

BETWEEN ME & YOU

Lent to Easter At-Home 2018



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Lent to Easter At Home 2018

February 13 – April 1, 2018

By Elsie Rempel

Illustrated and designed by Megan Kamei

Lent to Easter At Home, 2018 Between Me & You

Lent – Easter – At – Home, Lectionary Cycle B

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Music Sources and Abbreviations:

HWB = Hymnal: A Worship Book

STJ = Sing the Journey

STS = Sing the Story

Recordings of the songs by Bryan Moyer Suderman are available on the Leader website at www.leaderonline.org/Resources.

January 2018



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Introduction

By Elsie Rempel

Covenants of various kinds are found throughout the Old and New Testaments, and are highlighted in the Lenten scriptures of Lectionary Year B. So, this year's theme, *Between Me & You*, refers to covenants; our relationships with God, others, and creation. While covenants are made between two parties to strengthen their relationship, things also come in between those parties. Struggle, confusion, limitation, and disorientation are all part of our relationships. What will happen to your family relationships as you reflect on this theme together? We hope it will lead to renewal and cleansing as you ponder these devotionals together.

During the season of Lent, Christians prepare for Easter by reflecting on the life and death of Christ and on our relationship with Christ. Ever since 325 CE, these preparations have lasted forty days each year, from Ash Wednesday to Easter Eve, not counting Sundays. They have been a time of spiritual cleansing that reminds people of Jesus' forty days in the wilderness as he prepared for his ministry. Lent still invites Christians to withdraw from society's hustle and bustle, and to remove the clutter from our lives to help us prepare for the ministries where God would like our help.

The prayers and activities in this booklet are adapted from the congregational worship resources in the *Leader* magazine from Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA.

Use it whenever and however it fits into your routines and life stage realities. Simplify it, adapt it or add to it so it fits your family life. If your family has younger children, shorten and paraphrase the prayers and pondering questions.

To use this booklet for daily worship times, repeat the litany for each day of the week, and read the daily scripture recommendations. Or, choose one text and repeat it daily. The lectionary texts are divided into seven short readings.

Pondering Questions

The pondering questions are designed to allow God to speak to each household member in a personal way. Enjoy a short time of silence after each question and feel free to share or ponder these thoughts in your heart.

Songs for the week

Consider singing or listening to one of the suggested songs to open your devotional time. Music has a way of preparing our hearts to worship.

Suggested worship items to help make a holy space for God in your home and hearts:

- 1. A festive cloth:** It will mark your worship center. A purple cloth would reflect both the royalty of Christ, our Lord, and the attitude of repentance, which dominates the season. For Easter Morning, a celebratory cloth of white or yellow would be suitable.
- 2. An open Bible:** It can represent the covenant between God and God's people.
- 3. Visual Symbol for relationships:** Make it from two strips of fabric, in different colors, that are tied into a knot. Place the knot on your opened Bible, when not being used for devotional readings.
- 4. Candles:** Light a large white Christ candle near the Bible and place six small candles (tea lights work well) around it. Jesus as Light of the World is a powerful symbol for old and young alike. Lighting the weekly candles will help younger children measure the progression of our repentant preparation for Easter. Purple candles symbolize repentance, but may be hard to find. Gluing a purple paper or cloth sleeves around the base of white candles provides the opportunity to reflect on the meaning of the colours.
- 5. This booklet.**
- 6. Cloth scarves:** To be used for response activities throughout the season.
- 7. Musical resources:** HWB: Hymnal: A Worship Book, SS: Sing the Story, SJ: Sing the Journey. Bryan Moyer Suderman's songs for this season are at www.leaderonline.org/WorshipResources

Getting Ready for Lent

Shrove or Pancake Tuesday

“**Shrove**” comes from the old word, shrive, which means to hear a person confess their sins and receive forgiveness. On Shrove Tuesday, it was traditional to make pancakes to use up the eggs, fat, and sugar that were in the house, because people used to give up eating these foods for Lent.

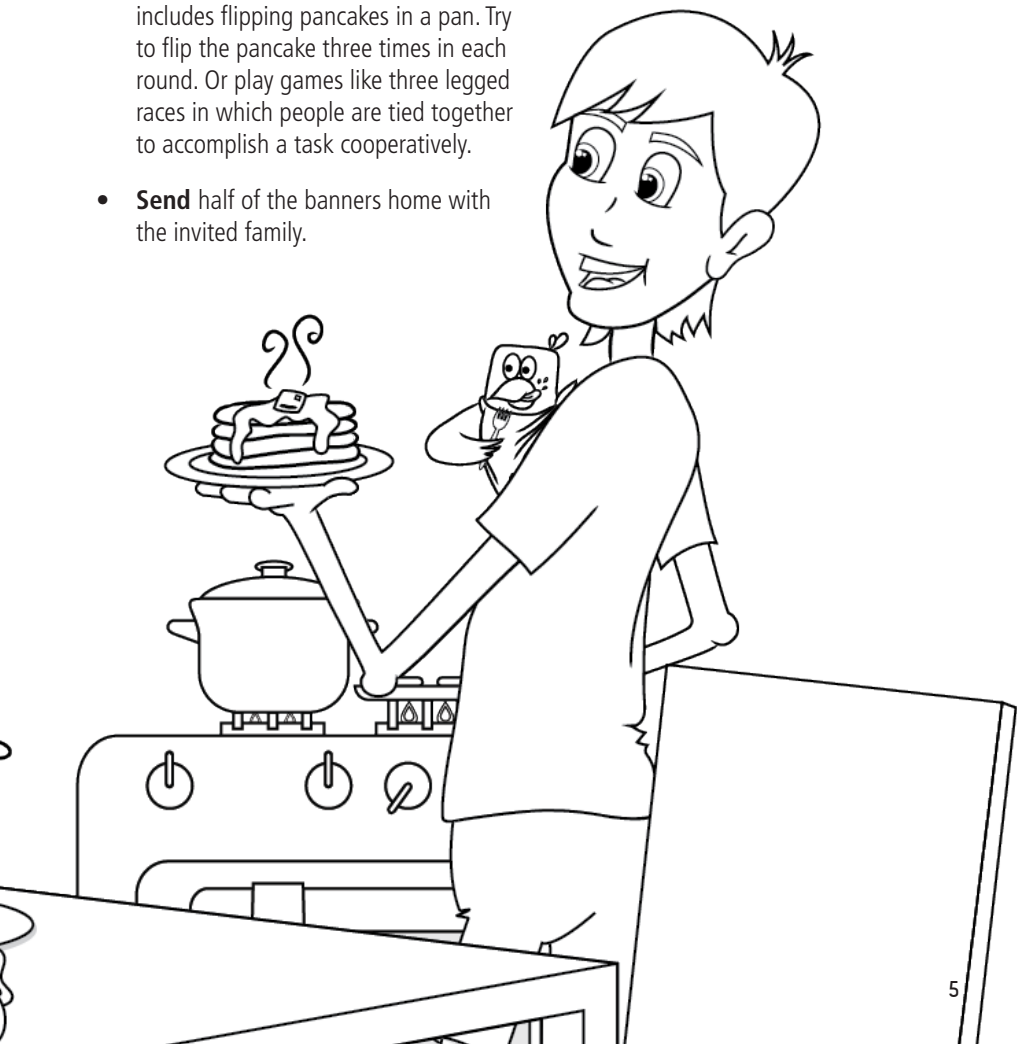
- **Invite** another family from your church into your home.
- **Decorate** the dining area together, using balloons and paper streamers to give it a festive look.
- **Write** words of praise, such as ***Alleluia, New Life, New Sight, New Life, and Love Wins***, onto paper streamers or cloth strips to create celebration banners.
- **Promise** to encourage each other on your Lent journey this year.



- **Pray** for attitudes of thankfulness and courage as you prepare to leave behind some of the things that can distract you from engaging with God and God's way during Lent. The following prayer may help you do so:

Dear God, you have made us as people
with many different feelings
with many different ways of showing that we love you.
We are getting ready to follow Jesus
on his journey to the cross and out of the tomb.
Thank you for the good times we can have with friends
as we encourage each other on this journey.
Thank you for the things we will learn during Lent.
Thank you that Lent is followed by Easter.
Thank you that we can trust your forgiving, renewing love. Amen (*spoken by all*).

- **Play** a food game, like a relay race that includes flipping pancakes in a pan. Try to flip the pancake three times in each round. Or play games like three legged races in which people are tied together to accomplish a task cooperatively.
- **Send** half of the banners home with the invited family.



Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday gets its name from the ashes that were traditionally rubbed on the forehead of worshippers on this day. Ashes are a symbol of purification, because as fire burns it can separate what is valuable from what is valueless. In the same way, making crosses of ashes on each others foreheads shows our willingness to be purified by Jesus, and that we are making space for Jesus to shape us for new and abundant life with him.

- **Take down** the celebration banners from your Shrove Tuesday supper. Fold them up carefully and bury them, or store them in a dark place until Easter morning.
- **Discuss** how Lent helps us look at ourselves and choose activities that renew, or strengthen, our faith in God. Lent helps us journey with Jesus and remember his journey to the cross and the resurrection.
- **Read God's Word: Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-21 and/or Psalm 51: 1-17**
- **Pick** some food or activity, from your normal family routine, that you would like to replace with faith-building activities during Lent.
- **Make** and record a Family Lent Plan for the next 40 days. This might help you get started:

We will help each other notice Jesus in our lives by...

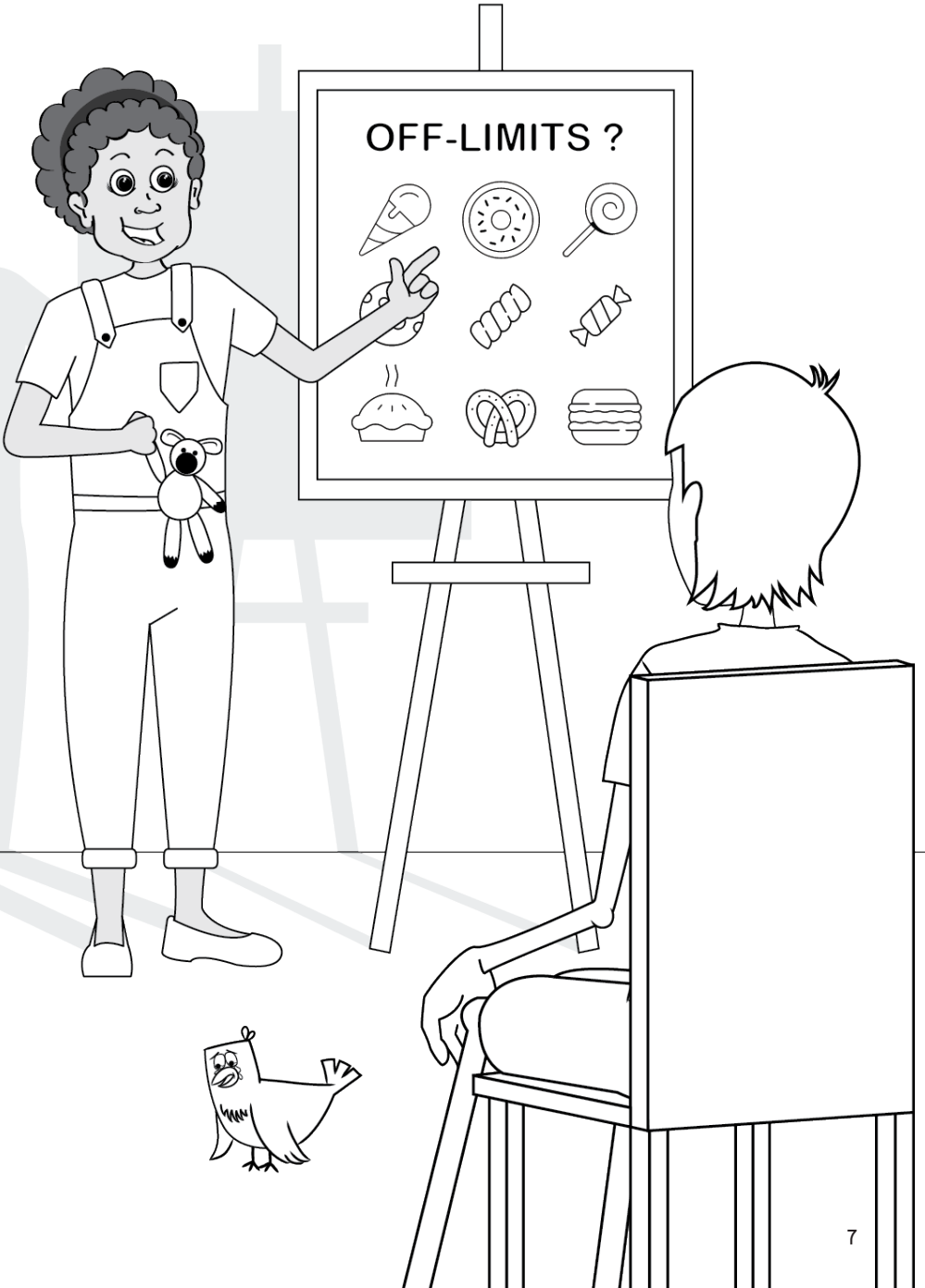
We will strengthen our relationships with God, each other, and creation by ...

We will prepare to celebrate a Holy Feast at Easter by...

We will do these things privately: ...

We will do these things as a family: ...

- **Brainstorm** freely and respect the ideas of your children. Children are excellent teachers about what it is like to trust others with their lives and often have a very deep and intuitive sense of their relationship with God. Prepare your hearts to learn from them as you worship together this season.
- **Sign** your Family Lent Plan with your names or fingerprints. (A bit of washable marker on a thumb helps you make a great fingerprint.) Make a copy to post.
- **Place** the Christ candle in a shallow metal bowl. Light it.
- **Burn** your plan in a metal bowl, lit with the Christ candle, as a way of sending it to God.
- **Mark** the sign of a cross on each other's foreheads with the ashes from these papers.
- **Wash** your hands.
- **Call** the family you shared Shrove Tuesday with and tell them about your plan.
- **Set up** your Lent Worship Centre, using the suggestions in this booklet.



Me & You & Creatures Too

Lent 1

Call to worship

(Leader can speak this in phrases which are echoed by the others.)

Leader: The time has come; the kingdom of God draws near. Repent and believe the good news.

All: We have come. We are here. We worship God together.

Candle lighter: We light this first candle of Lent to help us remember our relationships with God, each other, and creation.

God's Word for this week

Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-10; Mark 1:9-15, 16-20, 35-39; and 1 Peter 3:18-22. (one set per day)

Pondering thoughts

- I wonder why God marked his relationship with Noah's family with a rainbow.
- I wonder why the promise was also for the earth and the animals.
- I wonder how this story makes you feel.

Songs for the week

Recordings available on the Leader website at www.leaderonline.org. Follow the Worship Resources link.

- HWB 42, *All People That on Earth Do Dwell*,
- Bryan Moyer Suderman's *God's Love Is for Everybody* and his new theme song, *Between Me & You*. verse 1: Between me and you, and every creature, a covenant new, a gift, a promise I'm giving to you. I choose to be there with you.

Closing prayer

(to be echoed by others)

Leader: We are people of God. We go in God's love to share God's love and live God's promise. Amen.

Responding through song: For Me, For You

God's promises are for me, for you, and all the creatures too!

God's love is for me, for you, and all the creatures too!

Candle snuffer: May we remember God's promises even after we blow out this Lent candle.

Activities to choose from

1. Fold a big piece of thin cloth into a long strip. Hold it between 2 people to show their connection. Then unfold it and add people to help hold it. This can show how God's love connects all of us. Add plush animals on top to include the animals.
2. Start your own family Lent journal by writing out Genesis 9:12 or 13 as a verse to learn this week. Add stories of making a new start with God from the Bible and from your family's experiences, including baptisms.
3. Notice loving care between family, friends, and creation, and mention them after you light your Lent candles.
4. Look at plants for signs of God's care for creation. Make a list of the things you notice.
5. Create your own play about God's rainbow promise to Noah's family. Use toys to act it out.
6. Read about Noah and God. Noah: A Wordless Picture Book, by Mark Ludy, (2014, Plough Publishing House) www.commonword.ca/go/1431.



Me & You & the Generations after You

Lent 2

Call to worship

(Leader can speak the “all” part in phrases for the others to echo.)

Leader: Come worship God, whose promise and love grow longer and longer. From Abraham and Sarah till now and into the future, God is with us and blesses us.

All: God, we thank you for being with us and wait to see your way grow among us.

Candle lighter: We light these two Lent candles to help us remember that we walk with Jesus and many generations of Jesus’ friends

God’s Word for this week

(one set per day) Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Genesis 18:1-15; Psalm 22:23-31; Mark 8:31-38; Mark 9:2-10; Romans 4:13-25; Galatians 5:16-18, 22-26.

Pondering thoughts

- I wonder if Abraham and Sarah had a hard time believing God’s promises.
- I wonder what God’s special promise might be for our family.
- I wonder how God wants to bless others through our family.

Songs for the week

- HWB 20 *Come and See, or Beloved Child,*
- Bryan Moyer Suderman’s *I Will Bless You,* and theme song *Between Me & You,* verse 2: Between me and you, and generations to come after you, I have established a covenant true, I choose to be there with you.

Closing prayer

Thank you, God, that you stay with us through the generations.
We are people of God. We go in God’s love to share God’s love and live God’s promise.

Responding through song: For Me, For You

God’s promises are for me, for you, your children’s children too!
God’s love is for me, for you, your children’s children too!

Candle snuffer: May we remember you are with us through all generations, even after we blow out these Lent candles. Amen.

Activities to choose from

1. This week, also read these passages from God's word:
2. Collect scarves and tie them together to show the length of God's blessing through the generations.
3. In your Lent journal, write down Mark 8:34 as a verse to learn this week. Imagine what following Jesus could mean this week and record your thoughts.
4. Read Robert Munsch's 1995 book, *Love You Forever*, illustrated by Sheila McGraw – www.commonword.ca/go/1432, and talk about life and love continuing through generations.
5. Start some tomato plants indoors. Imagine enjoying and sharing them with others in summer.
6. Bless someone old who needs encouragement or company this week by bringing them a fruit basket and asking them for a story from long ago.
7. Give each person in your family a name-tag with space for other words. Hold it and imagine the gifts God has given you for blessing others. List these gifts after your names to encourage each other. Post the name tags on a new family tree.



Me & You & Working it Through

Lent 3

Call to worship

(Leader can speak the "all" part in phrases for the others to echo.)

Leader: Come rule makers, rule breakers, and you who are still finding your way. Come and meet your Maker. Come and worship.

All: We want to know God, and to be known by God. We are here together to worship.

Candle lighter: Knowing God, open our eyes to understand your way as we light these three Lent candles and worship you today. Amen

God's Word for this week

(one set per day) Exodus 20: 1-11; Exodus 20:12-17; Psalm 19; John 2:13-23; 1 Corinthians 1:18-25; Proverbs 2:1-11; Proverbs 17:1-17.

Pondering thoughts

- I wonder how rules help us learn and sweeten our lives.
- I wonder why it is so hard to live by God's rules.
- I wonder how God's rules can help us get along.

Songs for the week

- STS 65 Abre mis ojos(Open my eyes)
- Bryan Moyer Suderman's *God's Love Is for Everybody and Between Me & You* theme song, verse 3: Between me and you, in all the times you are struggling through, I will never turn my back on you, I choose to be there with you.

Closing prayer

Forgive us when we fail. Give us the courage to keep trying to live as you love. We are people of God. We go in God's love to share God's love and live God's promise.

Responding through song: *For Me, For You*

God's promises are for me, for you, in all that we go through.

God's love is for me, for you, in all that we go through.

Candle snuffer: May your strengthen and guide us even after we blow out these Lent candles. Amen.

Activities to choose from

1. Examine a knitted scarf. Look at the links and the pattern. How is it like a church family?
2. Enjoy a time of `popcorn prayer` together, before, during, or after eating popcorn. In popcorn prayers, we pop out words or short phrases on a theme. The leader begins with something like, "God we thank you for..."
3. Write out 1 Corinthians 1:25 or Psalm 19:7 as a verse to learn this week. Then look for signs of God's love and wisdom, and list them in your Lent journal.
4. Talk about rules that help your family get along and rules that help you love and honour God.
5. Make up and/or play a cooperative game with fair rules.
6. Some of our hardest choices are about using our money wisely. Give small sums of money to each person in your family and practice using it wisely.



Me & You & Darkness in View

Lent 4

Call to worship

(Leader can speak the "all" part in phrases for the others to echo.)

Leader: Come worship and thank God, whose promise and love grow all around us, even in darkness.

All: We are coming, even through darkness and fear. We come into the light by the power of God.

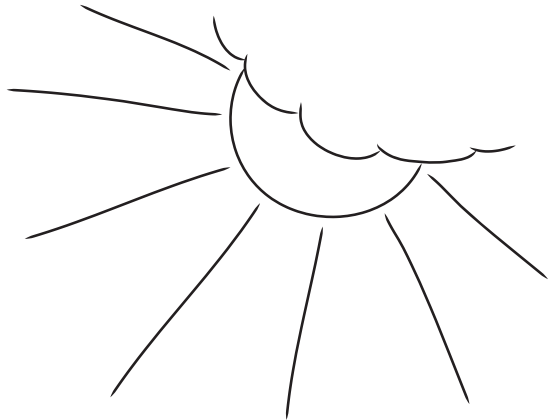
Candle lighter: Accept our love, fear, and trust as we light these four Lent candles and worship you today. Amen.

God's Word for this week

(one set per day) Numbers 21: 4-9; Psalm 107:1-3, and 17-22; John 3:1-13, and 14-21; Luke 10:30-35; Ephesians 2:1-10; Psalm 78:1-10.

Pondering thoughts

- I wonder how being sick, sorry and looking up at the snake for healing fit together.
- I wonder if God ever tires of healing distrustful people.
- I wonder what scares or hurts us and needs God's healing.



Songs for the week

- HWB 401 This little light of mine
- Bryan Moyer Suderman's *I Will Bless You*, and theme song *Between Me & You*, verse 2: Between me and you, with pain and darkness clouding your view, I'll give you courage to face what is true, I choose to be there with you.

Closing prayer

God, help us walk in your light, whether we see it or not. We are people of God. We go in God's love to share God's love and live God's promise.

Responding through song: For Me, For You

God's promises are for me, for you, and in the darkness too.

God's love is for me, for you, and in the darkness too.

Candle snuffer: May your light shine in and through us even after we blow out these Lent candles. Amen.

Activities to choose from

1. Hide under a large blanket to be in the dark and talk about when the dark feels safe, and when it is scary. Thank God for being with you, even when you are scared.
2. In your Lent journal, write out Psalm 107:1 as a verse to learn this week. Embellish it with pictures of things that remind you of God's promise and steady love.
3. Memorize your Scripture verse so you can pray with it. Pray with your arms crossed over your chest so it feels like a hug from God. Savour that love in silence after saying the verse. Breathe out more loudly to show you are done.
4. Beginning with the oldest in your family, tell stories about times when you felt alone and then sensed God's nearness.
5. Paint pictures of your least and most favourite foods. Would you have liked eating manna every day?
6. Pick a problem with which you would like to God's help. See what happens to your problem as you practice trusting God with it.
7. Create a skit or a story about people who felt rejected but find out they are welcome in God's family.

Me & You & Covenant New

Lent 5

Call to worship

(Leader can speak the "all" part in phrases for the others to echo.)

Leader: Each of you has been invited by God to this time of worship. Open your eyes and your hearts, for together we are here with Jesus. Praise the Lord.

All: We want to see Jesus and want God's love to grow in our hearts.

Candle lighter: Thank you, God, for writing your love on our hearts, and living in us as we light these five Lent Candles today. Amen.

Listening to God's Word

(one set per day) Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 51:1-12; John 12:20-33; Hebrews 5:5-10; Psalm 119:9-16; 2 Kings 22:1-10, 11-13 and 18-19.

Pondering thoughts

- I wonder what it is like to have God's law of love written on our hearts.
- I wonder how God changes us from the inside.
- I wonder what it will be like once everyone grows with God.

Songs for the week

- STJ 3 Jesus calls us here to meet him
- Bryan Moyer Suderman's *God's Love Is for Everybody and Between Me & You* theme song, verse 3: Between me and you, the days are coming when here's what I'll do: I'm going to plant my words within you, I choose to be there with you.

Closing prayer

We sometimes forget that to serve you, we must follow you. Forgive us. Hold us close and remind us again that we are people of God. We go in God's love to share God's love and live God's promise.

Responding through song: *For Me, For You*

God's promises are for me, for you, a covenant that's new!

God's love is for me, for you, a covenant that's new!

Candle snuffer: As we blow out these candles, help us keep following you. Amen

Activities to choose from

1. Look at each other through a scarf or table cloth. Then, talk about other things that keep us from seeing and understanding each other.
2. Practice listening prayer this week. Get comfortable and take a few deep breaths to help you find the quiet spot inside where you know God's love. Stay there and enjoy it till the prayer leader rings a bell.
3. In your Lent journal, write out Jeremiah 31:33b as a verse to learn this week. Draw a big but broken heart in your journal. When you catch someone else showing love, repair the heart by sticking little hearts over the rip in the big one. See how full your big heart will get this week.
4. Share God's heart with a lonely person by doing something loving with them.
5. Purchase a heart stamp or use a washable marker. Before you go to bed, make a heart on each others hands and say, "May God create a clean heart in you, _____," as you do so.
6. Plant some barley in a dish of soft moist soil and wait to see how God gives growth in receptive soil. Think about your heart as soil. (Barley grows into good grass for holding Easter eggs.)



Me & You & an Alternative View

Lent 6

Call to worship

(Leader can speak the "all" part in phrases for the others to echo.)

Leader: Come, this is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day Jesus enters Jerusalem.

All: We come into this week with Jesus and give thanks, for God is good!

Candle lighter: As we light these six Lent candles, we celebrate Jesus who rode into Jerusalem to the praises of children. Amen.

God's Word for this week

(one set per day) Mark 11:1-11; John 12:1-11, 20-36; John 13: 21-32; Thursday: John 13:1-17; Friday: John 18:1-19, 42; Saturday: Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16; Sunday: Mark 16:1-8.

Pondering thoughts

- What would Jesus have seen, heard, smelled and felt during the Palm Sunday parade?
- I wonder what people thought as Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey.
- I wonder what surprises of God's promise and love we will find this week

Songs for the week

- STS 73 *Jesus is coming*
- Bryan Moyer Suderman's *I Will Bless You*, and theme song *Between Me & You*, verse 2: Between me and you, the words of Scripture providing a clue; the stone, rejected, surprising for you, I choose to be there with you.

Closing prayer

Open our eyes and hearts. Show us again your new way of living. Help us to love like you, for we are people of God. We go in God's love to share God's love and live God's promise.

Responding through song: *For Me, For You*

God's promises are for me, for you, full of surprises too!

God's love is for me, for you, full of surprises too!

Candle Snuffer: As we blow out these candles, stay with us, and help us notice your surprises this Holy Week. Amen.

Activities to choose from

1. Collect scarves for each person in your family. Hold them up between you and talk about things that have come between you. Then lay them down for Jesus to ride on and sing Jesus is coming. Who will be Jesus? What does that do to your relationships?
2. Practice shouting prayers this week. On Sunday it can be "hosanna" like it was on the first Palm Sunday. On other days pick a different word that matches what is happening in the story, or shout out questions that bubble up from inside.
3. In your Lent journal, write out Mark 11:9b as a verse to learn this week. Then add pictures of your scarves and the feelings you had when you laid them down for Jesus.
4. Remember your donkey-riding Jesus in the sad times of this week.
5. Use the activities for Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and Easter to help you understand why Jesus had to die and why God raised him back to life.
6. When you decorate Easter eggs, think about the new life that God gave Jesus and offers to us.
7. Bake pretzels to remind your family of Jesus' humble attitude and prayer. Share them with a neighbour or friend.



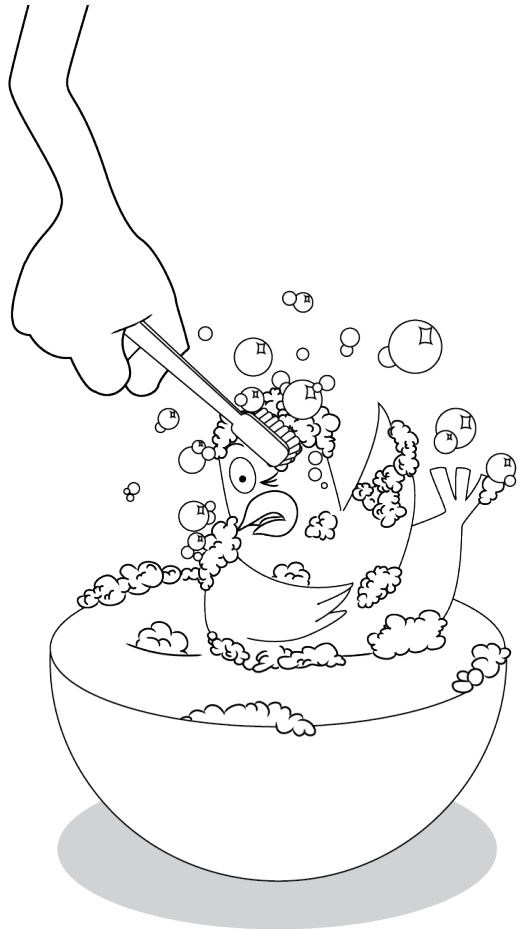
Maundy Thursday Foot Washing

Maundy comes from the Latin, "dies mandatum" which means "the day of the new commandment".

On that first Maundy Thursday, Jesus surprised his disciples by washing their feet. This was something servants regularly did when people came indoors, because the Palestinian roads were dusty and their sandaled feet were dirty. But Jesus was their teacher! By kneeling in front of them and washing their feet like a servant, Jesus taught them something very important. Jesus expects his followers to be like servants to each other, instead of trying to boss each other around. Listen to the Gospel words: "After he had washed their feet...he said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.'" John 13: 12-14.

Even though most North Americans don't wear sandals and walk on dusty roads in March, we can still wash each others feet, obey Jesus' new commandment, remember what Jesus taught us about serving, and experience/imagine what it is like to have our Lord Jesus, the Son of God, kneeling in front of us and washing our feet.

Can your family participate in a congregational foot washing service on Maundy Thursday? If not, here's how you can have one in your home.



Getting Ready:

Invite the family that joined you on Shrove Tuesday, to join you for this activity.

Prepare:

- A stack of towels, one for each person who is participating.
- A large bowl, or plastic dishpan, to catch the water.
- A jug filled with warm water for pouring over each other's feet.
- Suitable songs to accompany the activity.
- Readers. Practice reading the scripture and prayers to communicate well.

ORDER OF SERVICE

Opening song

SS 49 *I will come to you in the silence*, *Sing The Story 2*, CD, © 2008 Herald Press, track 18 www.commonword.ca/go/364.

Scripture Reading

John 13:1-20

Leader's Words of Invitation

Because Jesus, our Lord and Teacher, washed all of his disciples' feet, and told us to wash each other's feet, we invite you to do so with us, even if your feet aren't dusty and dirty. When Jesus washes us, his love cleans us, even on the inside, where bad attitudes can dirty our lives. Because we follow Jesus, we can help each other be cleaned by Jesus' love. **(Pause)**

(Quietly take off your shoes and put them to the side so no one can trip on them. Take a moment to breathe out all the ideas and attitudes that make it hard for you to follow Jesus.)

Leader: Lord Jesus, you washed the feet of your disciples to show us what you expect us to do. Let our participation in this foot washing strengthen us for your service, and fill us with your fairness, love, and peace.

All: To you be glory forever. Come, Lord Jesus.

Sing, or listen to

STS 40 *We will follow*, *Sing the Story 2*, CD, © 2008 Herald Press, track 15
www.commonword.ca/go/364

Foot washing instructions

Everyone sits around the worship centre during the foot washing.

The oldest person goes to the foot washing chair and invites the youngest one to come and sit on the chair with the basin in front of it.

Kneel down in front of the child, place a dry towel over one arm, take one bare foot in the non-dominant hand, make sure it is centered over the basin, and pour some warm water over the foot from the pitcher.

Put down the pitcher and rub the foot gently. Rinse with some more water from the pitcher.

Dry the foot gently, and then do the same with the other foot.

Then the child washes the feet of the adult in the same way. After this is completed, get up and give each other a hug.

This process continues until everyone's feet have been washed. If there is an odd number of people, the first person to wash feet can also be the last.

After everyone's feet have been washed and dried, they pass the peace of Christ to each other, by shaking hands and saying, "The Peace of Christ be with you."

All return to their seats for the final blessing.

Prayer

Thank you, Jesus, for showing us how we can kneel and serve each other. Thank you for honouring our willingness to serve and to be served. Thank you that your peace and love fill us as we obey and follow you. And now we pray the prayer Jesus taught us: (recite the contemporary version of the Lord's Prayer together, HWB 731).

After this foot washing ritual it would be good to have a snack to remember the way Jesus ate with his disciples. If you wish to have a Seder meal together, and celebrate Passover, a number of resources for this can be found at www.commonword.ca/go/365. Seder is a traditional Jewish feast ritual that marks the beginning of the Passover festival.

Good Friday Litany

This Friday is considered "good" because nothing, not even Jesus' painful death, could come between us and God's saving love and grace.

Getting Ready:

1. Make a copy of the litany page for each reading participant.
2. Prepare for this service with some quiet worship music and silence.
3. Light all the Lent candles and the Christ candle.
4. Write or draw personal confessions on slips of paper before beginning the litany. (Keep them for the middle of the litany.)
5. Add a metal bowl to your worship centre, in which you can burn up your confession slips.
6. Plan for family or household members to take turns snuffing out the candles.
7. Have family or household members take turns reading the "One" part.



Good Friday Litany

One: When we hate or are unkind to each other, the world becomes a darker place.
(Extinguish one candle)

All: Jesus taught us to love each other.

One: When we want everything for ourselves, the world becomes a darker place.
(Extinguish one candle)

All: Jesus taught us to share with others.

One: When we scare or bully others, the world becomes a darker place.
(Extinguish one candle)

All: Jesus taught us that love is better than fear.

One: When we are jealous of others, the world becomes a darker place.
(Extinguish one candle)

All: Jesus taught us contentment.

One: When we lie, the world becomes a darker place. **(Extinguish one candle)**

All: Jesus taught us honesty.

One: People's hatred, greed, selfishness, jealousy, and dishonesty placed Jesus on the cross. **(Extinguish one candle)**

All: For Jesus' friends the world seemed like a very dark place.

One: In the darkness, Jesus said, "O God, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing." **(Extinguish one candle)**

Sing

HWB 257 *Were you there* or SS 84 *So much wrong* while you safely burn up your confessions, lighting them with the still-burning Christ candle.

(The litany will continue on Easter Morning)

Holy Saturday

March 26, 2016

Holy Saturday is a day for silence and quiet anticipation of Easter Sunday joy. The sadness of Jesus' sacrificial death lingers with us, but we already anticipate resurrection joy. Let your young children know that we will soon be singing alleluias! This is a day where Easter eggs are traditionally painted, so we can crack them open and eat them on Easter Sunday, like the tomb that held Jesus' body was opened on Easter morning.

Activities to enrich this day in a silent, anticipatory way:

Take the chocolate that you may have been resisting during Lent and quietly chop it into chunks. Use the chunks in your favourite chocolate chip cookie recipe, and quietly shape the cookies into rock shapes, so they can remind you of the rock closing the tomb in which Jesus' body lay. Allow the smell to remind you that Easter and its joy are almost here. Save the "Rock-Chocolate" cookies for Easter breakfast and beyond.

Bake "Empty Tomb" buns. Use your favourite dinner roll recipe and quietly shape each dinner roll around a marshmallow. Seal it tightly, place the seams facing up on the pan, and wait for them to rise. Quietly wonder what will happen. As the roll bakes, the marshmallow will dissolve and leave a mysteriously empty, but sweet, tomb. Save these "Empty Tomb" buns for sharing the good news, "Christ is risen! He is not in the grave!" with each other on Easter morning. *(If you save the unbaked rolls in the "tomb" of the refrigerator and take them out early Sunday morning, they will taste even better, especially if you give them an hour or more to warm up before baking.)*



Nothing Between Us

Easter

Call to Worship

(Leader can speak the "all" part in phrases for the others to echo.)

Leader: *Come and celebrate. Welcome in the embrace of Christ. Hear and believe the good news, for he is risen! God's promise and God's love have broken the barriers; there is nothing between us and God's great love!*

All: Yes, praise the Lord! We will celebrate and worship God together!

Listening to God's Word

Read John 20:1-18. Other scriptures for this week are Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Pondering thoughts

- I wonder what you wonder about this story.
- I wonder which part of today's story you like best.
- I wonder what it was like for Mary to meet Jesus again after he died.

Suggested songs

- STS 89 *Christ Is Alive*
- Bryan Moyer Suderman's *Between Me & You* theme song : Between me and you, the temple curtain is torn now in two, stone rolled away, no barrier in view. I choose to be there with you, will be right there with you, I choose to be here with you.

Easter Activities

1. *Easter Litany (continued from Good Friday)*

One: On that first Easter, God raised Jesus to life and the world became a brighter place.
(Light Christ candle)

All: Jesus' love came to light the world.

One: Jesus' love shines through each of us and makes the world a brighter place.
(Light one candle)

All: Jesus' love shines through loving actions and words.

One: When we share with those who have less, the world becomes a brighter place.
(Light one candle)

All: Jesus wants us to share.

One: When we trust God and are no longer afraid, the world becomes a brighter place.
(Light one candle)

All: Jesus wants us to trust.

One: When we are content with what we have, the world becomes a brighter place.
(Light one candle)

All: Jesus will supply our needs.

One: When we are honest, the world becomes a brighter place. *(Light one candle)*

All: Jesus helps us be truthful.

One: When Jesus lives in us, the world becomes a brighter place. *(Light one candle)*

All: Alleluia! Christ is risen!
(You may want to add your own spontaneous prayers here.)

Easter Sunday Prayer of Thanks

(prayed by family worship Leader)

Dear God and Father of our living Lord, we praise you for the power of your forgiving, life-giving love!

We thank you for raising Jesus from the dead.

We thank you for the wonderful gifts of forgiveness and salvation that we can enjoy because of Jesus.

We thank you for the Bible, which helps us see how God's love transformed the lives of Jesus' first followers.

We thank you for Christians through the ages, who have loved and followed you as they were transformed by your love.

We thank you for inviting us to follow you, too, and for your willingness to transform our lives and faith communities.

We love you and want to follow your son, Jesus. Thank you for continuing to live in us and with us.

Thank you that your love, which is stronger than sin and death, can and does lead through suffering to joy.

Alleluia!

Closing ritual

Leader: Once more we say—and today we say with joy—that we are people of God. We go in God’s love to extend God’s love and live God’s promise.

All: As we blow out our Lent and Easter candles, may love and joy remain between me and you and the creatures too. Amen.

Notes:

Jot down insights or moments that made your At-Home Lent Worship memorable:

If you found this material helpful, or would like to tell us how you used it, please send a note to Elsie Rempel at elsiewrites1@gmail.com or to Shana Peachey Boshart at shana@anabaptistfaithformation.org



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