



**Lent  
Middle School  
Student  
Devotional**

NAME:



## What is “Lent”?!

### LENT IS NOT:

- The stuff in your belly button or pocket or clothes dryer.
- Giving something up for 40 days and telling everyone about it so we look really cool and disciplined.

### LENT IS:

- The season of the year when we talk about the events leading up to Easter.

Often when we think about Easter, we think about gospel music and celebrations and accepting candy from strange Easter bunnies. But Easter is actually a really serious time of the year, when we think about the way that Jesus lived His life and how He died for us.

This is what it says about Lent on the United Methodist website (<http://www.umc.org/topics/topic-lent-and-easter>):

*During Lent, we enter into a season of preparation, self-reflection and repentance when we seek to literally “turn around” and realign our lives and focus toward God. It is a time to give up things as well as take on new life-giving practices, helping us rid ourselves of distractions and our own selfish desires. By doing so, we seek to live and love as more faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.*

This booklet will help you process all that. It will help you decide to give something up, as well as help you take up a new practice: daily devotions!

This devotional will help walk you through Lent, introducing you quickly to some of the holidays. But I encourage you to attend those special services at your church and really engage in what Lent is all about.

[Author Note: Update the dates to reflect the current year. If your church offers services on these holidays, include the details.]

- Ash Wednesday, February 14 | 7 p.m. in the Sanctuary
- Maundy Thursday | 7 p.m. in the Sanctuary
- Good Friday | Noon and 7 p.m. in the Sanctuary
- Easter Sunday | 8, 9:30, and 11:00 in the Sanctuary and Robertson Chapel

[Author Note: Change the following to reflect what’s happening at your church.]

We also want to take the opportunity to model the church's theme so that you and your parents can talk about similar things. This year our, church's theme is MOUNTAINS. We'll talk about:

- FASTING on the mountain
- FAITH on the mountain
- TEMPATION on the mountain
- SERVICE on the mountain
- REST on the mountain
- TRANSFORMATION on the mountain
- And lastly, we'll walk you through Holy Week.

The Mountains theme is weaved in everything in this booklet—but we'll focus on what it means to have “mountaintop” experiences in our faith. You know how sometimes we talk about the “highs and lows” of our day? Well, have you ever thought about having *spiritual* highs and lows?

This Lenten season, I want you to think about what it might look like to have a spiritual high and avoid some of the lows that seem to trip our faith up.

## ABOUT THIS DEVO

Each week, there is ONE lesson and FIVE devos (meaning you get one day off on Sunday, when you go to church!). You can either do the lessons on Wednesdays by yourself, or do them at [\[your youth ministry name\]](#) with the rest of the group!

**In each day's devo, there are FOUR parts—S.O.A.P.:**  
**Scripture: Read the Scripture.**  
**Observations: What do you see?**  
**Application: What do you think this means?**  
**Prayer: Write a prayer to God.**

## Questions?

[Author Note: Replace the following with the contact info you want to give your students.]

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## Week One: Fasting on the Mountain

Today is ASH WEDNESDAY, which is the day that we officially begin Lent. On Ash Wednesday, we recognize the sadness that comes with the Lent season. We use it as a time to recognize that every single human dies.

Death—that's a rough concept, right? Have you ever been to a funeral? Maybe you've even had someone close to you die? It's a sad, sad occasion. Sometimes, Ash Wednesday feels like a funeral service, but it's kind of for yourself. This is the verse we read at Ash Wednesday:

### **Genesis 3:19**

*By the sweat of your brow  
will you have food to eat  
until you return to the ground  
from which you were made.  
For you were made from dust,  
and to dust you will return.*

Then, after we read this verse, we are given the “Imposition of Ashes” on our foreheads by our pastors. They say to us, “From ashes to ashes,” or, “Repent and believe the gospel.” (I remember the first time this happened to me—I almost peed my pants! I was freaked out.)

We are given the ashes to remind us that we are mortal. At some point, we will die. Why do we need the reminder that we're all going to die? That's not very uplifting.

But the beautiful thing is, at the end of this 40 days, we'll celebrate that Jesus died on the cross so that we don't have to die forever. And while today is a “sad day” on the Christian calendar, sadness does not last forever.

This week is all about remembering the sacrifice that Jesus made for us. One of the most common practices of Lent is to give up something in honor of the sacrifice that Jesus made for us. Many people give up chocolate, screen time, soda, or other things. Then, any time they have the craving for that thing, they take some to pray and thank Jesus for His sacrifice.

I encourage you to give up something this month. Yes, it stinks. It's uncomfortable. And, at times, you'll be sad. But a lot of other people will be doing it with you. This is a spiritual practice called *fasting*.

## **Some Questions for Reflection**

- 1. Google “fasting.” What did you learn?**
- 2. Why do you think people fast during *Lent*?**
- 3. What is something you’ll fast from?**
- 4. When you want that thing, what will you remind yourself?**
- 5. Write a simple prayer to God that you can read during Lent when you find yourself tempted to break your fast.**



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