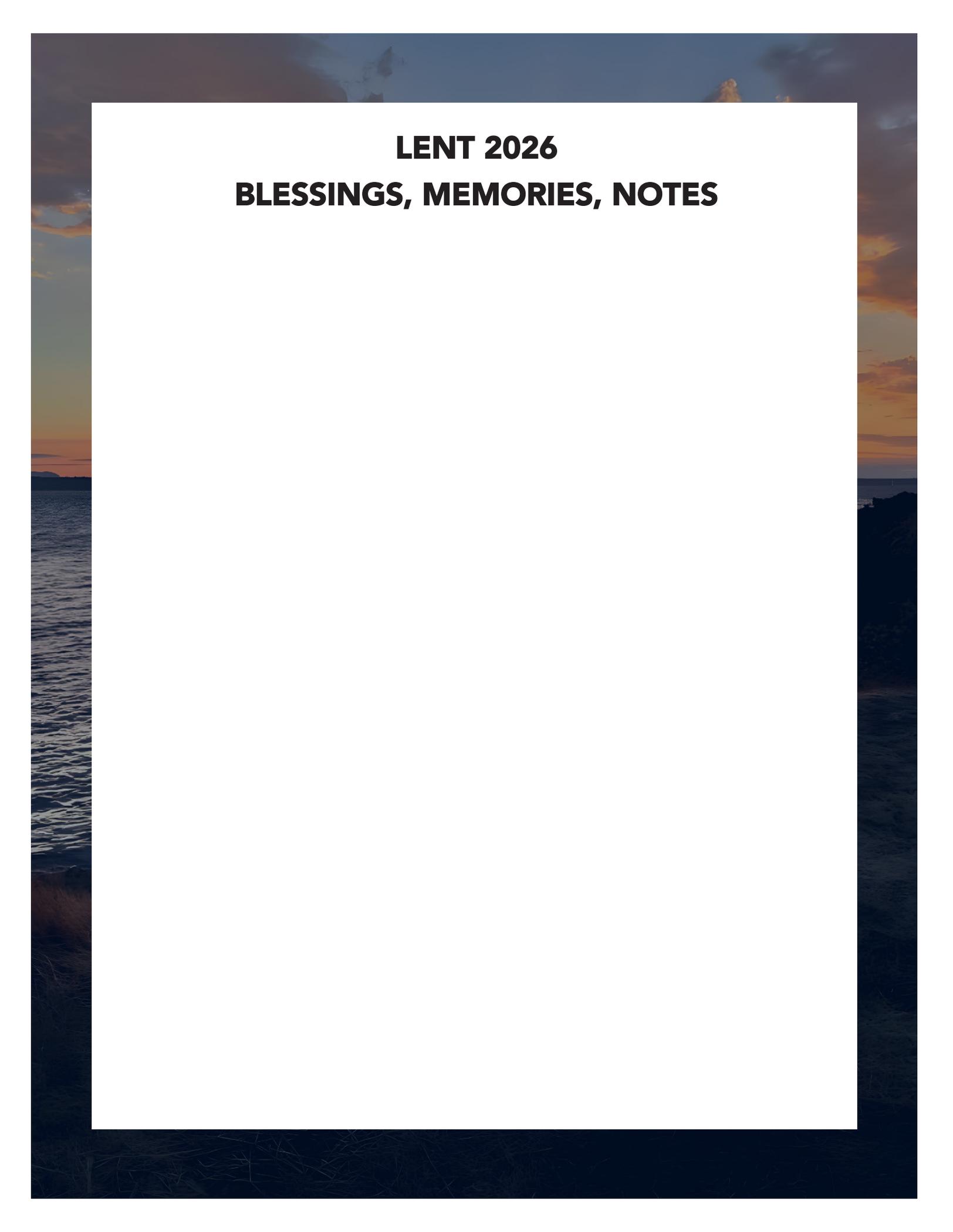


**WITNESSING  
JESUS** LENT SERMON  
SERIES 2026

**A LENTEN DEVOTIONAL FROM  
PULASKI HEIGHTS UMC**





**LENT 2026**  
**BLESSINGS, MEMORIES, NOTES**

# WITNESSING JESUS

## LENT SERMON SERIES 2026

During Lent we will read the Gospel of John as a congregation. The reading schedule divides the entire Gospel into 40 daily readings. The season of Lent is 40 days, not including Sundays. Therefore on Sundays you will not have a new scripture passage to read, instead there will be a scripture reading exercise to help you dive deeper into the texts. You can use this exercise with the upcoming week's readings or to dive deeper into the scripture. There will be some exercises you might enjoy and some that you find less helpful. The hope is that this will introduce you to new ways of reading scripture and you might incorporate some into your daily Bible reading.

The Gospel of John has been called the "Spiritual Gospel" and the "Gospel of Life." John tells the gospel story in a different way than Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Instead of miracles, John tells of the "signs and wonders" Jesus performed. John's Gospel focuses on Jesus' encounters and conversations with individual people like Nicodemus, the woman at the well, and Mary and Martha. In fact, the longest recorded conversation of Jesus' is in John 4 with the woman of Samaria he meets at Jacob's Well. There are several stories that are only told in John's Gospel such as Jesus saving the woman accused of adultery, the wedding at Cana when Jesus turns water into wine, and Jesus washing the feet of the disciples.

John does not recount Jesus' birth in Bethlehem, but instead begins with a beautiful explanation of the incarnation. John also focuses more on the last week of Jesus' life and the crucifixion than the other three Gospels. The first eleven chapters tell of Jesus' three years in ministry, and John 11:55-19:42 detail the last week of Jesus' life including the crucifixion. The resurrection is recounted in chapters 20 and 21. Since the Gospel of John is focused so much on the week leading up to the crucifixion, Lent is the perfect time to re-read this Gospel in its entirety to prepare our hearts to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus.

One final note on the Gospel of John: throughout the Gospel and especially during the arrest, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus, John refers to "the Jews." He is referring to a small group of leaders in the Jewish community including the high priest, Caiaphas, who had colluded with Rome and Pilate to have Jesus killed. Sadly, these passages have been misused throughout history and fed anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic sentiments. We believe that all of humanity bears responsibility for the death of Jesus because we have all sinned. We do not place the blame for Jesus' death on the Jewish people.

Here are a few practical tips for your reading: Set a daily time and place to read. It does not matter where you read: before bed, at breakfast, or in the car pick up line. Put your reading guide in a visible place as a reminder. The reading guide is yours to write in and track your progress. If you get behind, just pick up where you left off and continue.

- Rev. Katie Goss Pearce

# **ASH WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18**

## **JOHN 1:1-28**

<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and lived among us.

### **PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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## **FEBRUARY 19**

### **JOHN 1:29-51**

<sup>29</sup> Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

### **PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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## **FEBRUARY 20**

### **JOHN 2:1-25**

<sup>22</sup> After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

### **PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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## **FEBRUARY 21**

### **JOHN 3:1-21**

<sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

### **PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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# WITNESSING JESUS

FIRST SUNDAY  
OF LENT

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22**

## LECTIO DIVINA

Lectio Divina is an ancient Christian practice that means “divine reading” in Latin. This practice can help you to listen for how God is speaking through the scriptures. The practice of Lectio Divina is a practice of moving with Scripture to encounter God’s Word. Some have compared it to dancing – you may feel clumsy at first; but the more we try, the more we learn to move in rhythm. For Lectio Divina, a shorter passage can be better, so you can choose a verse or short passage from the week’s readings and follow the steps of Lectio Divina:

**Movement 1: Read:** Read through the scripture passage once, aloud if possible. Try to read slowly and with an open mind, as if you are reading the story for the first time.

Read through the same passage a second time, this time listen for one word or short phrase that sticks out to you.

**Movement 2: Reflection:** Ponder the word or phrase. Why did this stick out to you? What is the message this passage has for you today?

**Movement 3: Respond:** Read the passage a third time and then spend time in silent reflection. Close this time of silence by praying to God about what you read and thought.

**Movement 4: Rest:** Rest in God’s presence. When you are done, carry this message of scripture with you throughout the day.

## PRAYER/REFLECTIONS

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## **FEBRUARY 23**

### **JOHN 3:22-36**

<sup>35</sup> The Father loves the son and has placed all things in his hands.

#### **PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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## **FEBRUARY 24**

### **JOHN 4:1-42**

<sup>29</sup> He cannot be the Messiah, can he?

#### **PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**FEBRUARY 25**

**JOHN 4:43-54**

<sup>48</sup> Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**FEBRUARY 26**

**JOHN 5:1-29**

<sup>21</sup> Just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life,  
so also the son gives life to whomever he wishes.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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## **FEBRUARY 27**

### **JOHN 5:30-47**

<sup>36</sup> The words that the Father has given me to complete, the very works that I am doing, testify on my behalf that the Father has sent me.

#### **PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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## **FEBRUARY 28**

### **JOHN 6:1-21**

<sup>20</sup> It is I; do not be afraid.

#### **PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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# WITNESSING JESUS

SECOND SUNDAY  
OF LENT

**SUNDAY, MARCH 1**

## **IDENTIFYING WITH A PERSON IN THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE**

The Gospel of John records many long one-on-one conversations between Jesus and an individual. In fact, the longest recorded conversation Jesus has with another person is with the Woman at the Well in chapter 4. Pick a passage and identify with a person in the scripture passage. Read through the passage and say their words out loud; you can even read the entire passage out loud with others and assign different parts. Read through it again and focus on what this person would be thinking and feeling. How would you respond if you were in their shoes? Would you behave in the same way? How might this passage be inviting you to respond today?

## **PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 2**  
**JOHN 6:22-59**

<sup>57</sup> Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father,  
so whoever eats me will live because of me.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 3**  
**JOHN 6:60-71**

<sup>63</sup> The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 4**  
**JOHN 7:1-31**

<sup>25</sup> Is not this the man whom they are trying to kill?

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 5**  
**JOHN 7:32-53**

<sup>37b</sup> Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, <sup>38</sup> and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, 'Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water.'

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 6**  
**JOHN 8:1-30**

<sup>15</sup> You judge by human standards; I judge no one.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 7**  
**JOHN 8:31-59**

<sup>58</sup> Very truly I tell you, before Abraham was, I AM.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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# WITNESSING JESUS

THIRD SUNDAY  
OF LENT

**SUNDAY, MARCH 8**

## **READING DIFFERENT TRANSLATIONS**

We often read from the same Bible over and over again, so we are reading from the same translation. Different translations can bring out new details in the text. Read through a scripture passage in the translation you typically use. Then find two other translations and read the same passage. If you don't have other translations, you can find many online at [Biblegateway.com](http://Biblegateway.com). Try translations you are not familiar with such as The Message, King James, or the Common English Bible. Make notes of differences among the three translations. Did these differences change the meaning of the passage? Did it alter your understanding of the events or the meaning of the passage?

## **PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 9**  
**JOHN 9:1-41**

<sup>5</sup> As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 10**  
**JOHN 10:1-21**

<sup>17</sup> For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. <sup>18a</sup> No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 11**  
**JOHN 10:22-42**

<sup>25</sup> The works that I do in my Father's name testify to me.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 12**  
**JOHN 11:1-27**

<sup>25b</sup> Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live,  
<sup>26a</sup> and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 13**  
**JOHN 11:28-57**

<sup>40</sup> Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 14**  
**JOHN 12:1-26**

<sup>23</sup> The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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# WITNESSING JESUS

FOURTH SUNDAY  
OF LENT

**SUNDAY, MARCH 15**

## **THE SOAP METHOD**

The SOAP Method is a simple way to read scripture and apply God's word to your life. There are four easy steps that can be used to guide any scripture reading:

**S**cripture: Read your chosen scripture passage. Write it down by hand - it really does make a difference!

**O**bservation: Reflect on the passage to understand its meaning. Do any words stick out to you? Consider the context: where did this take place, who was it originally written to? What is the key theme of this passage? You can consult a commentary if you'd like, but you can also rely on your own knowledge and experience.

**A**pplication: Ask yourself how this scripture applies to your life right now. What do you need to learn from it? Are there areas of your life that don't align with this scripture? Note specific, practical insights you can put into practice.

**P**rayer: End by writing a prayer, asking God to help you apply this scripture to your life and asking for the continued guidance of the Holy Spirit.

## **PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 16**  
**JOHN 12:27-50**

<sup>32</sup> I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 17**  
**JOHN 13:1-20**

<sup>13</sup> You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for that is what I am.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 18**  
**JOHN 13:21-38**

<sup>34</sup> I give you a new commandment, that you love one another.  
Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 19**  
**JOHN 14:1-14**

<sup>12</sup> The one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and,  
in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 20**  
**JOHN 14:15-31**

<sup>26b</sup> The Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all that I have said to you. <sup>27a</sup> Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 21**  
**JOHN 15:1-17**

<sup>4</sup> I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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# WITNESSING JESUS FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

**SUNDAY, MARCH 22**

## **MEMORIZATION**

Pick a verse from John you would like to memorize. You can choose any verse, but here are some suggestions: John 1:14, John 8:12, John 13:34-35, and John 15:7. Use these steps to help you memorize your verse and try to think about it and apply it throughout the week:

Write it down by hand several times. This will help you to get the wording in your mind.

Put it on a Post-it note on the bathroom mirror so you can read it while brushing your teeth at the beginning and end of each day.

Find times throughout the day to recite the verse, such as when you refill your coffee mug or water bottle.

## **PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 23**  
**JOHN 15:18-27**

<sup>18</sup> If the world hates you, be aware that it hated me before it hated you.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 24**  
**JOHN 16:1-15**

<sup>13</sup> When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. <sup>14a</sup> He will glorify me.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 25**  
**JOHN 16:16-33**

<sup>33</sup> I have said this to you so that in me you may have peace. In the world you face persecution, but take courage: I have conquered the world!

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 26**  
**JOHN 17:1-26**

<sup>21</sup> As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me."

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 27**  
**JOHN 18:1-24**

<sup>5</sup> I am He.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 28**  
**JOHN 18:25-40**

<sup>36</sup> My kingdom does not belong to this world.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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# WITNESSING JESUS

SIXTH SUNDAY  
OF LENT

## PALM SUNDAY, MARCH 29

### JOURNALING

Journaling our Bible study reflections and prayers can be a powerful spiritual discipline. It also allows you to go back and read how a passage spoke to you before and reflect on how it speaks differently to you now. You can write anything you want, but here are some ideas to get you started:

Begin with prayer.

Read your scripture passage. Write down your immediate thoughts and reactions.

Paraphrase what you read.

Write down individual words that leapt out to you. Are there any feelings or reactions these words evoke from you?

Think of a situation going on in your life, in our community, or a current event and write what wisdom this passage has to speak to that situation.

If you are having trouble knowing what to write, re-write the passage. The hardest part is getting started.

### PRAYER/REFLECTIONS

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**MARCH 30**  
**JOHN 19:1-27**

<sup>11</sup> You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MARCH 31**  
**JOHN 19:28-42**

<sup>30</sup> It is finished.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**APRIL 1**  
**JOHN 20:1-18**

<sup>17</sup> I am ascending to my Father, and your Father, to my God and your God.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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**MAUNDY THURSDAY, APRIL 2**  
**JOHN 20:19-30**

<sup>31</sup> These are written so that you may continue to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

**PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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## **GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 3**

### **JOHN 21:1-14**

<sup>12b</sup> They knew it was the Lord. <sup>13</sup> Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them and did the same with the fish.

### **PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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## **HOLY SATURDAY, APRIL 4**

### **JOHN 21:15-25**

<sup>19</sup> Follow me.

### **PRAYER/REFLECTIONS**

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# WITNESSING JESUS

EASTER SUNDAY  
LENT 2026

**EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 5**

**JOHN 20:1-18**

<sup>1</sup> Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. <sup>2</sup> So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!"

<sup>3</sup> So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. <sup>4</sup> Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. <sup>5</sup> He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. <sup>6</sup> Then Simon Peter came along behind him and went straight into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, <sup>7</sup> as well as the cloth that had been wrapped around Jesus' head. The cloth was still lying in its place, separate from the linen. <sup>8</sup> Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed. <sup>9</sup> (They still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead.) <sup>10</sup> Then the disciples went back to where they were staying.

<sup>11</sup> Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb <sup>12</sup> and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot. <sup>13</sup> They asked her, "Woman, why are you crying?" "They have taken my Lord away," she said, "and I don't know where they have put him."

<sup>14</sup> At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus. <sup>15</sup> He asked her, "Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?" Thinking he was the gardener, she said, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him." <sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" (which means "Teacher"). <sup>17</sup> Jesus said, "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'"

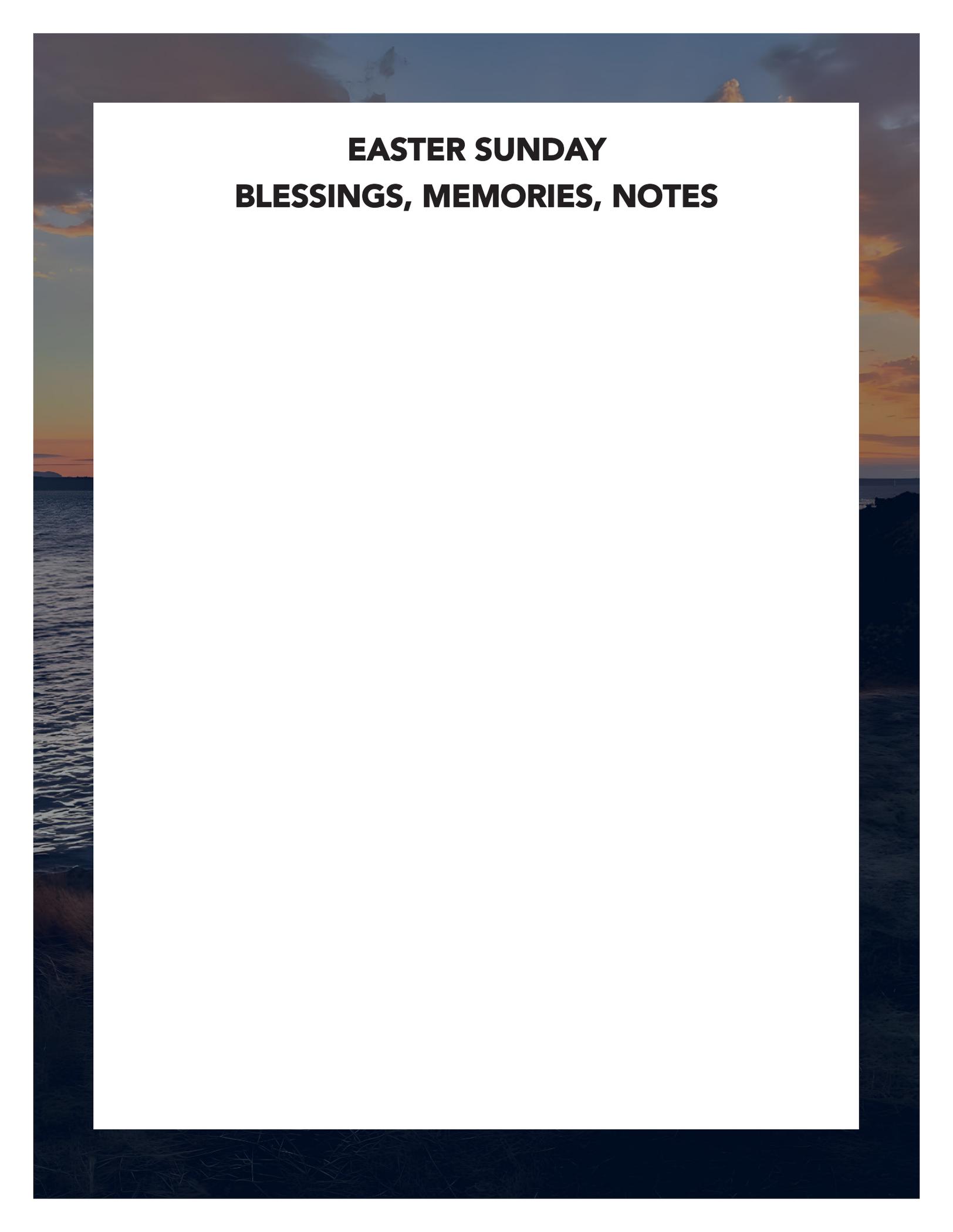
<sup>18</sup> Mary Magdalene went to the disciples with the news: "I have seen the Lord!" And she told them that he had said these things to her.

**JOIN US FOR EASTER WORSHIP!**

**Easter Saturday Worship | Sanctuary | 5 PM**

**Easter Sunday Classic Worship | Sanctuary | 8:30, 9:45 & 11 AM**

**Easter Sunday Modern Worship | Wesley Hall | 9:45 & 11 AM**



**EASTER SUNDAY  
BLESSINGS, MEMORIES, NOTES**

# LENT & EASTER

## @ PHUMC

### **FEBRUARY 18 « ASH WEDNESDAY**

Imposition of Ashes | Sanctuary | 7 AM (Drop-in)

Ash Wednesday Service | Sanctuary | 12 & 6 PM

\*Childcare is available for the 6PM service inside Entrance 4

### **MARCH 29 « PALM SUNDAY**

Classic Worship w/ Palm Procession | Sanctuary | 9 & 11 AM

Modern Worship w/ Palm Procession | Wesley Hall | 11 AM

Children's Palm Parade | Courtyard | 10:15 AM

### **APRIL 2 « MAUNDY THURSDAY**

Drop-in Communion | Sanctuary | 12 PM

Maundy Thursday Service | Sanctuary | 7 PM

### **APRIL 3 « GOOD FRIDAY**

Service of Oratorio - The Last 7 Words of Christ | Sanctuary | 12 PM

### **APRIL 4 « EASTER SATURDAY**

Easter Egg Hunt | War Memorial Pavilion | 10:30 AM

Easter Saturday Worship | Sanctuary | 5 PM

### **APRIL 5 « EASTER SUNDAY**

Classic Worship | Sanctuary | 8:30, 9:45 & 11 AM

Modern Worship | Wesley Hall | 9:45 & 11 AM

### **APRIL 6 « EASTER MONDAY**

Church offices closed

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