

A Lenten Journey 2023



WAREHOUSE
A CHURCH FOR THE CITY



A note about Lent

Lent is the forty-day season of reflection leading to Easter mirroring the forty days Jesus spent alone in the wilderness.

It is often associated with a time of confession and giving something up. We encourage you to consider your own Lenten journey as a time of letting go. We are invited to let go of the armor we wear to protect ourselves. We release our worries, fears, and insecurities. We confess our sins. And as we make space by letting go, we can embrace both our imperfections and our belovedness. We are thus made ready to receive anew the joy and grace of Easter.

As a community we will be reading the Old Testament book of Ruth throughout the Lenten season. Ruth is a story of heartache, death, destruction, famine, loneliness, fear, disillusionment, and hopelessness. Then redemption shows up and restoration unfolds. There is good news when God moves in the midst of our brokenness and delivers us. It happened to Ruth and Naomi - and it happens today.

To aid you on your journey, we have provided scriptures for each week in addition to some simple breath prayers, questions to consider, and a prayer. Use a different tool each day during the week, or consider using them all as part of a daily habit.

"And so let this be a season for wandering, for trusting the breaking, for tracing the rupture that will return you

to the One who waits, who watches, who works within the rending to make your heart whole."

Jan Richardson

WEEK 1: Struggle

breathe in: Prince of Peace

breathe out: Rule my heart.

read: Ruth 1:1-5 | Psalms 130

questions to consider: What do you want to surrender today? What do you want to ask for in exchange?

prayer:

Dear God,

I am so afraid to open my clenched fists!

Who will I be when I have nothing left to hold on to?

Who will I be when I stand before you with empty hands?

Please help me to gradually open my hands and to discover that I am not what I own, but what you want to give me.

And what you want to give me is love—unconditional, everlasting love.

Amen.

Henri Nouwen

Praying with Unclenched Hands

WEEK 2:

Return

breathe in: May my heart

breathe out: Find its home in you.

read: Ruth 1:6-22 | 2 Corinthians 3:18

question to consider: What would help you today to be more aware of God's presence?

prayer:

O my God, teach my heart where and how to seek

You, where and how to find You.

Let me seek You in my desire,

let me desire You in my seeking.

Let me find You by loving You,

let me love You when I find You.

Amen

St. Anselm of Canterbury (d. 1109)

WEEK 3:

Grace + Kindness

breathe in: Praise the Lord

breathe out: O my soul.

read: Ruth 2:1-23 | Psalms 103

questions to consider: Have you ever experienced God's favor in your life? How did it feel?

prayer:

I will take all of heaven

I can gather for today.

Tomorrow I will sit,

again,

with these hands cupped

to receive my enough.

Drew Jackson

God Speaks Through Wombs

WEEK 4:

Peace, Pleasure + Rest

breathe in: God of rest

breathe out: Fill me with your presence.

read: Ruth 3:1-18 | Psalms 131:2-3

questions to consider: What do you desire? What do you most want as you come to be with God? God loves to hear your truest desires.

prayer:

Almighty and eternal God,
You are hidden from my sight;
You are beyond the understanding of my mind;
Your thoughts are not like my thoughts;
Your ways are past finding out.

Yet you have breathed your Spirit into my Spirit;
You are formed my mind to seek you;
You are turned my heart to love you;
You have made me restless for the rest that can be found in you;
You have planted within me a hunger and a thirst that make me long for the eternal satisfaction of heaven.

John Baille
A Diary of Private Prayer

WEEK 5:

Kinsman Redeemer

breathe in: Lord Jesus Christ
breathe out: Draw near to me.

read: Ruth 4:1-12 | Isaiah 58:6-12

question to consider: Where are you longing for redemption?

prayer:

Lord, you forgive me completely,
even as I struggle to forgive myself.
When I choose to hold on to guilt or shame, and I
would condemn myself,
Your compassion, grace and mercy
are a never-failing stream.

Help me to learn to embrace myself,
with all of my imperfections and wounds,
so I may see you redeem them,
one by one.

Celtic Daily Prayer Book Two

WEEK 6:

Kingship

breathe in: Mighty God

breathe out: May your kingdom come.

read: Ruth 4:13-22 | Luke 4:14-19

question to consider: What are the ways that you are being invited to help participate in the Lord's work of making all things new?

prayer:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed by your name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today day, our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we have also forgiven
our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from
the evil one.

Matthew 6:9-13