

Family Devotionals for Lent from Intermountain

Greetings to God's people—the Beloved Community!

Lent is a journey inward. It is a great time to try some new habits around self-awareness. A popular question among Methodists and thinkers alike is “how is it with your soul?” The next step of that question is pondering how your soul moves in the world: how do you live in the world? How does your faith impact your relationships, community, and the world?

Please enjoy these family-focused devotionals following the Psalm readings this Lenten year. These can be questions/topics you discuss at bedtime routine, in route to school, even on the ski lift. They are meant to be as simple or complex as the Spirit leads them to be.

*Sincerely, Rev. Sami Pack-Toner
Chaplain, Intermountain Residential*

February 26th

First Sunday in Lent—AUTHENTICITY

Being authentic with God and others is important. It can also be difficult to be authentic, depending on your feelings, your situation, and your behaviors. Still, God encourages us to always strive to be our true selves as often as we can be. And if there is a time when we feel like we can't be our true selves, we need to explore why we are feeling that way.

Scripture Reading: Psalm 32

Discussion Questions:

- *What does “authentic” mean to you?*
- *Why does it matter to be authentic?*
- *Can you think of any reasons why it might be difficult to be authentic?*
- *When you are authentic, what do you feel in your body? When you are NOT authentic, what do you feel in your body?*



March 5th

Second Sunday in Lent—HOPE

A pilgrimage is a special journey that is centered on something spiritual. It often takes a lot to plan the journey, and it's a lot of work to finish the journey. The destination is just as important as the journey getting there. The path of a pilgrimage is not always clear and straightforward. It could be as difficult as going up and around a mountain! The tricky part about this type of journey is relying on God to be with us through it all—thick and thin—easy and hard—the ups and downs.



Scripture Reading: Psalm 121

Discussion Questions:

- *What feels like an impossible mountain to climb right now?*
- *How do you think you will know when you have reached the destination?*
- *Do you think that God would make our pilgrimage journeys easier? Why/why not?*

March 12th

Third Sunday in Lent—JOY

When we start to think about God and us striving being authentic and hopeful, it can be overwhelming to focus on God's BIG presence. It can even feel like we can't escape, and that also be overwhelming. The more we learn about *what* God's presence in our lives and the world mean, the more comfort we can feel and less overwhelm. Our comfort can even be shown through joy and celebration!



Scripture Reading: Psalm 95

Discussion Questions:

- *What do you think God's presence means?*
- *What are some ways that you could learn more about God's presence in your life?*
- *The author mentions "twisted hearts" (verse 10)—what does that mean to you? What are some ways to un-twist hearts?*

March 19th

Fourth Sunday in Lent—CARE

Psalm 23 is a really famous scripture passage. It brings a lot of people comfort. They memorize it and recite it each day. It's famous for the image of God being a shepherd, and all of us being sheep being cared for by the shepherd. The shepherd has a really important job—to care for their sheep NO MATTER WHAT. Even if the sheep are grumpy or sad or happy, the shepherd is still there caring.

Scripture Reading: Psalm 23

Discussion Questions:

- *What is comforting about this Psalm to you?*
- *What does the phrase “no matter what” mean to you?*
- *How does God care for you like a shepherd? Have you experienced a “no matter what” moment?*



March 26th

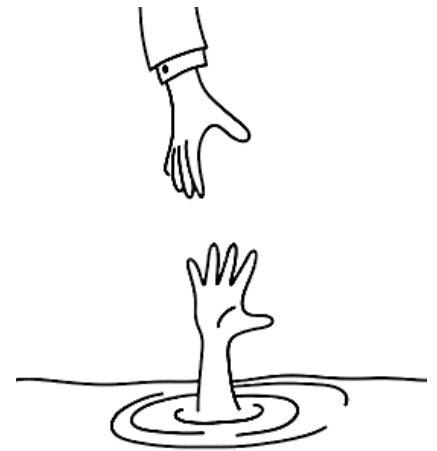
Fifth Sunday in Lent—GRIEF

There are lots of stories like this passage in the Bible. We can learn about a lot of different reactions and outcomes to this. It's mainly because we are all human, and we get to have a very human, not-perfect response to the struggles in life. Our challenge is to practice healthy responses to these hard parts of life.

Scripture Reading: Psalm 130

Discussion Questions:

- *When is it hardest to ask for help? What feelings do you have when you're struggling to ask?*
- *The passage says “from the depths”—what image do you think of when you hear that?*
- *How do you know God is listening?*
- *The passage says “wait for God's promise”—what is it like to wait for something really meaningful?*



April 2nd

Sixth Sunday in Lent—GRATITUDE

The passage this week focuses on gratitude for *who* God is. Sometimes, figuring out who God is can be the hardest job we have!

Scripture Reading: Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

Discussion Questions:

- *The passage mentions gates of “righteousness”— what does that mean to you? Do they need to be opened before one can be grateful?*
- *Is it easier to be grateful before you have “proof” of something good? Or, is it easier to see the reality of something good and THEN be grateful?*
- *Is it healthier to wait or to practice gratitude for here and now? Why do you think so?*



April 9th

Holy Week/Easter—RENEWAL

Easter is about new birth and renewal. It reminds us that EVEN in our humanness, God’s love is unfailing. God will build us up and encourage us. God walks with us. God endures with us.

Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 31:1-6

Discussion Questions:

- *This passage has the word “again” a lot. What does “again” mean to you when thinking of God’s love? Is it negative or positive?*
- *Is it uncomfortable or helpful to know that God’s love is unfailing?*
- *What is something that helps remind you of God’s unfailing love that is there again and again?*

