



## Manse Cat Monthly: Musings from Pastor Leia / her cat

02/11/2021

Volume 1, Issue 43

Many things in this universe come in cycles and we often find ourselves back in a place that feels like somewhere we've been before. Every day, we repeat the ritual of washing our hands. Every week, we repeat the ritual of worshipping together on Sunday. Every month, we repeat the ritual of turning the page on a calendar. Every year, we repeat the rituals of birthdays and anniversaries and holidays. On a less regular schedule, we repeat a cycle of welcoming God into our lives and then nudging God aside when we are distracted by idols and temptations. We repeat a cycle of hurting each other and having to find the courage to admit it and the grace to apologize for it and the conviction to do things differently next time. We repeat a cycle of being

caught up in the excitement of this world and then taking a step back and suddenly feeling the sorrow and longing that is always around us.

We aren't always at the same point in these cycles at the same time. The strength of a community lies in our ability to lift each other up when some of us are in high places and others are low.

For everything, there is a season and the season we are about to step into is Lent, a time when we all come together to recognize (no matter where we are individually) that many of us are stuck in a place where we'd rather not be, in cycles we can't escape, in the darkness of sin or doubt or grief that we can't see past. For everything, there is a season, and in the cycle of the church year, there are seasons of rejoicing and growing and and singing alleluia, but in

the season of Lent, there is a long tradition of not singing or saying the word "alleluia," which means "praise God" because we've set time apart to instead say "I'm sorry" and "what do I need to do differently?".

Lent is part of the rhythm of the church year: Christ comes and we rejoice, but soon enough, we sin and turn away from God. Christ comes again, rising from the dead, and we rejoice again, but then, again, we sin and turn away from God. The pattern is as sure and steady as our own heartbeat, but again and again, God offers us more love and grace than we know what to do with. In this season of separation and uncertainty, it is reassuring to know that there is something in this universe that will never change. As we prepare this week to

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### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Happening This Week
  - Mission
  - Vaccine Updates
-

## Pastor Leia Continued

worship from home on Ash Wednesday, I invite you to gather together a candle and something to light it with, some paper and something to write with, and a way to get your hands dirty—whether that's with ashes from a fireplace, a burnt cork, some dark eyeshadow, a stick of charcoal, fingerpaint, a bowl of dirt, or something else. It is said that sacraments, like baptism, are visible signs of invisible grace, reminding us of the abundant blessings that God showers on us. Sometimes, we need to look at visible signs of invisible sin and pain because sometimes, it can be all too easy to ignore what we can't see, even when it's right in front of us, smudging everything we touch.





## Ash Wednesday February 17, 2021 7pm

Join us as we begin our Lenten journey with scripture, music, reflection,  
and an invitation to get our hands dirty.

**Tuesday, February 16, 8pm:** Bible study on Facebook Live (1 John 5)

**Wednesday, February 17, 7pm:** Ash Wednesday service on Facebook Live

**Thursday, February 18, 1-3pm:** virtual knitting group on zoom

<https://peoplespresbyterian.org/events/hats-for-cancer-2021-02-18/>

**Thursday, February 18, 5pm:** virtual fellowship on zoom

<https://peoplespresbyterian.org/events/virtual-cocktail-hour-2021-02-18/>

**Sunday, February 21 (first Sunday in Lent), 10am:** worship on Facebook Live followed by virtual fellowship on zoom

<https://peoplespresbyterian.org/events/virtual-coffee-hour-2021-02-21/>

Since September, I've put a spotlight on four different spiritual practices every month here in the mini Mouse and invited you to try one (or several) throughout that month. For Lent, you might consider taking part in a series of 47 "micropractices:" simple spiritual exercises that should take no more than ten minutes a day. If you're interested in trying these micropractices on for size, print a copy of this three-page (double-sided) booklet **at the end of this newsletter** and follow along from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday!

**Daily Prayers for Lent by Rev. Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)**

**Ash Wednesday, February 17:** Teaching God, you remind us to avoid going through the motions on autopilot so that we can engage our faith with our whole hearts. You're worth our whole hearts. So today I pray: Be there in my fasting. Be there in my praying. Be there in my walking and waking. Make this journey real. Make it rich. Make it yours. Amen.

**Thursday, February 18:** God of tomorrow, brokenness weighs on us. No one is left untouched. And so we lift our eyes to you, dreaming of the day when love is all we carry. Give us the strength to be those who dream—today and tomorrow. Amen.

**Friday, February 19:** Inviting God, you are a God who is up to something good, always thinking of you ahead, always inviting us to join. So spark curiosity in me today so that I might ask, "Where are you going? I want to tag along." Amen.

**Saturday, February 20:** Gracious God, being people of faith has never been easy. From the very beginning, we have needed reminders—to be gentle, to show courtesy, to devote ourselves to good works. In a world of division, help me be gentle. May that gentleness be a power for good. Amen.

**\*\*\*Very important  
public safety  
announcement: if you  
are playing with ashes at  
home, do not mix them  
with water. Mixing ashes  
with water creates lye  
and lye will burn your  
skin. Only touch ashes  
dry or mixed with a little  
bit of oil. DO NOT  
MIX ASHES WITH  
WATER.\*\*\***



# Misson

## Let's Share!

Hello PPC friends, please consider sharing what's in your pantry with those in need.

Aid In Milan is continually asking for donations to help keep their food pantry open and available to anyone in need. This week, their biggest need is cereal, sliced bread, pastries and snacks.

The need for personal care items....shampoo, toothpaste, deodorant as well as detergent is on-going. It's tough to keep those items stocked.

If you can, please drop off any items that you wish to donate at AIM during these hours:

Monday: 9:00-2:30

Tuesday: 12:00-4:30

Wednesday-Closed

Thursday/Friday: 9:00-2:30

If you are unable to deliver goods, please feel free to e-mail me at : [subarney@comcast.net](mailto:subarney@comcast.net) and I will pick items up from your porch.

Thanks for your support!

Sue Barney-Deacon Moderator



## Donations Opportunities for Aid in Milan

Great news!! Our donations for Aid in Milan's "shut-off" fund has totaled \$1,450!!! What a wonderful show of compassion for our neighbors in financial trouble because of the pandemic. There have 17 pairs of adult winter gloves also dropped off to be given to AIM.

Please have your cash and glove donations into the church by Sunday, February 14. You can mail your check, of any amount, to the church office, 210 Smith Street, with "Aid in Milan" in the memo section or put it in an envelope into the mail slot outside the office.

The gloves can either be slipped through the mail slot or put them in the large paper bag in the church office with AIM sign on it.

A huge thank you to all who have so generously donated to this outreach project. Peoples should be very proud of the amount of donations received so far. Milan residents in need will greatly appreciate us thinking of them.

We are certainly living up to the Matthew 25:40 verse : "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me"

Your Mission Committee



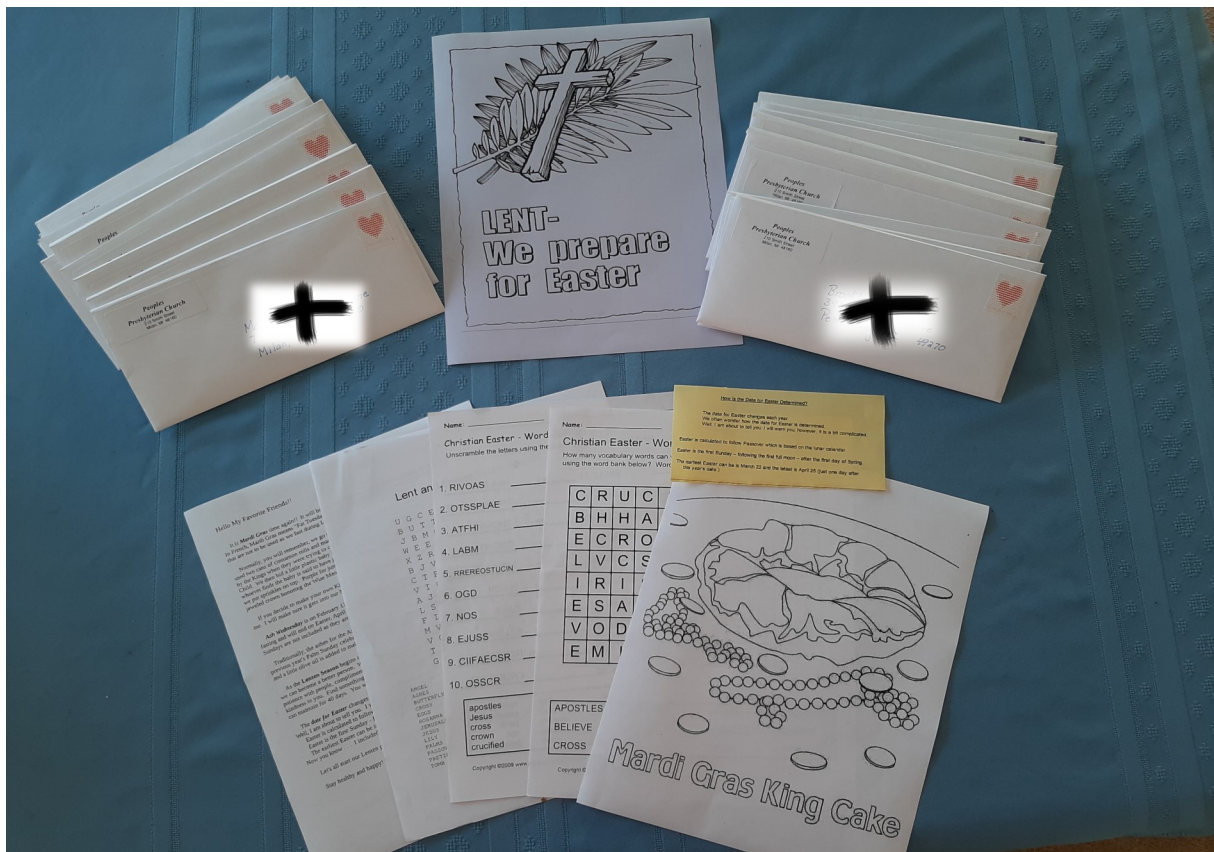


# Christian Education

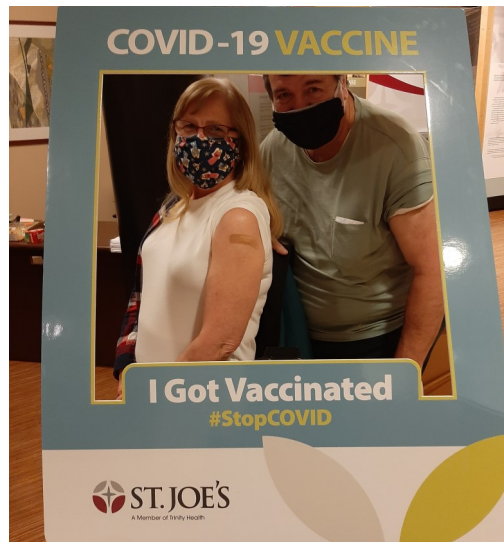
With Mardi Gras on February 16 and Ash Wednesday on the 17th, the Lenten C.E. packets were sent out this week. There are explanations of both Mardi Gras and Ash Wednesday holidays. Hopefully some of the youth will be making their own King's Cake on Mardi Gras and take a picture of them and the Cake. They will find out how the date of Easter is determined each year along with ways to think about how they might want to make some positive changes in their daily lives during Lent.

Age appropriate coloring and activities are also enclosed.

-C.E. Committee



## Vaccine Updates at PPC

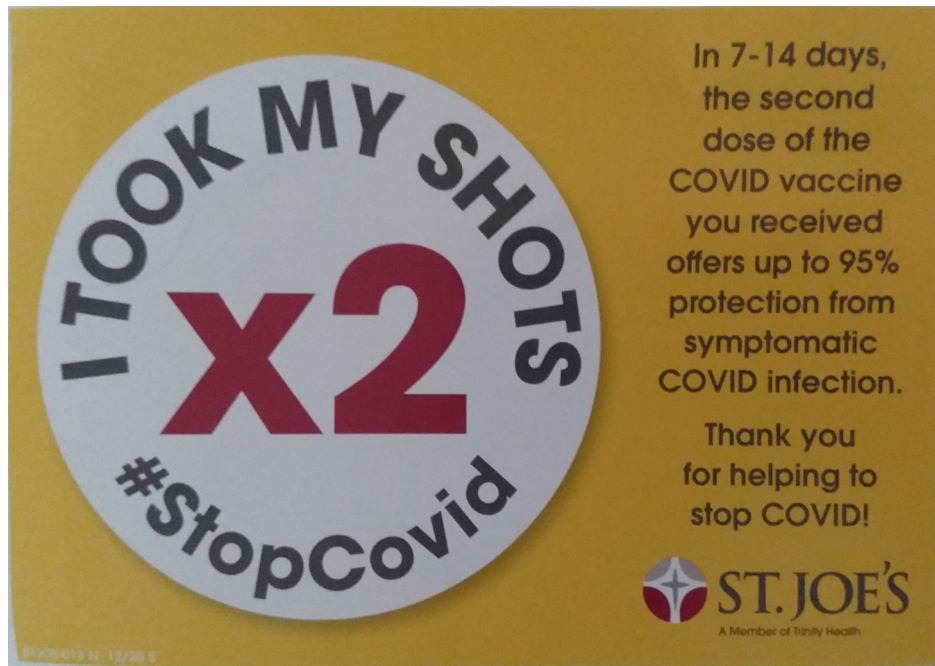


Here is Ken and my picture at St. Joes after we received our 2nd COVID vaccine.

St. Joes has given over 18,942 doses . . . and going strong!!

Thank God for giving us this vaccine to help fight this awful virus.

-Carole London



Diane London also received her second dose of vaccine.

Thank you, members, for staying proactive!

# The Nurse Corner with Diane London

Submitted by Diane London on behalf of the Worship Committee

## Why can't we have in-person worship?

It has been a year since we have been able to have in-person worship services. We all miss having our regular worship service, singing together, being able to shake hands, hug, laugh and connect with others. There may be some members & friends who don't understand why we have continued virtual services this long. Suspending in-person services is solely the decision of our elected Session members. Unfortunately the Covid virus has proved to be quite a "life disrupter" and puts people at risk of serious illness, long term health effects and death. Having in-person services at this time would increase potential exposure to the Covid virus which could be devastating to our older, high-risk membership.

Session members have been reviewing data on this national website <https://www.covidactnow.org/>. The data below is from Wednesday, February 10 and is sorted by county population. Ann Arbor is currently in the high risk level because of a recent surge of the variant Covid virus. Notice that 83% of the ICU capacity in Washtenaw is in use - that's the U of M and SJMH - a LOT of ICU beds!

This data is from February 10 on the Covidactnow.org website:

COUNTY POPULATION	DAILY NEW CASES PER 100K	INFECTION RATE	POSITIVE TEST RATE	ICU CAPACITY USED	VACCINATED (1ST SHOT)
1 ● <b>Ontonagon Co.</b> 5,700	● 45.0	● 0.89	● 6.5%	● ---	● 23.2%
2 ● <b>Washtenaw Co.</b> 370,000	● 29.6	● 1.06	● 2.6%	● 83%	● 12.5%
27 ● <b>Monroe Co.</b> 150,000	● 14.8	● 0.80	● 4.7%	● 82%	● 7.6%

## When might we be able to return to in-person services?

1. Seeing the number for infection rates and positive test rates consistently drop without subsequent spikes
2. Getting more people vaccinated, especially those within our congregation

Vaccines are being manufactured and we are hearing about more people being called to schedule their shots here in Washtenaw and Monroe counties.

What can YOU and I do?

1. Register to get on the wait lists at Washtenaw or Monroe County Public Health department, Meijer, MYChart through SJMH & IHA. Veterans can receive vaccines at the VA hospital.
2. Take the covid vaccine when it is offered.
3. Continue to wear your mask, wash your hands, use hand sanitizer and avoid gatherings with people outside of your immediate family.

"But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint." (Isaiah 40:31)



# Peoples Presbyterian Church

210 Smith Street Milan, MI 48160

*Pastor: The Reverend Leia Rose Battaglia*

Phone: (734) 439-1922

Church Email: [ppcoffice@peoplespresbyterian.org](mailto:ppcoffice@peoplespresbyterian.org)

Pastor's Email: [ppcpastor@peoplespresbyterian.org](mailto:ppcpastor@peoplespresbyterian.org)

Website: [www.peoplespresbyterian.org](http://www.peoplespresbyterian.org)

## Worship:

Streamed Weekly on Facebook Live  
at 10:00 am every Sunday

## Prayer Service:

Streamed Live each Wednesday on Facebook  
Live at 8:00 pm

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			DAY 1  <b>Daily Examen</b> <small>ASH WEDNESDAY</small>	DAY 2  <b>Prayer Rhythm</b>	DAY 3  <b>Simplify</b>	DAY 4  <b>Giving Jar</b>
SUNDAY 1 <b>Bible Reading</b>	DAY 5 <b>Quiet Time</b>	DAY 6 <b>Let Go</b>	DAY 7 <b>Clear Out</b>	DAY 8 <b>Start Seedlings</b>	DAY 9 <b>Finger Prayer</b>	DAY 10 <b>Unplug</b>
SUNDAY 2 <b>Nourish</b>	DAY 11 <b>God Sightings</b>	DAY 12 <b>Prayer Wall</b>	DAY 13 <b>Press Pause</b>	DAY 14 <b>Save + Share</b>	DAY 15 <b>Learn a Song</b>	DAY 16 <b>On the Move</b>
SUNDAY 3 <b>Be Inconvenienced</b>	DAY 17 <b>A New Gift</b>	DAY 18 <b>Saintly Friend</b>	DAY 19 <b>Prayerful Encounters</b>	DAY 20 <b>Buy Less</b>	DAY 21 <b>Sustain</b>	DAY 22 <b>Color</b>
SUNDAY 4 <b>Silence</b>	DAY 23 <b>Speak Kindness</b>	DAY 24 <b>Say Thanks</b>	DAY 25 <b>Memorize</b>	DAY 26 <b>Difficult Prayers</b>	DAY 27 <b>Traditional Fast</b>	DAY 28 <b>Give Time</b>
SUNDAY 5 <b>Music Day</b>	DAY 29 <b>Folding Prayer</b>	DAY 30 <b>Go Green</b>	DAY 31 <b>Appreciate</b>	DAY 32 <b>Act of Kindness</b>	DAY 33 <b>Jesus Prayer</b>	DAY 34 <b>Detach</b>
PALM SUNDAY <b>A Break</b>	DAY 35 <b>Be Uncomfortable</b>	DAY 36 <b>Church Staff</b>	DAY 37 <b>Wonder</b>	DAY 38 <b>Support</b> <small>MAUNDY THURSDAY</small>	DAY 39 <b>Practice Grace</b> <small>GOOD FRIDAY</small>	DAY 40 <b>Prayer Walk</b>
EASTER SUNDAY <b>Presence</b>						

*Vibrant* CHURCH COMMUNICATIONS

## PRESENCE - EASTER SUNDAY

MORE

**Reach out to someone in your church or neighborhood who could use a call or visit.** This might include an elderly church member, a stay at home parent, someone who has recently lost their job, or someone who is grieving.

## REFLECT

What practices have been meaningful for you?

How can you incorporate them into your daily life now that Lent is over?

How have you been changed by engaging with these practices over the last six and a half weeks?

 vibrant CHURCH COMMUNICATIONS

# LENTEN M·I·C·R·O PRACTICES

## ABOUT LENTEN MICROPRACTICES

Lent is a 40 day season of preparation for the resurrection of Jesus. We mark this time as different through our actions. The days are counted from Ash Wednesday through the Saturday before Easter. Sunday's are not counted in Lent's 40 days.

We begin by being marked with ashes as a reminder of the uncertainty of human life. We continue throughout the 40 days by making room in our hearts and lives for Christ's resurrection.

In this booklet, you'll find a new practice to guide you each day on your journey. Some practices can be done on the spot, some during the day, and others will take some time and/or preparation.

Traditionally, there are three pillars of Lent: praying, fasting, and alms giving, which come to us from Matthew 6:1-18. The practices in this booklet rotate through these themes, along with additional practices that don't fit neatly in one of those categories ("more").

Engage with the practices when and how you can. There is no right or wrong way to do them. You are no more or less holy by doing them all or only a few. Feel free to adjust the practice of the day to better fit yourself or the members of your household.

### Bonus Tips:

- + Read the daily practice in the morning so you have a chance to engage with it during the day.
- + Set an alarm on your phone as a reminder.
- + Review the day's practice at dinner.
- + Mark your favorite practices to make a regular part of your faith life.



### CHURCH STAFF - DAY 36

PRAY

Lent and Holy Week are especially busy times for church staff.  
**Pray for their well-being.**

### WONDER - DAY 37

FAST

**Take a break from having all the answers.** Spend the day noticing, wondering, and questioning the world around you.

### SUPPORT - DAY 38 - MAUNDY THURSDAY

GIVE

**Support a local school or teacher with a note, goodies, or supplies.** You can go to [donorschoose.org](https://donorschoose.org) to support specific school projects.

### PRACTICE GRACE - DAY 39 - GOOD FRIDAY

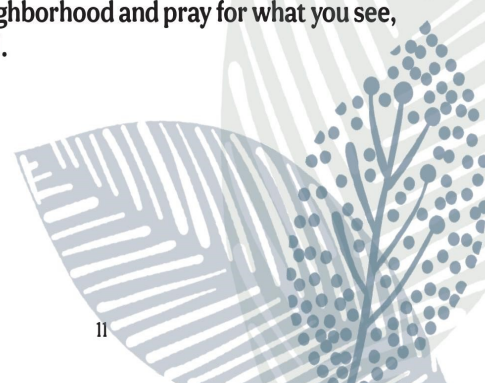
MORE

**Practice grace in everything you do today.** Extend some to your family if they irritate you, to the slow people in your checkout line, or to the cars that pull out in front of you. Notice where you need grace extended to you, too.

### PRAYER WALK - DAY 40

PRAY

**Walk around your neighborhood and pray for what you see, hear, touch, and smell.**





## ACT OF KINDNESS - DAY 32

MORE

**Perform a random act of kindness for another person today.**

If you need ideas for what to do check out [randomactsofkindness.org](http://randomactsofkindness.org).

## JESUS PRAYER - DAY 33

PRAY

**Recite the Jesus prayer 10 times, either in one sitting or throughout the course of the day:** "Lord Jesus Christ, son of God, have mercy on me a sinner." For children, it can be as simple as "Jesus loves me and my neighbor."

## DETACH - DAY 34

FAST

**Set aside what you find yourself attached to for the day.** It could be your phone, books, video games, etc. What space does this open up for you?

## A BREAK - PALM SUNDAY

GIVE

**Who do you know who needs a break, and how can you give them one?** You could offer a run to the store, babysitting, sweeping/shoveling, or even a small gift card.

## BE UNCOMFORTABLE - DAY 25

MORE

Growth happens in places where we are uncomfortable, and it's easy to stay in the places of comfort. **Push yourself to find new opportunities to live your faith, especially if it means doing something new.**

## DAILY EXAMEN - DAY 1 - ASH WEDNESDAY

PRAY

This prayer technique was developed by St. Ignatius Loyola over 400 years ago. At the end of the day, **use these five steps to review your day and prepare for the next.**

1. Become aware of God's presence.
2. Review the day with gratitude.
3. Pay attention to your emotions.
4. Choose one feature of the day and pray from it.
5. Look toward tomorrow.

## PRAYER RHYTHM - DAY 2

PRAY

Pick something that happens regularly - like brushing teeth, taking a walk, or washing dishes. **Say a prayer every time you do this action.**

## SIMPLIFY - DAY 3

FAST

**What is overcomplicated in life that can be simplified?**

What are the simplest meals you can eat? Rice and beans is a simple, nutritious meal found in most cultures around the world that would make a great lunch or dinner.

## GIVING JAR - DAY 4

GIVE

**Designate a giving jar where loose change can go.** At the end of Lent, give the collected change to the church or another organization. You can also set an intention to give to it regularly.

## BIBLE READING - SUNDAY 1

MORE

**Read one chapter in your Bible today.**

## QUIET TIME - DAY 5

PRAY

**Spend 10 minutes today in silence and prayer.**  
Is that easy or hard for you?

## LET GO - DAY 6

FAST

It is human nature to hold on to resentment and grudges.  
**Today practice letting go of resentment and open your heart to new possibilities.**

## CLEAR OUT - DAY 7

GIVE

**Donate personal possessions such as clothes, books, shoes, to live a second life.** Take time to figure out what is essential and what is extra.

## START SEEDLINGS - DAY 8

MORE

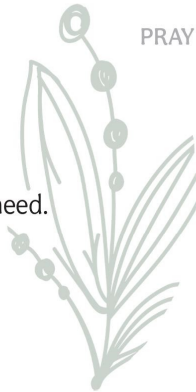
**Plant seeds in small jars and place them in the light.** Let them be physical reminders that we partner with God in creation.

## FINGER PRAYER - DAY 9

Use your fingers to guide your prayer.

- Thumb:** Those close to you.
- Pointer:** Those who point the way.
- Tall finger:** Those in authority.
- Ring finger:** Those who are sick, poor, in need.
- Pinky:** Your own needs.

PRAY



## GIVE TIME - DAY 28

GIVE

**Schedule time for serving others during Lent.** It doesn't matter whether the project is big or small, it matters more that you share your time.

## MUSIC DAY - SUNDAY 5

**Spend your day singing and listening to religious music.**  
After all, "when you sing you pray twice."

(Quote attributed to Augustine.)

MORE



## FOLDING PRAYER - DAY 29

PRAY

**Fold paper cranes (or other origami) and pray for someone.** If you are able, give them what you created. Follow the link [bit.ly/Folding-Prayer](https://bit.ly/Folding-Prayer) (or scan the qr code) for some easy origami instructions.



## GO GREEN - DAY 30

FAST

**How can you reduce your waste today?** Find ways to use cloth instead of paper products, reusable instead of single-use products, purchase items with eco-friendly packaging.

## APPRECIATE - DAY 31

GIVE

**Leave a note in your mailbox or some treats on the front porch for the folks who bring the mail and deliver packages.** It's easy to take for granted how the world can be shipped to our doorsteps and not stop to notice all those who make it happen.



### SPEAK KINDNESS - DAY 23

FAST

Refrain from gossip and other unkind words. **Only speak what is positive today.** Bonus: add a quarter to a giving jar if you say something negative.

### SAY THANKS - DAY 24

GIVE

We receive help from others in big and small ways all the time. Who has helped you along the way? **Write a letter of thanks to someone who has made a difference in your life.**

### MEMORIZE - DAY 25

MORE

**What scripture do you want to hold close to guide you today and in the future? Write it out and repeat it throughout the day.** You can even set a timer on your phone as a reminder.

### DIFFICULT PRAYERS - DAY 26

PRAY

In Matthew 5:43, **Jesus tells us to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us.** A simple but transformative reminder for yourself is: God loves my enemies the same as God loves me.

### TRADITIONAL FAST - DAY 27

FAST

**Partake of only one full meal today.** Some food is permitted at breakfast and around midday or in the evening—depending on when you choose to eat your full meal.

### UNPLUG - DAY 10

FAST

**Unplug as much as you can - perhaps even the wifi router!** Make room for connection with those close to you.

### NOURISH - SUNDAY 2

GIVE

**Cook a meal for a friend or neighbor.** We never know what people are going through, and even a simple meal can make a big difference in someone's life.

### GOD SIGHTINGS - DAY 11

MORE

At the end of the day ask yourself **"Where did I see God today?"** Make a list.

### PRAYER WALL - DAY 12

PRAY

Use a large piece of paper or sticky notes to **write or draw prayers of joy and concern.** Visit the wall regularly and continue to pray for the prayers that have been posted.

### PRESS PAUSE - DAY 13

FAST

**Press pause on videos, shows, movies, and streamed content.** What can you fill this time with instead?

### SAVE + SHARE - DAY 14

GIVE

**Buy one or two extra non-perishable foods each week at the grocery store or set aside 10¢ a meal.** At the end of Lent, share what you've saved to help feed others.



### LEARN A SONG - DAY 15

MORE

**Find a psalm or a hymn text that is meaningful to you.**

Write out the words, learn more about the song, and read/sing it throughout the day.

### ON THE MOVE - DAY 16

PRAY

**Be intentional about silencing your phone and radio when in the car alone.** Instead, use that quiet time to talk to God.

### BE INCONVENIENCED - SUNDAY 3

FAST

**Cut out a modern convenience that you use regularly (digital devices, microwave, coffee maker, etc.) for the day.** How does this change your daily activities?

### A NEW GIFT - DAY 17

GIVE

**Find a new charity or organization to support that energizes you.** Share their mission with friends and family.

### SAINTLY FRIEND - DAY 18

MORE

**Read about one of the saints.** We have many mothers and fathers who have come before us with inspiring stories. Learn about some saints at [bit.ly/Saintly-Friend](https://bit.ly/Saintly-Friend). You can also scan the QR code to the right to access the link.



### PRAYERFUL ENCOUNTERS - DAY 19

PRAY

**Pray for others you encounter in your day**—whether you know them or not. Did you pray for someone unexpected?

### BUY LESS - DAY 20

FAST

When we can buy with the click of a button, it's easy not to pause and think. **Take a day to refrain from purchasing anything unless it's truly needed.**

### SUSTAIN - DAY 21

GIVE

**Write a note of thanks to those who work to keep us healthy (doctors, nurses, etc.).** Your words of thanks and appreciation will sustain them through difficult times.

### COLOR - DAY 22

MORE

We can connect with God when we're doing something that doesn't use our full concentration like coloring. **Color a mandala or search out other meaningful coloring pages.**

### SILENCE - SUNDAY 4

PRAY

**Find a quiet place, close your eyes and let your thoughts go.** As they come to you, imagine that they are floating by you on a river. Let them go.

