

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FORT WORTH

LENT

TRAPPS

*A journal for all ages during
this Lenten season.*



First Presbyterian
Church FORT WORTH

LENT TRAPS

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What is Lent?

Lent is a season of reflection, growth, and preparation in the life of the church. For 40 days, beginning on Ash Wednesday and leading up to Easter, we take time to draw closer to God by examining what's on our hearts, letting go of distractions, and making space for renewal. Just as Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness preparing for his ministry, we, too, use this time to pray and reflect. For all ages, Lent is an invitation to grow in faith. This can happen through wondering, worshiping, serving others, or simply noticing where God is at work in our daily lives.

What does the theme,

LENT TRAPS

mean?

Each Wednesday and Sunday during the season of Lent, we will focus on a different "trap" that we can fall into. We will spend time thinking about how we get stuck and may feel like there isn't a way out. When we are trapped, it prevents us from deepening our relationship with God and others. Through scripture, reflection, and community, we will explore how God meets us in these stuck places and offers us a way forward. By naming the traps that hold us back (pride, busyness, perfectionism, doubt, etc.), we open ourselves to grace.



Ways that you can use this Lent Booklet:

- Bring it to worship with you on Wednesdays and/or Sundays to make notes, draw pictures, or write a prayer.
- Use the guiding questions to think about each "Lent Trap."
- Take a creative approach—doodle, collage, or write poetry—to express your thoughts about each trap's theme.
- Use it as a space for gratitude, noting where you see God's presence even in challenging moments.
- Turn it into a prayer journal, writing down prayers for yourself, others, and the world.
- Pick a day each week to reflect on the questions, prayers, and activities.
- Use the prompts as a way to create conversation over breakfast, dinner, and/or bedtime as a family, with friends, or in your prayer time with God.
- Look back at your reflections throughout Lent to notice where growth and transformation are happening in your journey.

Guiding Questions:

1. How do the "Lent Traps" this week limit my thinking or my relationship with God and others?
2. How can I step outside of each "Lent Trap" to open my heart and mind to make space for transformation?



Tips for younger children:

For families with young children, this season is an opportunity to help kids recognize and name the feelings of being stuck—whether in frustration, routines, or worries—and to remind them that God’s love is always with them. Through simple conversations, prayers, and activities, families can explore together how God helps us find new ways to grow, love, and trust. Be sure to see the "tips for younger children" sprinkled throughout the booklet.

**ASH Wednesday, March 5:
Matthew 6.1-6, 16-21**



PRIDE

Pride: Exalting ourselves and our accomplishments, rather than giving glory to God.

As we begin the Lenten season, write or doodle about one hope you have as we focus on different Lent Traps.

Sunday, March 9:

Jeremiah 9.23-24 & 1 Corinthians 8.1-13

INTELLECTUALISM

Intellectualism: Focusing solely on theological knowledge without practical application.

Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. (1 Corinthians 8.1b)

Write or draw about how God might be inviting you to live out your knowledge about God in a way to share love with those around you.

**Tip for younger children: How can we use what we know about God to help or care for someone today? Write or draw ways that you can live out your faith—such as sharing, helping a neighbor, or being kind—and choose one action to do as a family this week.*

Wednesday, March 12:

Mark 9.14-29 & Matthew 28.16-20

DOUBT



*Doubt: The tension between
“Lord, I believe” and “help my unbelief”
can either paralyze us or propel us forward.
In the Lent Trap of “Doubt,” we explore the
temptation to believe that faith means certainty
rather than trust.*

Write or doodle a prayer for the place in your life
where you experience doubt.

Sunday, March 16:


Psalm 51.1-17 & Matthew 6.1-6, 16-18

ELITISM

Elitism: Believing ourselves to be superior to others based on spiritual attainment.

Listen to the song, *Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God* based on Psalm 51 in the *Glory to God Hymnal #423*

*Create in me a clean heart, O God,
And renew a right spirit within me.
Create in me a clean heart, O God,
And renew a right spirit within me.*



**Tip for younger children: discuss the word “humble” and what stories about Jesus show us how even the Son of God didn't act better than others. How can we follow God, without thinking we are better than others?*

Wednesday, March 19:
Matthew 18.21-35

RESENTMENT

Resentment: Holding onto bitterness and resentment, hindering spiritual growth and relationships.

How does holding onto resentment feel like carrying a heavy burden? What might change if you choose to let go and forgive? Hold a small rock in your hand and squeeze it tightly while thinking about a time you felt hurt or upset. Then, release the rock into a bowl of water, watching it sink. Talk about how letting go of resentment, like releasing the rock, can help us to grow in love and grace.

Sunday, March 23:

Exodus 20.8-11 & Luke 10.38-42

BUSYNESS

Busyness: Overfilling our schedules, leaving little time for spiritual reflection or connection.

Jesus commends Mary for choosing "what is better." What does "choosing what is better" look like in your current season of life? Are there activities, commitments, or habits that you could let go of to prioritize time with God or meaningful relationships?

Breath Prayer:

Inhale: Your steadfast love surrounds me.

Exhale: I trust in You, O Lord.



Wednesday, March 26:
Matthew 5.21-26

LEGALISM

Legalism: Overemphasizing rules and regulations, neglecting the heart of the gospel.

Where do you experience legalism that prevents you from fully living out your faith?

Sunday, March 30:

Proverbs 12.24-28 & Luke 10.30-37

APATHY

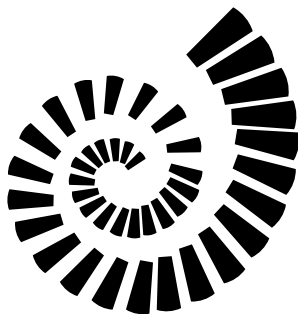
Apathy: Becoming indifferent to the needs of others and the world around us.

Jesus challenges us to "go and do likewise" by showing compassion and mercy. How might apathy in our daily lives or the church community prevent us from being true neighbors? What specific actions could you take to move from passive acknowledgment to active care for those who are suffering or marginalized?

**Tip for younger children: Read Luke 10.30-37 together, the story of the Good Samaritan. When Jesus tells us to "go and do likewise," what is he encouraging us to do? Have you ever seen someone who needed help, but people walked past them? What can we do to be good neighbors like Jesus teaches?*

Wednesday, April 2:
Psalm 91

CONTROL



Control: Trying to control our circumstances or the lives of others, rather than trusting in God's sovereignty.

What is one thing you control that you can let go of this week?

Sunday, April 6: Proverbs 3:1-6 & Philippians 3.12-16

PERFECTIONISM

Perfectionism: Setting unrealistic standards for ourselves and others, leading to frustration and disappointment.

Gracious God, help us to trust in you with all our hearts and let go of the need for perfection. Remind us, as Paul said, that we have not yet reached the goal, but we press on toward the purpose you have set for us. Teach us to rest in your love, free from striving, and to find peace in your guidance, knowing you are faithful to complete the good work you have begun in us. Amen.

**Tips for younger children: Reflect on how God doesn't expect us to be perfect - God does ask us to be faithful. Have you ever felt like you had to be perfect for something? How does that feel? Read Philippians 3.12-14 together. Talk about how God is still working in us, and we don't have to have everything figured out yet. As a family, practice saying: "God loves me just as I am" and take a deep breath together, letting go of the pressure to be perfect.*

Wednesday, April 9:

Matthew 20.1-16

COMPARISON

Comparison: Comparing ourselves to others, leading to feelings of inadequacy or superiority.

Write or doodle a prayer about where you experience comparison in your life.

Sunday, April 13:
Philippians 2.5-11 & Luke 22-23



PALM/PASSION READING

Take a piece of paper and draw a simple path or road. Along the path, write or draw ways people celebrated Jesus during his time on Earth—waving palms, sharing meals, showing kindness. Then, add ways you can celebrate and follow Jesus in your own life today. Reflect on how Jesus' teachings continue to guide your journey.

Pray:

Hosanna! We lift our voices and call out to you, O God.

Guide us and show us your way.

When we are uncertain, give us wisdom.

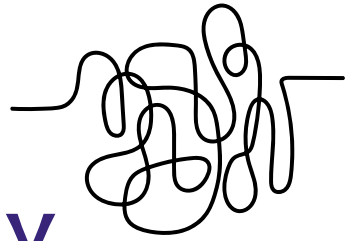
When we feel lost, draw us close.

As we walk through this Holy Week,

help us follow Jesus with open hearts and faithful steps.

Amen.

Monday, April 14:
Mark 11.12-19

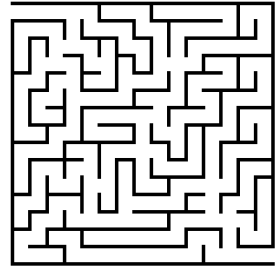


COMPLACENCY

Complacency: Becoming content with our current spiritual state, neglecting growth.

What steps might you take to deepen your spiritual growth?

Tuesday, April 15:
Mark 14.3-9



WITHHOLDING

Withholding: Holding back love, grace, or resources that God calls us to share with others.

Write or doodle a prayer about where you experience withholding in your life.



Wednesday, April 16:

Luke 10.38-42

DISTRACTION

Distraction: When we are physically present but spiritually distant, forgetting that God is just as present in our interruptions as in our plans. When we see interruptions as obstacles rather than invitations to encounter God.

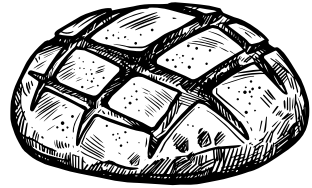
Breath Prayer:

Inhale: You are my help.

Exhale: I sing in the shadow of Your wings.

Thursday, April 17:
Mark 14.12-20

MAUNDY THURSDAY



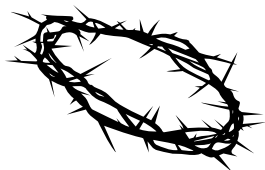
Self-Righteousness: Judging others and feeling superior based on our own perceived righteousness.

Pray:

Gracious God, you who washed the feet of the one who betrayed you, break down my pride. When I am quick to judge, remind me of your mercy. When I feel superior, show me my own need for grace. Open my heart to see others as you see them—not with comparison, but with love. As I walk through this Holy Week, may I be humbled at your table, aware of my own failings, and grateful for your endless mercy. Amen.

Friday, April 18

GOOD FRIDAY



Find a small stone and hold it in your hand. Feel its weight, its coolness, its solid presence. Sit in silence for a moment. Then, slowly close your hand around the stone, tightening your grip. Notice how it feels to hold onto the weight of sadness and loss.

After a moment, open your hand and place the stone down. How does it feel to release it? Write about what it's like to sit with the weight of Good Friday and the hope that is yet unseen.

Pray:

We wait in the darkness.
Be with us in the darkness,
O Light of the world.

Saturday, April 19

HOLY SATURDAY

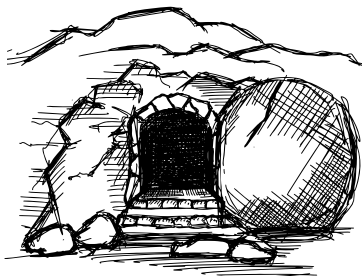
Pray:

Help us hold on to the promise
That you are good,
That you are who you say you are,
Even when we can't see you,
Even when we don't know
What tomorrow brings.



Sunday, April 20

EASTER



Give thanks for the season of Lent and the time that you've given over the past 40 days to deepening your relationship with God. Give thanks for transformations, and name one thing you want to take with you post-Easter.

Pray:

The earth bursts with your glory, O God,
and all creation sings your praise!

Our hearts join the song, shouting, "Hallelujah!"

We rejoice in your love as we leave behind
the weight of yesterday.

Fill us with the joy of resurrection, that we may dance
in the light of your new day—today, tomorrow, and always!

Amen.



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A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for a detailed description or notes.

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