



Drawing Closer to God through
Service | Generosity | Witness

2019 Lent Devotional

Faith United Methodist Church

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Rev. Charles Straight, Pastor

A Message from our Pastor

Blessings to you Faith!

I am so excited about this season of Lent as we remember with joy and anticipation the amazing work Christ did for us on Calvary's cross. This year we invite you to join us on this spiritual journey for the next 6.5 weeks. Lent is a time for us to *refrain* from things that divert our attention away from God, *refocus* our attention on God, reflect on God's love extended toward us through His son, Jesus. This year we will journey together each day through this devotional and our theme is ***Drawing Closer to God through Service, Generosity and Witness***. I believe that God wants our church family to give these areas laser focus. Each day is assigned a scripture, prayer focus, and action to live out one of our three areas of focus. In addition, please give up something that may be preventing you from being your best self. This could be a type of food, the type of entertainment you consume, or anything you feel that distracts you from getting closer to God. If you don't have a fast of your own, then join me over the next 40 days in a somewhat traditional fast of turning away from all meats and also poultry.

Blessings,

Rev. Charles Straight
Pastor - Faith United Methodist Church

What is Lent?

Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. Lent comes from the Anglo Saxon word *lencten*, which means "spring." The forty days represents the time Jesus spent in the wilderness, enduring the temptation of Satan and preparing to begin his ministry.

Lent is a time of repentance, fasting and preparation for the coming of Easter. It is a time of self-examination and reflection. In the early church, Lent was a time to prepare new converts for baptism. Today, Christians focus on their relationship with God, often choosing to give up something or to volunteer and give of themselves for others.

Sundays in Lent are not counted in the forty days because each Sunday represents a "mini-Easter" and the reverent spirit of Lent is tempered with joyful anticipation of the Resurrection.

Clarifying Your Personal Goals

Why is it important for me to draw closer to God?

The scriptures gives us clear instructions in James 4 concerning drawing closer to God and not being friends with the world. “ So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come close to God, and God will come close to you”.

What will i give up for Lent?

1. _____

As a result, I hope to see God:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

There are people who God has laid on my heart. As a result of this fast, I hope that God will move in their life in this way. Write their name, and in parenthesis write a prayer request:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

SERVICE

Day 1 - March 6th - Ash Wednesday

Scripture: Luke 10:25-37

Prayer Focus: Lord open my eyes to the world around me. Help me to actively live out your commandment to love my neighbor just as much as I love me.

Live it Out: Go above and beyond to show God's love to someone that others have forgotten about.

Day 2 - March 7th

Scripture: John 13:12-13

Prayer Focus: Lord humble me and give me a heart to serve the people you love.

Live it Out: Serve your family by hosting them for dinner.

Day 3 - March 8th

Scripture: Hebrews 6:10

Prayer Focus: Thank you for not forgetting about the areas I have served and given. Help me to remain encouraged to continue doing good work.

Live it Out: Email or write a former teacher who made a difference in your life.

Day 4 - March 9th

Scripture: 1 Peter 4:10

Prayer Focus: Thank you for every gift bestowed on me. I realize that all gifts come from you. Help me to use my gifts to serve your people.

Live it Out: Buy a gas gift card, and give it to someone the next time you're at the gas station.

Day 5 - March 11th

Scripture: John 13:12-13

Prayer Focus: Lord humble me and give me a heart to serve the people you love.

Live it Out: Give thought to ways you can commit to volunteer with Ready Now.

Day 6 - March 12th

Scripture: Galatians 5:13

Prayer Focus: The same way you show your love to me, help me show love to those around me.

Live it Out: Pay it backward: buy coffee for the person behind you in line today.

Day 7 - March 13th

Scripture: Romans 7:6

Prayer Focus: Thank you for making me free so that I can be of service to someone else.

Live it Out: Leave a kind server the biggest tip you can afford.

Day 8 - March 14th

Scripture: Isaiah 58:10

Prayer Focus: Lord, use me as a vessel to feed the hungry and clothe the naked.

Live it Out: Call Respond Now at (708) 755-4357 or email Carl Wolf at info@respondnow.org.

Day 9 - March 15th

Scripture: Romans 12:1-2

Prayer Focus: Lord help me to serve you and others with my whole being.

Live it Out: Run an errand for a friend or family member who is busy.

Day 10 - March 16th

Scripture: Luke 22:24-27

Prayer Focus: Lord give me a heart committed to service.

Live it Out: Offer to sit with an aging friend or family member to give their primary caregiver a break for a couple of hours.

Day 11 - March 18th

Scripture: Ephesians 2:10

Prayer Focus: God you made me to do good. Help me to live this out.

Live it Out: Take flowers or treats to a nurses station at your nearest hospital or nursing home.

Day 12 - March 19th

Scripture: Mark 10:35-45

Prayer Focus: Lord help me to be more like Jesus.

Live it Out: Volunteer at a local shelter or food pantry.

Day 13 - March 20th

Scripture: Romans 12:9-13

Prayer Focus: Lord open my eyes to those in need. Help me be a bridge to get them the assistance they need.

Live it Out: Know parents who could use a night out? Offer to babysit for free.

Day 14 - March 21st

Scripture: Matthew 25:40

Prayer Focus: There are so many we forget about. Lord, help me to use my influence to make sure the forgotten become the remembered.

Live it Out: Donate old towels and blankets to an animal shelter.

Day 15 - March 22nd

Scripture: Colossians 3:23-24

Prayer Focus: As I go to work, remind me that I am working for you!

Live it Out: Send a gratitude email to a coworker who deserves more recognition.

Day 16 - March 23rd

Scripture: Philippians 2:1-11

Prayer Focus: Lord, make me humble. Help me to put others interest above my own.

Live it Out: Send a “Thank You” card or note to the firefighters at your local fire station.

GENEROSITY

Day 17 - March 25th

Scripture: Matthew 6:19-21

Prayer Focus: Lord open my eyes to the world around me. Help me to actively live out your commandment to love my neighbor just as much as I love me.

Live it Out: Go above and beyond to show God’s love to someone that others have forgotten about.

Day 18 - March 26th

Scripture: Luke 6:38

Prayer Focus: Lord open my eyes to the world around me. Help me to actively live out your commandment to love my neighbor just as much as I love me.

Live it Out: Go above and beyond to show God’s love to someone that others have forgotten about.

Day 19 - March 27th

Scripture: Mark 12:41-44

Prayer Focus: Lord open my eyes to the world around me. Help me to actively live out your commandment to love my neighbor just as much as I love me.

Live it Out: Go above and beyond to show God's love to someone that others have forgotten about.

Day 20 - March 28th

Scripture: Matthew 6:24-34

Prayer Focus: Lord open my eyes to the world around me. Help me to actively live out your commandment to love my neighbor just as much as I love me.

Live it Out: Go above and beyond to show God's love to someone that others have forgotten about.

Day 21 - March 29th

Scripture: Malachi 3:10

Prayer Focus: Lord open my eyes to the world around me. Help me to actively live out your commandment to love my neighbor just as much as I love me.

Live it Out: Go above and beyond to show God's love to someone that others have forgotten about.

Day 22 - March 30th

Scripture: Acts 2:44-45

Prayer Focus: Lord open my eyes to the world around me. Help me to actively live out your commandment to love my neighbor just as much as I love me.

Live it Out: Go above and beyond to show God's love to someone that others have forgotten about.

Day 23 - April 1st

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 9:7-9

Prayer Focus: Lord open my eyes to the world around me. Help me to actively live out your commandment to love my neighbor just as much as I love me.

Live it Out: Go above and beyond to show God's love to someone that others have forgotten about.

Day 24 - April 2nd

Scripture: Philippians 4:15-19

Prayer Focus: Lord open my eyes to the world around me. Help me to actively live out your commandment to love my neighbor just as much as I love me.

Live it Out: Go above and beyond to show God's love to someone that others have forgotten about.

Day 25 - April 3rd

Scripture: Matthew 6:1-4

Prayer Focus: Lord open my eyes to the world around me. Help me to actively live out your commandment to love my neighbor just as much as I love me.

Live it Out: Go above and beyond to show God's love to someone that others have forgotten about.

Day 26 - April 4th

Scripture: Luke 10:25-37

Prayer Focus: Lord open my eyes to the world around me. Help me to actively live out your commandment to love my neighbor just as much as I love me.

Live it Out: Go above and beyond to show God's love to someone that others have forgotten about.

Day 27 - April 5th

Scripture: Matthew 19:16-22

Prayer Focus: Lord open my eyes to the world around me. Help me to actively live out your commandment to love my neighbor just as much as I love me.

Live it Out: Go above and beyond to show God's love to someone that others have forgotten about.

Day 28 - April 6th

Scripture: Luke 10:25-37

Prayer Focus: Lord open my eyes to the world around me. Help me to actively live out your commandment to love my neighbor just as much as I love me.

Live it Out: Go above and beyond to show God's love to someone that others have forgotten about.

WITNESS

Day 29 - April 8th

Scripture: Mark 16:15

Prayer Focus: God, you have called us to share Your good news throughout the world. Give me the boldness to overcome the fear of what others my say or think. You have made my life better and I want the world to know it.

Live it Out: Create a post on social media telling your friends and followers about God's love for us.

Day 30 - April 9th

Scripture: 1 Peter 3:15

Prayer Focus: Lord, keep me from being so heavenly minded that I'm not earthly good. Give me the courage to share my faith with others in a way that values them and does not tear them down.

Live it Out: Take a moment to plan out how you would share your faith with a non-believing friend or family member.

Day 31 - April 10th

- Scripture:** Micah 6:8
- Prayer Focus:** God, connect me with others that are committed to living a life of justice and love.
- Live it Out:** The People's Lobby is an organization our church partners with to live out God's call for us to be people of love and justice. Go to www.ThePeoplesLobbyUSA.org and sign up for alerts about ways to connect.

Day 32 - April 11th

- Scripture:** Jeremiah 1:7-8
- Prayer Focus:** Thank you Lord for not allowing my age to disqualify me from sharing your word.
- Live it Out:** Look in the mirror and say to yourself, "I am not too young or too old for God to use me."

Day 33 - April 12th

- Scripture:** Matthew 5:16
- Prayer Focus:** Lord, help me to shine for you. I want to be a shining witness of your love, peace and joy!
- Live it Out:** Do something for someone today that needs witness God's love for them through you.

Day 34 - April 13th

- Scripture:** John 4:1-30
- Prayer Focus:** Thank You for changing my life! Today, I drop what I'm doing to tell everyone what you have done for me.
- Live it Out:** Create a post on social media telling your friends and followers about God's love for us.
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Day 35 - April 15th

- Scripture:** John 12:1-11
- Prayer Focus:** Give me courage to publicly show the world my love for You.
- Live it Out:** Today, demonstrate your faith in a public way. Pray over your food in public, share with someone in need, invite 10 people to church for Resurrection Sunday, etc.

Day 36 - April 16th

- Scripture:** Acts 1:8
- Prayer Focus:** Fill me with the power of the Holy Spirit so that I can have what I need to go testify of your love in different spaces and places.
- Live it Out:** Make sure you are filling your spirit, mind and body with the right things.

Day 37 - April 17th

- Scripture:** Matthew 28:19-20
- Prayer Focus:** Thank You Lord for calling me to spread your goodness with those close to me life family and friends, and then to those I do not know. Allow me to move fear to the side as I do as you said and “Go.”
- Live it Out:** GO! The passage clearly tells us to Go and make disciples. Today share a testimony of God’s power in your life with at least 5 friends or family members.

Day 38 - April 18th

- Scripture:** Mark 14:27-31; 66-72
- Prayer Focus:** Lord help me to unashamed to say I know You. Give me an opportunity to share my faith with someone today.
- Live it Out:** When that moment comes for you to share your faith today, do not do like Peter and deny that you know Jesus.
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Day 39 - April 19th

Scripture: Hebrews 5:7-9

Prayer Focus: Thank You for changing my life! Today, I drop what I'm doing to tell everyone what you have done for me.

Live it Out: Don't be afraid to share your testimony. Do so today, by inviting 10 people to church Resurrection Sunday.

Day 40 - April 20th

Scripture: John 19:38-42

Prayer Focus: Lord, give me the courage to do what others are too afraid or occupied to do.

Live it Out: Just as Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus' lives were changed when they encountered Jesus, they realized that there may come a moment when you need to do what others may not do. Taking time to pray everyday, read scripture and being committed to live out your faith may not be popular; however there is great benefit to drawing closer to God.
