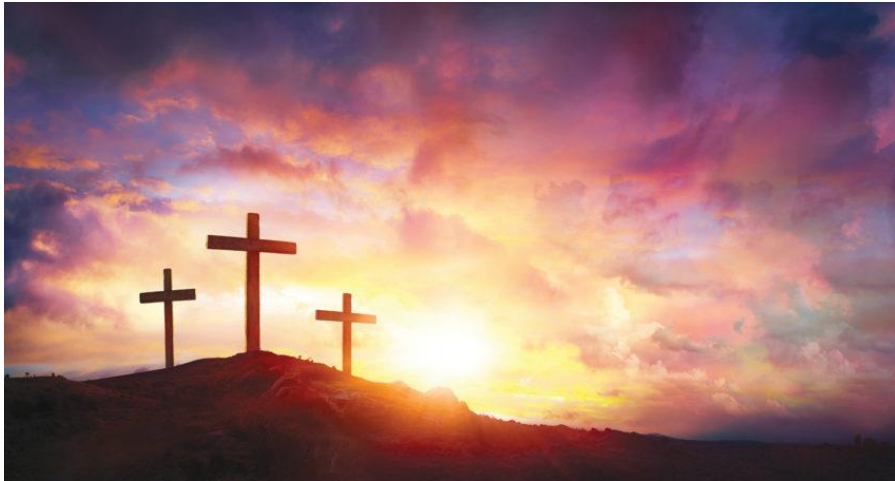


Lent in a 'Virtual' Bag



Welcome to Lent in a Virtual Bag - An opportunity to journey through Lent as an individual, family or support bubble.

Lent is a time to pay more attention to the inner life, which affects our outer life in the world around us. Christ's life, ministry, and death are remembered during this season. Also, it can be a time to think about our own journey of faith as we prepare ourselves for Holy Week and Easter.

We are unable to send out bags of objects, so the suggestion is that you are creative about finding the objects for these reflections around your house or garden.

The readings and questions are provided in this leaflet.

Prayer for the Beginning of Lent



Creator of my Life,
Renew me: bring me to new life in you.
Touch me and make me feel whole again.
Help me to see your love
in the passion, death and resurrection of your son.
Help me to observe Lent
in a way that allows me to celebrate that love.
Prepare me for these weeks of Lent
as I feel both deep sorrow for my sins
and your undying love for me.
Amen.

Week 1 - The Week Beginning 21st February

In the wilderness – Sand and Stone



*Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted.
Matthew 4.1*

Read the story of Jesus wandering in the desert - Luke 4.1-11

From baptism we are called to follow Jesus: to 'walk in the dust of the rabbi.' In Jewish culture, in the days of Jesus, young boys were taught by a rabbi – a teacher – who they often walked and talked with and listened to. The boys were told to stay so close to their teacher, that they would be walking in the dust from the road that the rabbi kicked up behind him.

Feel the sand, hold the stone.

I wonder... when have you walked on hard,
barren or stony ground?

*Prayer: Holy God, help us to “walk in the dust of the rabbi”
through the difficult places in our lives,
and to know that the closer we walk to you,
the closer you will be to us. Amen.*

Week 2 - The Week Beginning 28th February

Questions from Nicodemus - Footprint



*There was a Pharisee named Nicodemus .. he came to Jesus by
night .. and said to him 'How can these things be?'
John 3.1; 9*

Read the story of Nicodemus – John 3:1-21

Nicodemus, a religious leader, comes to Jesus to ask his questions. Lent is a good time to try to be open about our questions. Maybe we can even 'cherish the questions' and 'have patience with all that is unsolved'.

Draw a footprint, write a question as a Lent prayer.

*Prayer: Walk among us, grace of God, teaching us the
questions of the kingdom. Amen.*

Week 3 - The Week Beginning 7th March

The Woman at Well – Blue cloth



A Samaritan woman came [to the well] to draw water and Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink' John 4:7

Read the story of the Woman at the well – John 4:1-30

The Samaritan woman gives Jesus a drink of water. They speak together for a long time. He tells her about living water – to revive the spirit and bring hope. She believes and others believe because of her.

Find some blue cloth – the colour of life-giving water.

Give thanks for those who continue to help you believe.
Get in touch with someone who needs to know they matter.

Support a charity that works to provide clean water for all, e.g. WaterAid.

Prayer: O God, may we thirst for your waters of justice, and learn to deny no one the water of life. Amen.

Week 4 - The Week Beginning 14th March

Mothering Love – An image



*Simeon said to Mary, the baby's mother,
"This child is destined to cause many in Israel to fall,
and many others to rise.*

*He has been sent as a sign from God,
but many will oppose him.*

*As a result, the deepest thoughts of many hearts
will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your very soul."*

Luke 2:33b-35

This week the Church remembers the mothering love of God. In the middle of Lent we give thanks for all who show us this mothering love – a strong love, a challenging love, an encouraging love, a healing love.

If you have a picture of someone who gave you a mother's love or Mary, the mother of Jesus, spend some time remembering and giving thanks for that love.

If that relationship was more complicated perhaps give yourself a treat and remember that you are an adult who can care for themselves now.

Week 5 - The Week Beginning 21st March Being Light - Candle



Light the candle and reflect on these Bible verses.

Again Jesus spoke to them, saying:

'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.' - John 8:12

Jesus went up the mountain.. and began to teach them:

'You are the light of the world' - Matthew 5:14

Lent begins in the dimness of late winter and ends with the burst of bright spring. Jesus is, according to John's gospel, 'The Light of the world' and that Light insists: 'You are the light of the world. Don't be hiding under some bushel basket.'

So where do you shine?

How do you keep your light lit?

Prayer: Light of the world, walk among us, illuminating God in our midst. Amen.

Week 6 - The Week Beginning 28th March It is finished – Cross



Then Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said: 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit' - Luke 23:46

Find a cross or make a simple one from material to hand and trace your fingers over it.

Hold it in your hand and feel its shape.

How can the cross remind us to trust in the way of love and know that we are not forgotten?

How can we dare ourselves to follow the way of love – the whole way?

Prayer: In the silence may we hear your cry of abandonment; in the shattering of your soul may our brokenness be healed. Amen.

Based on resources by Wendy Bray, Kate Massey,
from an idea by <https://www.buildfaith.org>