insisted defensively on our competence, on the respect we were due because of all our hard work. We looked for others whose lives were similarly overstuffed; we found them. "This is just the way it is," we said to one another on the train, in the restaurant. "This is modern life. Maybe some people have time to measure things out by teaspoonfuls." Our voices dripped contempt for those people who had such time. We felt oddly defensive, though no one had accused us of anything. But not me. Not anyone who has a life. I have a life. I work hard. I play hard.

When did the collision between our appetites and the needs of our souls happen? Was there a heart attack? Did we get laid off from work, one of the thousands certified as extraneous? Did a beloved child become a bored stranger, a marriage fall silent and cold? Or, by some exquisite working of God's grace, did we just find the courage to look the truth in the eye and, for once, not blink? How did we come to know that we were dying a slow and unacknowledged death? And that the only way back to life was to set all our packages down and begin again, carrying with us only what we really needed?

We travail. We are heavy laden. Refresh us, O homeless, jobless, possession-less Savior. You came naked, and naked you go. And so it is for us. So it is for all of us.

# START OF LENT

## OPENING PRAYER FOR THE START OF LENT

Almighty and ever living God,  
you invite us deeper into your world, your people, your Lent.  
May this time be one of outward focus;  
seeking you in those we often ignore.  
Help us live a Lent focused on freedom, generosity, and encounter.  
Give us hearts hungry to serve you  
and those who need what we have to give.

## SONG FOR THE START OF LENT

*Everything* by Emissaryband

## SURRENDER to the Presence of God

*Pause to be still, quiet yourself, and breathe slowly. Become aware that you are in the presence of the Holy.*

*God is near to you because He loves you.*

## LISTEN to the Scriptures

*As you read, remember the goal is not primarily information, but intimacy with God. Read the passage slowly, asking yourself first what the scripture says about God. Ask what the scripture says about God's heart for the people and world around you. Ask what the scripture says about God's heart towards you.*

*"For it is not mere words that nourish the soul, but God Himself." - A.W. Tozer*

## READINGS FOR THE START OF LENT

- Ash Wednesday: Psalm 51, Genesis 3.11-19
- Thursday after Ash Wednesday: Psalm 69, Genesis 9.8-17
- Friday after Ash Wednesday: Psalm 70, Genesis 15.7-21
- Saturday after Ash Wednesday: Psalm 71, Genesis 22.1-14



# START OF LENT

## **MEDITATE on the Scriptures**

*Becoming aware of God's presence again, revisit the passage once more. Reflect on what the passage reveals about God and God's heart. Sit with and dwell on any words or phrases that jump out.*

## **RESPOND in Prayer**

*Talk to God about your reflections, whether it's awe or frustration, gratefulness or anger, be honest with God. The goal is to simply respond to anything God, through His Word, has revealed to you.*

## **CLOSING PRAYER FOR THE START OF LENT**

○ God of peace, who taught us that in returning and rest we shall be saved,  
In quietness and in confidence shall be our strength:  
By the might of your Spirit lift us, we pray, to your peace-filled presence,  
Where we may be still and know that You are our God. Amen.

*- Adapted from the Book of Common Prayer, Prayer 59*

# WEEK 1 OF LENT | FASTING

## OPENING PRAYER FOR WEEK 1 OF LENT

Lord, surely we wait and we wait for you  
You who bent down and heard our cries  
You who drew us up from the pit, out of the deep mud  
And set our feet upon a rock, making our steps secure  
As we wait, Lord, put a new song in our mouths,  
A song of praise to our God

- Prayer adapted from Psalm 40

## SONG FOR WEEK 1 OF LENT

*Here in Your Presence* by New Life Worship

## SURRENDER to the Presence of God

*Pause to be still, quiet yourself, and breathe slowly. Become aware that you are in the presence of the Holy.*

*God is near to you because He loves you.*

## LISTEN to the Scriptures

*As you read, remember the goal is not primarily information, but intimacy with God. Read the passage slowly, asking yourself first what the scripture says about God. Ask what the scripture says about God's heart for the people and world around you. Ask what the scripture says about God's heart towards you.*

*"For it is not mere words that nourish the soul, but God Himself." - A.W. Tozer*

## READINGS FOR WEEK 1 OF LENT

- Sunday: Psalm 91, Joel 2:12-14
- Monday: Psalm 72, Genesis 49.8-12
- Tuesday: Psalm 73, Exodus 12.1-13
- Wednesday: Psalm 74, 1 Samuel 2.1-10
- Thursday: Psalm 75, 1 Samuel 2.27-36
- Friday: Psalm 76, 2 Samuel 7.1-17
- Saturday: Psalm 77, Psalm 110

# WEEK 1 OF LENT | FASTING

## **MEDITATE on the Scriptures**

*Becoming aware of God's presence again, revisit the passage once more. Reflect on what the passage reveals about God and God's heart. Sit with and dwell on any words or phrases that jump out.*

## **RESPOND in Prayer**

*Talk to God about your reflections, whether it's awe or frustration, gratefulness or anger, be honest with God. The goal is to simply respond to anything God, through His Word, has revealed to you.*

## **CLOSING PRAYER FOR WEEK 1 OF LENT**

Almighty God, whose blessed Son was led by the Spirit to be tempted by Satan: Come quickly to help us who are assaulted by many temptations; and, as you know the weaknesses of each of us, let each one find you mighty to save; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

- *Collect for the First Sunday of Lent from the Book of Common Prayer*

# WEEK 2 OF LENT | WORSHIP

## OPENING PRAYER FOR WEEK 2 OF LENT

Convert us anew this Lenten season, O God our Savior  
And shape our lives with your word of truth  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son  
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.  
Amen

## SONG FOR WEEK 2 OF LENT

*I Shall Not Want* by Audrey Assad

## SURRENDER to the Presence of God

*Pause to be still, quiet yourself, and breathe slowly. Become aware that you are in the presence of the Holy.*

*God is near to you because He loves you.*

## LISTEN to the Scriptures

*As you read, remember the goal is not primarily information, but intimacy with God. Read the passage slowly, asking yourself first what the scripture says about God. Ask what the scripture says about God's heart for the people and world around you. Ask what the scripture says about God's heart towards you.*

*"For it is not mere words that nourish the soul, but God Himself." - A.W. Tozer*

## READINGS FOR WEEK 2 OF LENT

- Sunday: Psalm 27, Isaiah 6
- Monday: Psalm 78, Psalm 2
- Tuesday: Psalm 79, Psalm 118.22-24
- Wednesday: Psalm 80, Psalm 69.1-12
- Thursday: Psalm 81, Psalm 109.21-31
- Friday: Psalm 82, Psalm 22
- Saturday: Psalm 83, Psalm 68

## WEEK 2 OF LENT | WORSHIP

### **MEDITATE on the Scriptures**

*Becoming aware of God's presence again, revisit the passage once more. Reflect on what the passage reveals about God and God's heart. Sit with and dwell on any words or phrases that jump out.*

### **RESPOND in Prayer**

*Talk to God about your reflections, whether it's awe or frustration, gratefulness or anger, be honest with God. The goal is to simply respond to anything God, through His Word, has revealed to you.*

### **CLOSING PRAYER FOR WEEK 2 OF LENT**

Ever present God, you taught us that the night is far spent and the day is at hand.  
Grant that we may be found watching for the coming of your Son.  
Save us from undue love of the world,  
That we may wait with patient hope for the day of the Lord,  
And so abide in him, that when he shall appear,  
We may not be ashamed; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*- A prayer from the Church of Scotland*

# WEEK 3 OF LENT | SILENCE AND SOLITUDE

## OPENING PRAYER FOR WEEK 3 OF LENT

How long, O LORD? Will you continue to forget me?  
How long will you hide from me?  
How long will I have sorrow in my heart?  
Consider me, answer me, O LORD.  
But I trust in your steadfast love,  
My heart shall rejoice in your salvation.  
I will sing to the LORD.

- Prayer adapted from Psalm 13

## SONGS FOR WEEK 3 OF LENT

*You Are My Hiding Place* by Selah

*It is Well* by David Ramirez

## SURRENDER to the Presence of God

*Pause to be still, quiet yourself, and breathe slowly. Become aware that you are in the presence of the Holy.*

*God is near to you because He loves you.*

## LISTEN to the Scriptures

*As you read, remember the goal is not primarily information, but intimacy with God. Read the passage slowly, asking yourself first what the scripture says about God. Ask what the scripture says about God's heart for the people and world around you. Ask what the scripture says about God's heart towards you.*

*"For it is not mere words that nourish the soul, but God Himself." - A.W. Tozer*

## READINGS FOR WEEK 3 OF LENT

- Sunday: Psalm 63
- Monday: Psalm 84, Psalm 72.12-19
- Tuesday: Psalm 85, Isaiah 42.1-9
- Wednesday: Psalm 86, Isaiah 49.1-6
- Thursday: Psalm 87, Isaiah 50.4-9
- Friday: Psalm 88, Isaiah 53.1-6
- Saturday: Psalm 89, Isaiah 55.1-7

## WEEK 3 OF LENT | SILENCE AND SOLITUDE

### **MEDITATE on the Scriptures**

*Becoming aware of God's presence again, revisit the passage once more. Reflect on what the passage reveals about God and God's heart. Sit with and dwell on any words or phrases that jump out.*

### **RESPOND in Prayer**

*Talk to God about your reflections, whether it's awe or frustration, gratefulness or anger, be honest with God. The goal is to simply respond to anything God, through His Word, has revealed to you.*

### **CLOSING PRAYER FOR WEEK 3 OF LENT**

O my gracious Savior,  
be my Healer and Redeemer,  
and cast me not away.  
Raise me up when you see me fallen,  
    lying in sin,  
since You are all-powerful,  
that I may know your deeds and cry out to You:  
"Before I perish completely,  
    save me, O Lord."

*- From Thomas Hopko, The Lenten Spring*

## WEEK 4 OF LENT | PRAYER

### OPENING PRAYER FOR WEEK 4 OF LENT

God, your glory fills the heavens  
and all that you have made bears your mark.  
We pray for this creation:  
we ask forgiveness for the ways in which we have disfigured it;  
we pray for those who cannot enjoy  
the warm sun or the cool night,  
those who are imprisoned or alone . . .  
those who are ill or infirm . . .  
those who mourn . . .  
Use all of us, our hearts, our hands,  
to bring your wondrous power into their lives.  
Let us glorify you, O God.  
Let your hymn resound in our lives.

*- From the Revised Common Lectionary*

### SONG FOR WEEK 4 OF LENT

*Talking to Jesus* by Elevation Worship

### SURRENDER to the Presence of God

*Pause to be still, quiet yourself, and breathe slowly. Become aware that you are in the presence of the Holy.*

*God is near to you because He loves you.*

### LISTEN to the Scriptures

*As you read, remember the goal is not primarily information, but intimacy with God. Read the passage slowly, asking yourself first what the scripture says about God. Ask what the scripture says about God's heart for the people and world around you. Ask what the scripture says about God's heart towards you.*

*"For it is not mere words that nourish the soul, but God Himself." - A.W. Tozer*



# WEEK 4 OF LENT | PRAYER

## READINGS FOR WEEK 4 OF LENT

- Sunday: Psalm 32,
- Monday: Psalm 90, Isaiah 61.1-3
- Tuesday: Psalm 91, Jeremiah 33.14-18
- Wednesday: Psalm 92, Ezekiel 34.23-31
- Thursday: Psalm 93, Haggai 2.6-9
- Friday: Psalm 94, Zechariah 9.9-10
- Saturday: Psalm 95, Zechariah 12.10-14

## MEDITATE on the Scriptures

*Becoming aware of God's presence again, revisit the passage once more. Reflect on what the passage reveals about God and God's heart. Sit with and dwell on any words or phrases that jump out.*

## RESPOND in Prayer

*Talk to God about your reflections, whether it's awe or frustration, gratefulness or anger, be honest with God. The goal is to simply respond to anything God, through His Word, has revealed to you.*

## CLOSING PRAYER FOR WEEK 4 OF LENT

Gracious Father, whose blessed Son Jesus Christ came down from heaven to be the true bread which gives life to the world: Evermore give us this bread, that he may live in us, and we in him; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

- *Collect for the Fourth Sunday of Lent from the Book of Common Prayer*

# WEEK 5 OF LENT | CONFESSION

## OPENING PRAYER FOR WEEK 5 OF LENT

Lord, show me your ways, teach me your paths  
Lead me in your truth and teach me  
For you are the God of my salvation  
For you, I wait all the day long  
Remember your mercy, O Lord, Remember your steadfast love  
For they have been of old  
Remember not the sins of my youth,  
Remember not my transgressions;  
According to your love, remember me,  
For the sake of your goodness. Amen.

*- Prayer adapted from Psalm 25*

## SONG FOR WEEK 5 OF LENT

*Letting Go* by Steffany Gretzinger

## SURRENDER to the Presence of God

*Pause to be still, quiet yourself, and breathe slowly. Become aware that you are in the presence of the Holy.*

*God is near to you because He loves you.*

## LISTEN to the Scriptures

*As you read, remember the goal is not primarily information, but intimacy with God. Read the passage slowly, asking yourself first what the scripture says about God. Ask what the scripture says about God's heart for the people and world around you. Ask what the scripture says about God's heart towards you.*

*"For it is not mere words that nourish the soul, but God Himself." - A.W. Tozer*

# WEEK 5 OF LENT | CONFESSION

## READINGS FOR WEEK 5 OF LENT

- Sunday: Psalm 51, 2 Samuel 12.1-15
- Monday: Psalm 96, John 1.29-34
- Tuesday: Psalm 97, Matthew 4.1-11
- Wednesday: Psalm 98, Mark 1.40-45
- Thursday: Psalm 99, John 8.1-11
- Friday: Psalm 100, Luke 9.18-27
- Saturday: Psalm 101, John 12.20-33

## MEDITATE on the Scriptures

*Becoming aware of God's presence again, revisit the passage once more. Reflect on what the passage reveals about God and God's heart. Sit with and dwell on any words or phrases that jump out.*

## RESPOND in Prayer

*Talk to God about your reflections, whether it's awe or frustration, gratefulness or anger, be honest with God. The goal is to simply respond to anything God, through His Word, has revealed to you.*

## CLOSING PRAYER FOR WEEK 5 OF LENT

Almighty God, you alone can bring into order the unruly wills and affections of sinners: Grant your people grace to love what you command and desire what you promise; that, among the swift and varied changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

- *Collect for the Fifth Sunday of Lent from the Book of Common Prayer*

## A POEM FOR HOLY WEEK

*Those Who Carry* by Anna Kamienska

Those who carry pianos  
to the tenth floor wardrobes and coffins  
an old man with a bundle of wood limbs beyond  
the horizon  
a woman with a hump of nettles  
a madwoman pushing a pram  
full of vodka bottles  
they will all be lifted  
like a gull's feather like a dry leaf  
like an eggshell a scrap of newspaper

Blessed are those who carry  
for they shall be lifted.

*Poem published in Astonishments: Selected Poems of Anna Kamienska (2008).*  
<https://poem-locker.tumblr.com/post/117259058501/anna-kamienska-those-who-carry>

# HOLY WEEK | MEDITATION AND CONTEMPLATION

## OPENING PRAYER FOR HOLY WEEK

Almighty and everliving God, in your tender love for the human race you sent your Son our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon him our nature, and to suffer death upon the cross, giving us the example of his great humility: Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of his suffering, and also share in his resurrection; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

- *Collect for Palm Sunday from the Book of Common Prayer*

## SONG FOR HOLY WEEK

*Thy Word* by Amy Grant

## SURRENDER to the Presence of God

*Pause to be still, quiet yourself, and breathe slowly. Become aware that you are in the presence of the Holy.*

*God is near to you because He loves you.*

## LISTEN to the Scriptures

*As you read, remember the goal is not primarily information, but intimacy with God. Read the passage slowly, asking yourself first what the scripture says about God. Ask what the scripture says about God's heart for the people and world around you. Ask what the scripture says about God's heart towards you.*

*"For it is not mere words that nourish the soul, but God Himself." - A.W. Tozer*

## READINGS FOR HOLY WEEK

- Palm Sunday: Psalm 31
- Monday: Psalm 36, Mark 14.3-9
- Tuesday: Psalm 71, Mark 11.15-19
- Wednesday: Psalm 70, Matthew 26.1-25
- Thursday: Psalm 116, John 13.1-15
- Good Friday: Psalm 22, John 19.1-37
- Holy Saturday: Psalm 88, Matthew 27.57-66

# HOLY WEEK | MEDITATION AND CONTEMPLATION

## **MEDITATE on the Scriptures**

*Becoming aware of God's presence again, revisit the passage once more. Reflect on what the passage reveals about God and God's heart. Sit with and dwell on any words or phrases that jump out.*

## **RESPOND in Prayer**

*Talk to God about your reflections, whether it's awe or frustration, gratefulness or anger, be honest with God. The goal is to simply respond to anything God, through His Word, has revealed to you.*

## **CLOSING PRAYER FOR HOLY WEEK**

Is not this the fast that I chose:  
to loose the chains of injustice  
and untie the cords of the yoke,  
to set the oppressed free  
and break every yoke?  
Is it not to share your food with the hungry  
and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—  
when you see the naked, to clothe him,  
and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?  
Then your light will break forth like the dawn,  
and your healing will quickly appear;  
then your righteousness will go before you,  
and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.  
Then you will call, and the Lord will answer;  
you will cry for help, and he will say: Here I am.

- *Isaiah 58:6-9*

## A POEM FOR EASTER WEEK

*From a Window* by Christian Wiman

Incurable and unbelieving  
in any truth but the truth of grieving,

I saw a tree inside a tree  
rise kaleidoscopically

as if the leaves had livelier ghosts.  
I pressed my face as close

to the pane as I could get  
to watch that fitful, fluent spirit

that seemed a single being undefined  
or countless beings of one mind

haul its strange cohesion  
beyond the limits of my vision

over the house heavenwards.  
Of course I knew those leaves were birds.

Of course that old tree stood  
exactly as it had and would

(but why should it seem fuller now?)  
and though a man's mind might endow

even a tree with some excess  
of life to which a man seems witness,

that life is not the life of men.  
And that is where the joy came in.

*Poem published in The Atlantic (2008)*

<https://www.theatlantic.com/books/archive/2022/02/poem-christian-wiman-window/622870/>

# EASTER WEEK

## OPENING PRAYER FOR EASTER WEEK

O God, who for our redemption gave your only-begotten Son to the death of the cross, and by his glorious resurrection delivered us from the power of our enemy: Grant us so to die daily to sin, that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his resurrection; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

- *Collect for Easter Sunday from the Book of Common Prayer*

## SONGS FOR EASTER WEEK

*King of Kings* by Hillsong

*The Blood Will Never Lose Its Power* by Cece Williams

## SURRENDER to the Presence of God

*Pause to be still, quiet yourself, and breathe slowly. Become aware that you are in the presence of the Holy.*

*God is near to you because He loves you.*

## LISTEN to the Scriptures

*As you read, remember the goal is not primarily information, but intimacy with God. Read the passage slowly, asking yourself first what the scripture says about God. Ask what the scripture says about God's heart for the people and world around you. Ask what the scripture says about God's heart towards you.*

*"For it is not mere words that nourish the soul, but God Himself." - A.W. Tozer*

## READINGS FOR EASTER WEEK

- Sunday: Psalm 121, John 20.1-18
- Monday: Psalm 123, John 20.19-31
- Tuesday: Psalm 124, Matthew 28.16-20
- Wednesday: Psalm 126, Luke 24.36-53
- Thursday: Psalm 127, Acts 1.1-11
- Friday: Psalm 134, Acts 2.1-13
- Saturday: Psalm 138, Hebrews 10.1-18



# EASTER WEEK

## **MEDITATE on the Scriptures**

*Becoming aware of God's presence again, revisit the passage once more. Reflect on what the passage reveals about God and God's heart. Sit with and dwell on any words or phrases that jump out.*

## **RESPOND in Prayer**

*Talk to God about your reflections, whether it's awe or frustration, gratefulness or anger, be honest with God. The goal is to simply respond to anything God, through His Word, has revealed to you.*

## **CLOSING PRAYER FOR EASTER WEEK**

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.  
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
Where there is error, truth;  
Where there is injury, pardon;  
Where there is doubt, faith;  
Where there is despair, hope;  
Where there is darkness, light;  
And where there is sadness, joy.  
O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek  
To be consoled as to console;  
To be understood as to understand;  
To be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive;  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;  
It is in self-forgetting that we find;  
And it is in dying to ourselves that we are born to eternal life.  
Amen.

*- The Peace Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi*



REUNION CHURCH