



**LIVING ON
PURPOSE**
Suncreek UMC

**40 Day Journey
through Lent**

What is Lent?

Lent is an important time in the Christian calendar when we can prepare our hearts for a closer walk with Jesus. The forty days of Lent, not counting Sundays, last from Ash Wednesday through Easter Saturday. The forty days represent the forty days Jesus suffered in the wilderness, enduring the temptations of Satan by remaining close to God through fasting and prayer. This unimaginable time of Jesus' temptations and suffering is what prepared Him to begin and carry out his public ministry.

Why do we observe Lent?

As followers of Jesus, we continue to dedicate the Lenten season to God and ask for our hearts and minds to be prepared for the ministry God has entrusted to us. So together, during these forty days, we listen for God and for whatever it is God is calling us to do and be. It is our prayer that this booklet will be a guide along the journey. Remember, you are not alone.

*“Then Jesus was led by the Spirit
into the wilderness...”*

~ Matthew 4:1

Week 1 - Sunday, February 21st

Following the Spirit on Purpose

Matthew 4:1-11

FAST

The purpose of a fast is that we refrain from something that is common in our life so that we can focus on something spiritual instead. **Choose one fast per day (Monday-Saturday) OR choose one fast for the entire week.** During this week, take a few moments to reflect on the experience.

Fast from hurting words & say kind words

Fast from technology & feast on the Gospel

Fast from complaints & focus on sharing compliments

Fast from negativity & make a list of 10 things for which you are thankful

Fast from excess & donate things you no longer need

Fast from isolation & check on a neighbor or friend

Fast from clutter & organize one area

Fast from comparison & focus on the gifts you bring to your family and friends

Fast from busyness & spend 10 minutes of quiet time

Fast from anxiety when you feel worried & spend 5 minutes in prayer

Fast from plastic/disposable products & spend 30 minutes outside enjoying nature

Fast from shopping for things we don't really need & contribute to a nonprofit

Reflection Questions

1. What did you learn about yourself through fasting this week?

2. What did you learn about God and the Spirit?

Week 2 - Sunday, February 28th

Following Jesus on Purpose

Mark 8:31-38

SERVE

Jesus' life provides the example of what it meant to serve others. He teaches those who follow him that they must take up their cross and serve others as he did. **Choose one act of service per day (Monday-Saturday) OR choose one for the entire week.** During this week, take a few moments to reflect on the experience.

Deliver a meal to someone who is lonely

Do something helpful in your home without being asked

Call someone you know who has had a difficult time in the past year

Volunteer an hour of your time in the community

Pick up trash as you take your daily walk

Pick up a few extra groceries when you shop and give to a local foodbank

Pay for the person behind you in the drive through

Hold the door for people when you go in and out of a building

Stay a few minutes after a meeting or event and help the leader clean up

Do a 10-minute closet cleanout and share with people in need

Deliver flowers to a nursing home and ask for them to be given to someone who doesn't have visitors

Do something unexpected for a neighbor

Reflection Questions

1. What did you learn about yourself through serving this week?

2. What did you learn about God and the Spirit?

Week 3 - Sunday, March 7th

Worshiping on Purpose

John 2:13-22

PRAY

Prayer is a basic Christian practice that keeps us centered on God and in touch with our own needs. Though prayer is any conversation or thoughts we share with God, there are some prayers that are powerful and have spoken to people across the ages. **We have provided a prayer for you to use each day.** During this week, take a few moments to reflect on the experience.

MONDAY: A Covenant Prayer in the Wesleyan Tradition

I am no longer my own, but yours.
Put me to what you will, place me with whom you will.
Put me to doing, put me to suffering.
Let me be put to work for you or set aside for you,
Praised for you or criticized for you.
Let me be full, let me be empty.
Let me have all things, let me have nothing.
I freely and fully surrender all things to your glory and service.
And now, O wonderful and holy God,
Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer,
you are mine, and I am yours.
So be it.
And the covenant which I have made on earth,
Let it also be made in heaven. Amen.

TUESDAY: The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, As it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, For ever and ever.
Amen.

WEDNESDAY: The Serenity Prayer by Reinhold Neibuhr

God grant me the serenity
To accept the things I cannot change;
Courage to change the things I can;
And wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time;
Enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;
Taking, as He did, this sinful world

As it is, not as I would have it;
Trusting that He will make all things right
If I surrender to His Will;
So that I may be reasonably happy in this life

And supremely happy with Him
Forever and ever in the next.
Amen.

THURSDAY: The Prayer of St. Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of Your
peace;
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
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,
And it is in dying that we are born to
Eternal Life.
Amen.

FRIDAY: Slow Me Down Lord by Orin L Crain

Slow me down Lord
Ease the pounding of my heart
By the quieting of my mind
Steady my hurried pace
With a vision of the eternal reach of time.

Give me amidst the confusion of my day
The calmness of the everlasting hills
Break the tensions of my nerves and muscles
With the soothing music of the singing streams
That live in my memory.

Help me to know
The magical restoring power of sleep
Teach me the art
Of taking minute vacations
Of slowing down to look at a flower
To chat with a friend
To pat a dog
To read a few lines from a good book.

Remind me each day of the fable
Of the hare and the tortoise
That I may know that the race
Is not always to be swift
That there is more to life
Than measuring speed.

Let me look upward
Into the branches of the towering oak
And know that it grew great and strong
Because it grew slowly and well.

Slow me down Lord
And inspire me to send my roots
Deep into the soil
Of life's enduring values
That I may grow towards the stars
Of my enduring destiny.

SATURDAY: Receive Grace by John Wesley

Holy God whose nature and name is Love:
Seeing there is in Christ Jesus an infinite fullness
of all that we can want or wish
O that we may all receive of his fullness,
grace upon grace;
Grace to pardon our sins and subdue our iniquities;
Grace to justify our persons and to sanctify our souls;
Grace to complete that holy change,
that renewal of our hearts,
whereby we may be transformed.
into that blessed image wherein you did create us;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.
Amen

Reflection Questions

1. Did any of these give voice to the prayers of you own heart? How?

2. What did you learn from these prayers that might help you with your prayer life going forward?

Week 4 - Sunday, March 14th

Believing on Purpose

John 3: 14-21

GRATITUDE

When we realize the extent of God's great love for us, the only appropriate response is a life of gratitude. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life." **Choose one act of gratitude per day (Monday-Saturday).** During this week, take a few moments to reflect on the experience.

Leave a generous tip

Send a handwritten note to someone who has blessed your life

Donate a few school supplies to a teacher

Leave a letter of encouragement for someone with whom you work

Do something nice for someone who is sick

Set a timer for two minutes and list everything for which you are grateful

Chalk your sidewalk or trail with positive messages

Take a treat to share with first responders

Share a Bible verse or gratitude quotation on social media or in an email

Celebrate your own best friend appreciation day

Give someone a gift card you don't intend to use

Offer compliments to strangers, friends, and family

Reflection Questions

1. What did you learn about yourself through these acts of gratitude?

2. What did you learn about God's love for you?

Week 5 - Sunday, March 21st

Seeking on Purpose

John 8:20-36

SEEK

The life of a disciple is the life of seeking Jesus. We seek Jesus in our families. We seek Jesus in our work. We seek Jesus in our world. One way we find Jesus and find what God wants for us is by seeking in the scriptures. Read one chapter per day and seek out what God might be saying to you.

Monday – Joshua 24

Tuesday – Luke 10

Wednesday – Psalm 46

Thursday – Luke 15

Friday – Ecclesiastes 3

Saturday – Galatians 3

Week 6 - Sunday, March 28th

Sacrificing on Purpose

Mark 11:1-11

GIVE

As we come into this last week of Lent, we join the crowd welcoming Jesus into Jerusalem. With them, we give our praise and our voices and our lives, not realizing Jesus has come to give his life for us. It is fitting then that we focus this last week on giving. **Choose one act of giving per day (Monday-Saturday).** During this week, take a few moments to reflect on the experience.

Love – Tell the people closest to you how much you love and appreciate them

Money – Contribute to an organization you believe in

Talents – Use your abilities and knowledge to help another person or group

Kindness – Share a conversation with someone who is alone and in need

Time – Volunteer to serve in a way that helps others

Faith – Invite at least one person or family to come to church with you

Reflection Questions

1. What did you learn about yourself through these acts of giving?

2. What did you learn about God's gift for you?

Lent Reflection

As we reach the end of this journey, it is a good time to reflect on what we have experienced. Perhaps this experience has made you more aware of the passing of time. Six weeks, lived on purpose, makes us aware of the length of a day and the gift of time.

As we walk and pray, we find both questions and answers. Take a few moments to reflect on these questions:

- How did you see a transformation in your own life?

- How did you see a transformation in the life of your family or others?

- In what ways do you feel closer to God? _____

- In what ways do you feel closer to others? _____

- How would you have described your relationship with God before the challenge?

- How would you describe that relationship following the challenge?

- Which practice will you continue after Easter? _____

Let's keep this going...

Your Suncreek Discipleship Team invites you to continue in your spiritual growth . Go to the church website and check out the discipleship pages. You will find resources and ideas that will help you and your family continue to grow in your faith.



The Suncreek
DISCIPLESHIP TEAM
presents

**A Guide to
Living in Faith**

New & Improved!

Go Explore at www.SuncreekUMC.org/path



HOLY WEEK

Upcoming Services - Online & In-Person

PALM SUNDAY
March 28 at 11AM

MAUNDY THURSDAY
April 1 at 7PM

GOOD FRIDAY
April 2 at 7PM

www.SuncreekUMC.org/holyweek

CELEBRATE

EASTER

AT SUNCREEK UMC
April 4 at 7:00, 8:00, 10:00 & 12:00



SUNCREEK

United Methodist Church

Living, Growing and Serving in Jesus Christ to change lives and the world.

www.SuncreekUMC.org