

**A Lenten Meditational Guide©
For the People of God
at
Holly Presbyterian Church**



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Dear Friends in Christ,

It is my hope that this Lenten guide will be just that for you (and for me) ... a guide to spend some time reflecting on the Scriptures and meditating on what God might be saying to you.

Each week, you will find, at the top of the page, a suggested Scripture reading that will be the full text for the upcoming Sunday during Lent. Then there is a Psalm for helping us to quiet ourselves and to get centered.

I suggest that you take a few deep breathes, slowly and deeply breathing in and then exhaling, letting out all the distractions and concerns you might be feeling. Then read the Centering Psalm (I find it most helpful to read it softly out loud). It could be your opening prayer.

Take a moment to just sit in silence and allow the Spirit to surround you with love and peace. You will find after those silent moments, the key Scripture, which will either be the full reading or a portion of the entire Scripture reading, depending on the length. Read the passage three times - each time, pausing to reflect on what you read and heard.

There are five reflection questions to ask after reading the key Scripture. You may find it easier to just answer one question each day. It doesn't hurt to revisit those questions to see if there is more. There almost always is!

I have left a space for you to write notes in, but, if you enjoy writing, you may prefer writing in a journal.

Last, there is a New Testament reading to remind us of the Good News of Jesus Christ. In Lent, we are more reflective. We take a look inside to see if there is something we need to repent of, or if we have just gotten so distracted that we have shifted away from our close relationship with God. But, we must never forget, even if we are in a dry, desert place, that we are never alone, that we are forgiven and loved beyond measure.

These Scriptures are part of the Lenten sermon series titled "Lessons from the Potter." Although I will be the potter you see, in no way do I take the place of our great and loving Creator Potter. I pray that He will use me as a tool to tell you how much He loves you.

Sharlyn

Ash Wednesday to the First Sunday in Lent (Feb. 10-14)

Read: Isaiah 64:1-9

Centering

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. - Psalm 51:10, 17

Be Silent and Open Your Heart to God's Word

Key Scripture

⁸ And yet, O Lord, you are our Father. We are the clay and you are the Potter. We are all formed by your hand. ⁹ Oh, be not so angry with us, Lord, nor forever remember our sins. Oh, look and see that we are all your people. – Isaiah 64:1-9 (TLB)

For Reflection

1. What word or words stand out to you?
2. What phrase or sentence calls your attention?
3. Is there an image that comes to mind as you read?
4. What parts of this passage do you claim as your prayer to God?
5. What do you need to hear God say to you?

Spend Some Time in Prayer and Journaling

Read and Give Thanks for the Good News

Jesus says: “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” – Matthew 11:28-30 (NRSV)

The Week Before the Second Sunday in Lent (Feb. 15-21)

Read: Jeremiah 18:1-6

Centering

Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior and my hope is in you all day long. Remember, O Lord, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old. - Psalm 25:4,5

Be Silent and Open Your Heart to God's Word

Key Scripture

Here is another message to Jeremiah from the Lord: Go down to the shop where clay pots and jars are made, and I will talk to you there. I did as he told me and found the potter working at his wheel. But the jar that he was forming didn't turn out as he wished, so he kneaded it into a lump and started again. Then the Lord said: O Israel, can't I do to you as this potter has done to his clay? As the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand. - Jeremiah 18:1-6 (The Living Bible)

For Reflection

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Spend Some Time in Prayer and Journaling

Read and Give Thanks for the Good News

Peter said to them, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.³⁹ For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.” Acts 2:38-39(NRSV)

The Week Before the Third Sunday in Lent (Feb. 22-28)

Read: 2 Corinthians 4:5-12

Centering

The Lord is my light and my salvation – whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life – of whom shall I be afraid? Psalm 27:1

Be Silent and Open Your Heart to God’s Word

Key Scripture (The Message)

It started when God said, “Light up the darkness!” and our lives filled up with light as we saw and understood God in the face of Christ, all bright and beautiful. If you only look at *us*, you might well miss the brightness. We carry this precious Message around in the unadorned clay pots of our ordinary lives. That’s to prevent anyone from confusing God’s incomparable power with us. As it is, there’s not much chance of that. You know for yourselves that we’re not much to look at. We’ve been surrounded and battered by troubles, but we’re not demoralized; we’re not sure what to do, but we know that God knows what to do; we’ve been spiritually terrorized, but God hasn’t left our side; we’ve been thrown down, but we haven’t broken. What they did to Jesus, they do to us—trial and torture, mockery and murder; what Jesus did among them, he does in us—he lives!

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Spend Some Time in Prayer and Journaling

Read and Give Thanks for the Good News

“So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. Luke 11:9(NRSV)

(Bonus) God abounds in love and mercy and welcomes our return, for in Christ, God came to us that we might have abundant life.

The Week Before the Fourth Sunday in Lent (Feb. 29-March 6)

Read: 2 Isaiah 43:1-7

Centering

Hear my voice when I call, O Lord; be merciful to me and answer me. My heart says of you, "Seek his face!" Your face, Lord, I will seek. Psalm 27:7-8

Be Silent and Open Your Heart to God's Word

Key Scripture (The Message)

But now, God's Message,

the God who made you in the first place, Jacob,

the One who got you started, Israel:

"Don't be afraid, I've redeemed you.

I've called your name. You're mine.

When you're in over your head, I'll be there with you.

When you're in rough waters, you will not go down.

When you're between a rock and a hard place,

it won't be a dead end—

Because I am GOD, your personal God,

The Holy of Israel, your Savior. I love you.

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Spend Some Time in Prayer and Journaling

Read and Give Thanks for the Good News

The New Life in Christ

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect - Romans 12:1,2 (NRSV)

The Week Before the Fifth Sunday in Lent (March 7-13)

Read: Romans 9:19-33

Centering

You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in your word. Psalm 119:114

Be Silent and Open Your Heart to God's Word

Key Scripture (The Message)

⁹ Are you going to object, "So how can God blame us for anything since he's in charge of everything? If the big decisions are already made, what say do we have in it?" Who in the world do you think you are to second-guess God? Do you for one moment suppose any of us knows enough to call God into question? Clay doesn't talk back to the fingers that mold it, saying, "Why did you shape me like this?" Isn't it obvious that a potter has a perfect right to shape one lump of clay into a vase for holding flowers and another into a pot for cooking beans? If God needs one style of pottery especially designed to show his angry displeasure and another style carefully crafted to show his glorious goodness, isn't that all right? Either or both happens to Jews, but it also happens to the other people. Hosea put it well: I'll call nobodies and make them somebodies;

I'll call the unloved and make them beloved.

In the place where they yelled out, "You're nobody!"

they're calling you "God's living children."

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Spend Some Time in Prayer and Journaling

Read and Give Thanks for the Good News

²⁰ Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me.

Revelation 3:20 (NRSV)

The Week Before Palm Sunday (March 14-20)

Read: Philippians 2:1-13

Centering

In you, O Lord, I have taken refuge; let me never be put to shame; deliver me in your righteousness. Turn your ear to me, come quickly to my rescue; be my rock of refuge, a strong fortress, for the sake of your name lead and guide me. Psalm 31:1-3

Be Silent and Open Your Heart to God's Word

Key Scripture

⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, ⁷but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, ⁸he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Phil. 2:5-11

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Spend Some Time in Prayer and Journaling

Read and Give Thanks for the Good News

So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord— the King of Israel!” John 12:13