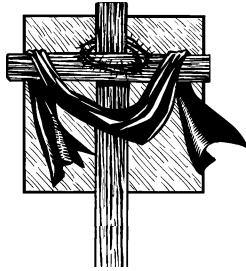


Some Ideas for Focus as We Journey to Jerusalem



The following ideas can be used in conjunction with our Sermon on the Mount scripture passages to help you reflect and grow during this Lenten journey.

+ Secret Service of Love Throughout Lent and Beyond

“Don’t just talk about love, show love” 1 John 3:18.

Many of you stopped by our Family Ministry Team table at the Valentine Party to make the Secret Service of Love hearts as described below. This is a life-long habit to develop with or without visible hearts (see [Matt. 6:4, 6, 18](#)).

1. Make several hearts for each person in your family. You can either:
 - Trace, cut out and decorate heart shapes and write “Secret Service of Love” on them, or
 - Decorate pre-cut heart shapes and write “Secret Service of Love” on them.
2. Do something kind (in secret!) for a family member and leave one of the hearts you made for them. Use up all of your hearts!!
Examples: ♥ make your brother’s bed and leave a heart
♥ “turn down” the bed for Mom and Dad and leave a heart
Use your imagination!!
3. Make one special heart to use as a “Family Secret Service of Love” act for a neighbor or friend from your family.
4. Bake cookies, shovel, or do some other secret act of kindness for a neighbor, relative or family friend and leave the special “Family Secret Service of Love” heart to spread love to them.

+ Amazing Grace, A Movie to See

The film, “Amazing Grace,” based on the life of Christ follower and antislavery pioneer William Wilberforce, is 151 minutes long and rated PG. It is a true story of Wilberforce, who was elected to the House of Commons at the age of 21 and over the course of two decades, took on the English establishment and persuaded those in power to end the inhumane trade of slavery. John Newton, who wrote the hymn “Amazing Grace” was a friend of Wilberforce and inspired him to a life of service to humanity. For more information on Wilberforce pick up a flyer from the table by Pastor Jane’s office door. Parents: introduce your kids to Christ followers in history thru such books as [Hero Tales](#) by Dave & Neta Jackson. Help them learn how Christ followers make a difference.

+ Open the Eyes of My Heart Prayer 7p.m. Wed. Feb. 28, Meredith Drive campus Matt. 6:22-23

One of our scriptures for Ash Wednesday from the Sermon on the Mount was from Matthew 6:22-23: *“The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!”* A simple way to pray at the end of the day, either alone, with kids age 4 and up, or as a family; to develop “vision” to “see” more thanksgivings, let go of regrets, and be ready for the next day.

+ Managing Status Anxiety 7-8 p.m. Wed. Mar. 7 Matt. 6:25-34

Social status has always been an issue that Jesus taught about and his followers have wrestled with: What does “poor” mean and what does “rich” mean? What does being “emptied” mean? Is it okay to be rich if you are a Christian? For many Christian families, having social status or desiring social status has become a confusing, anxiety-producing, and sometimes consuming issue. In today’s culture there exists an almost inescapable world view that social status symbols like the car one drives, the clothes one wears, and the house or neighborhood in which one lives are ultimate “statements” to the world about “me.” But scripture assures us that there is a healthier world view: God blesses us with tools that witness to culture and the world about God. Presenter: Shane Ver Steeg, Pine Rest Therapist

Helping Our Kids Navigate the Preteen & Teen Years

7 p.m. Wed. Mar. 14, Meredith Drive campus

A seminar to reflect on the forces our kids face to fit in, how it affects their friendships, how they see themselves, and coaching tips for parents and grandparents of all ages. Presenter: Bruce Buchanan, Child/Youth Therapist

How Jesus Died

6:30 p.m. Wed. Mar. 28

Join us for the video, “How Jesus Died: The Final 18 Hours.” This full-length video presents the comprehensive medical, forensic, and historical facts of Jesus’ crucifixion, capturing every detail of the last few hours leading up to his death on the cross. You will have a new understanding of what Jesus endured as four world-renowned experts explore various aspects of his crucifixion.

Good \$ense Budget

6 to 8:30 p.m. Wed. Mar. 28 & Apr. 4
Matt.. 6:19-24

Learn how to better manage the treasure God gives us using this proven biblical resource for changing hearts and lives in the area of finances.

Now you can experience the joy of financial freedom! You’ll learn how to:

- Prioritize financial goals
- Develop a personalized spending plan
- Identify action steps to reduce expenses
- Reduce debt . . . and much more

Good \$ense will give you the tools and skills you need to control your finances rather than allowing your finances to control you! (To take full advantage of the material in this course, a Participant’s Guide will be necessary—the cost is \$8.50.)

Questions, contact presenter, Arlan Van Roekel, 378.8194, or Pastor Jane, 276.4901.

Additional Lenten Ideas

Below you will find two simple processes of self-examination that may prove helpful in your daily life to keep you aware of God’s grace in your life.

Life-Centered Prayer

Ben Campbell Johnson speaks of learning to “pray with our lives.” He suggests a basic process to “integrate the life of prayer into the ordinary events and decisions of everyday life.”

Gather the day. Identify five to ten major events of your day, including prayer, particular conversations, meetings, meals, work, and other activities. List them.

Review the day. Reflect upon each occurrence listed, without judging yourself, avoiding feelings, or making excuses. This is the actual substance of your daily life.

Give thanks for the day. Thank God for each part of your day, for your life, and for God’s presence in the midst of it.

Confess your sin. Acknowledge your faults in thought, word, and deed toward God, your neighbor, and yourself (you might add the creation, too).

Bring Forgiveness Home

“Forgive as the Lord forgave you” the Bible says (Colossians 3:33). Bring the message of forgiveness “home” to your spouse, your children, your parents, your brothers and sisters, to friends, and all who are in your life. Seek to live in an atmosphere in which the words “I’m sorry” and “I forgive you” are sincerely, frequently and meaningfully exchanged. For at the heart of Lent is the message that Christ died for the forgiveness of sins.

You may sign up for those classes you plan to attend in worship on Sunday mornings, or e-mail Pastor Jane, janebrown@meredithdrive.org.