



Christians around the world associate the season of Lent as a 40-day period of prayer and fasting that begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Maundy Thursday. This period of preparation commemorates the 40 days Jesus spent praying and fasting in the desert. It is a time of drawing closer to Christ as we remember all that He accomplished for us at Calvary and prepare our hearts and souls for the celebration of the resurrection on Easter Sunday.

In this year's Prayer Calendar, we'll look at major themes from the Epistle of James, and then shift our focus slightly as we move closer to Easter Sunday.

James 1:22-25: Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22

James 1:22 “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.”

Heavenly Father, instill within me a deep desire during this season of Lent to prayerfully and intentionally draw closer to You. Grant to me the ability to make time for You each day and create within me a profound dependency on You as I seek to be obedient to Your Word in every area of my life. Please allow me to ask those fearless searching questions about my moral and spiritual life that I might live in a manner that is honoring to You. Amen.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23

James 1:22 “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.”

Father, as I quieten my heart today and attempt to rest in You, enable me not to forget what Your word teaches about prayer. Grant to me the desire to

earnestly pray with “petition” and “thanksgiving” for everyone I love, children and grandchildren, siblings and parents, grandparents and grandchildren, friends and work colleagues. May each one be renewed by Your tender touch and empowering grace and may they realize afresh the wonder of Your love for each of them. Amen.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24

James 1:23-24 “Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.”

Father as I reflect upon what James is teaching, allow me not to forget the biblical principles he has laid down. I freely confess that some Sundays I leave church encouraged and enthused determined to live for You in the week ahead, yet I also recognize that I also forget much of what I have learned and fall back into old habits and patterns of behavior that are not good for me. Please enable me to recognize those areas in my life that do need to change and not to forget that by Your grace I can overcome them and seek to live for You in holiness and purity. Amen.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25

Personal Prayers

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Personal Prayers

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27

James 1:25 “But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it — he will be blessed in what he does.”

Gracious God, in these quiet moments of prayer help me not to take for granted all You have blessed me with. I am conscious that You who are infinite, immeasurable, incomprehensible, omnipotent and invisible, unchangeable in Your being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth call and equip me live in obedience to Your word. Hold me close to You that during these days of Lent I might seek to live out my faith with consistency and faithfulness each day. Bless me with the strength I need as I seek to be submissive to Your word and obedient to Your call. Amen.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28

Father, as I come to You at the end of this first full week of Lent allow me to express my deep and lasting gratitude to You for all that You mean to me. I know that each day You lavish Your love upon me when I don't deserve it. You consistently listen when I pray, You answer my prayers in ways that are truly beyond my understanding and although I may not always get what I want I often get what I had hoped for. In the remaining week of this Lenten season consecrate my life and take me to a place of abiding intimacy with You, a sacred place of unfathomable riches as I rest in You and You alone. Amen.



James 2:14-24: What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead... Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did?... You see that his faith and his actions were working together... Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1

Father as I begin a new week of Lenten prayers, enable me to continue to grow in my relationship with You as I pray for others. In the week ahead, allow me to actively express my faith and live it out by praying for my church family, especially those I know and love and the ministries we are involved in. For each person in Children's Ministry, hold them close and equip them to love and care for each child. Protect and watch over our children; grant to them an awareness of Your love as they grow and develop. Let them see church as a safe, warm, welcoming place where they are cared for and loved. Be with each parent, living busy and demanding lives while chauffeuring children to school, soccer practice, music, and swimming lessons, while seeking to pray for and model active faith for their children. Grant to them the wisdom they need as they raise each child in the knowledge of Your love. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

THURSDAY, MARCH 2

Heavenly Father, for the youth in the congregation who are full of life and energy, grant to each one Your tender touch, impart to them an active faith accompanied by the knowledge of Your love, and give to each one the wisdom they need in forming friendships and making decisions about their futures. Lead them as they prayerfully wrestle with course work, reassure them of the depth of Your concern for them, and grant to each one a sense of Your guiding hand upon their future. Above all, deepen and mature their faith as You enable them to draw closer to You and rest in You amidst the complex decisions that lie before them. In Your Holy Name I pray. Amen.

FRIDAY, MARCH 3

Father, give to us a sense of Your enabling grace as we celebrate our 175th Anniversary this weekend. We are immensely grateful to You for Your faithfulness in the past and Your reassuring promises for all that is to come. Bestow upon us all that we need as we move toward fully occupying our new facilities and using them for Your glory. May we be like Abraham, who willingly stepped out in faith, so that our faith and actions go together as we serve the Greenville community and make an active difference in the lives of those in need. May we be known as a church that provides a secure spiritual home for all ages, a people whose ministries are life-giving and life-affirming, and a place that thrives on intergenerational engagement. Enable us to intentionally equip people to live out their faith in Christ amidst the demands and distractions of daily life, while being prayerfully committed to transforming the spiritual heart of our city. Amen.

SATURDAY, MARCH 4

Personal Prayers

SUNDAY, MARCH 5

Personal Prayers

MONDAY, MARCH 6

Gracious God, as we move toward beginning phase two of our Capital Campaign, we are so grateful for all that has been accomplished over the last few years. We have indeed witnessed “faith in action.” We know that prayerful, thoughtful sacrifices have been made, and we come in faith, seeking to honor You in our actions and asking that Your Holy Spirit would enable us to complete the work You have begun. Father, we recognize that we are blessed with outstanding facilities that enable us to be a shining light of hope and transformation at the heart of our city. Put Your hand of blessing upon us now as we respond to the financial challenges we face. Permit us to seize the opportunities that lie before us, and to do so in Your name. Amen.

TUESDAY, MARCH 7

Holy and Gracious God, as I come to the end of week two in my Lenten prayers, I dare to pray that, like Abraham, I might be called “a friend of God.” Father, I recognize that I often let You down and sin against You in “thought, word, and deed.” Please forgive me for those moments. Grant to me the grace and forgiveness I need to draw close to You once again. Inspire and strengthen me so that I might be faithful in my walk with You. Permit me to enjoy moments of deep abiding intimacy with You.

Finally, be with those in positions of leadership in the congregation. Allow each one moments that are refreshing to the heart, renewing to the soul, and clarifying to the mind as they ultimately depend on You. Thank You for each leader; consecrate them to the service You have called them to, while giving them the godly wisdom, insight, and integrity they need to lead our congregation. Place Your hand upon them and strengthen them for the days ahead. Amen.



James 3:3-6: When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. Likewise the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person...

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8

Heavenly Father, as I continue my prayers during this season of Lent, enable me to take seriously what You teach in scripture. As James reminds his readers of the powerful effect of our words, help me to remember to guard what I say and how I say it. Please forgive me when I become easily frustrated with others. Protect me from mentally criticizing those closest to me. Grant to me through the indwelling power of Your Spirit a change of heart, a change of behavior—behavior that perceives others critically, or moves me to think before I speak. Help me to control my tongue and to fast from disapproval and judgment. Amen.

THURSDAY, MARCH 9

Gracious God, as I recognize the truth that James is teaching, **“The tongue also is a fire,”** work in my soul in order that I would not only practice general restraint in what I say, but that I would especially restrain myself with my children and those I work with. Strengthen my resolve to not be so negative, metaphorically setting circumstances and relationships on fire by what I say. Enable me to be extremely careful when talking about others, especially when they are not present to hear my comments. Keep me from painfully wounding those around me. Help me to actively avoid the sins of the tongue, including dishonesty, unkindness, flattery, impurity, blasphemy, pride, criticism, exaggeration, temper, greed, slander, boasting, and many others. In Jesus name I pray. Amen.

FRIDAY, MARCH 10

Father, in this season of Lent, the temptation of Christ in the desert for 40 days is a powerful reminder of Your faithfulness in challenging circumstances. I know that Luke 4:1-13 teaches the need to resist temptation, yet I freely confess there are moments when I enjoy the sin I commit, especially sins of the tongue. When I gossip, I have information no one else has; others are listening to me; I am the center of attention; I feel "large and in charge." Please forgive me for this. Grant to me a profound sorrow for those I hurt when I misuse my tongue. Forgive me when I intentionally hurt others, bringing them down in the eyes of others. I pray that You would fundamentally change my behavior, and help me to guard against the influence of sin that corrupts the whole person. Amen.

SATURDAY, MARCH 11

Personal Prayers

SUNDAY, MARCH 12

Personal Prayers

MONDAY, MARCH 13

James 3:10-11: Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be. Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring?

Lord God, as I continue to think about the teaching of James on the use of the tongue, enable me to use my tongue to be an encouragement to others. Help me to express my love more readily and my encouragement more consistently, purposefully building up and expressing admiration and affection. Provide me opportunities this week to positively impact and influence others with what I say. Amen.

TUESDAY, MARCH 14

Father, in a culture dominated by social media that thrives on criticism and cynicism, enable me to be Christ-like, rising above the negativity and condemnation. Help me to refuse to feed my soul on controversy and fault-finding. Move me to pray for elected leaders, for our nation, for those who seek to serve. Grant to each one a profound dependency on You, a trust and reliance on Your sovereign direction as they wrestle with complex and challenging issues. May our prayers be as James reminds us—**"fresh water"** that brings life and renewal. Amen.



James 4:7-8: Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15

Lord God, grant to me the spiritual discernment to recognize the temptation that the devil brings into my life. Permit me not only to apply what James teaches when it comes to submitting myself to You, but to actively resist the devil in the hidden recesses of my soul. Father, I am aware that when the devil tempts, he does so in ways that are appealing and attractive. Yet I freely confess that I am in need of Your enabling power in order to resist. Impress upon my soul the scriptural truth that sin is addictive, enslaving, and utterly toxic. Help me to remember, however, that when I submit myself to You and resist the devil, he will flee from me. Amen.

THURSDAY, MARCH 16

Heavenly Father, for the youth in the congregation who are full of life and energy, grant to each one Your tender touch. Impart to them an active faith accompanied by the knowledge of Your love, and give to each one the wisdom they need to form godly friendships and make good decisions about the future. Lead them as they prayerfully wrestle with coursework, reassure them of the depth of Your concern for them, and grant to each one a sense of Your guiding hand upon their future. Above all, deepen and mature their faith as You enable them to draw closer to You and rest in You amidst the complex decisions that lie before them. In Your Holy Name I pray. Amen.

FRIDAY, MARCH 17

Father, allow me to take seriously my prayers of the last few days. Help me to slow down and build new patterns and rhythms of engaging with You. Grant within me a desire for a deeper intimacy with You, and encourage me to recognize that when I am determined to grow in my faith, I am often distracted, forgetful, and preoccupied. Enable me through the power of Your Holy Spirit to be sensitive to what You are teaching me so I can recognize the reality of what James teaches when he writes, **“Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”** Amen.

SATURDAY, MARCH 18

Personal Prayers

SUNDAY, MARCH 19

Personal Prayers

MONDAY, MARCH 20

James 4:7-8: Come near to God and he will come near to you.

Father, continue to slow me down this week after an active and busy weekend. Help me to purposefully make time each day to pray. I know James urges His readers to **“Come near to God and he will come near to you.”** Help me to recognize the truth of this promise and to hold onto the reality of what takes place when I pray. Enable me to be consistent in my prayer life and to not give in to the thought that occasional or infrequent prayers are enough. Grant to me a hunger and an appetite to know You more. Create within me a sense of anticipation and expectation that when I pray I am interacting with You. Please draw close to me. Give me a sense of Your comforting presence and tender touch. In Jesus name I pray. Amen.

TUESDAY, MARCH 21

Father, there are days when I am facing difficult circumstances and am not sure what to pray. I know that when I draw close to You, You draw close to me. Yet I sometimes struggle in knowing what to pray when I am facing major decisions. Enable me to remember the work of the Holy Spirit in those moments: **“but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will” (Romans 8:26-27).** Help me to profoundly trust in You for all I am wrestling with, and grant to me clarity in my actions and obedience to Your call. Amen.