

# Lenten Letters in a Box



Welcome to the first letter in your box! This box full of letters and other things has been put together to help your family journey through Lent. Lent is the season just before Easter, and it lasts 40 days, not counting Sundays.

Lent is a season where people often try to pray more and try to grow in their faith in new ways. This box has all kinds of ideas of things that your family can do together to do that – one thing a week, plus extra things for special days in the season of Lent.

We hope you enjoy what's to come!



# Shrove Tuesday

## ALLELUIA BANNER

Today is Shrove Tuesday – although lots of people call it Pancake Tuesday – and it is the day before Lent begins. People often eat pancakes today because people often fast in Lent, which means they go without something, so pancakes are a bit of a treat before they go without for a while. People often give up things that are a treat – like pancakes, or chocolate, or potato chips, or watching tv.

When people fast, they usually wait to have any celebrations until after the fast is over. If you have a birthday in Lent, it's definitely ok to still celebrate it though! In church, we sometimes say "Alleluia!" when we want to celebrate something. Alleluia means praise the Lord. So, as a sign that we are fasting from that kind of celebration, we don't say alleluia during Lent, and we can say it again when it is Easter, and it's time for a BIG celebration.

For today's activity, we've made an Alleluia banner for you to decorate. You can use whatever you have at home to make it look great, and then find a good hiding place for it (just don't forget where it is!) Then, when Easter finally comes, you can take it out and hang it up!



# Ash Wednesday

## PRAYER TREE

Today is Ash Wednesday – the first day of Lent.

One of the things that people do in Lent is try to pray more, so we have a new way for you to think about prayer to hopefully help your family to do that.

You'll need to find a couple of twigs and a vase or a jar to put them in, and find somewhere special to put them.

In this envelope there are different colours of ribbon, each one representing something, and each day you can choose the kind of thing that you'd like to pray about. Your family can decide if you'd like to pray silently or out loud, and once you are done your prayer, you can tie the ribbon onto your branch. Here are the colours and what they mean:

Green: Asking God for guidance or to help you figure something out.

Blue: Saying sorry to God and asking for forgiveness.

Gold: Saying thank you to God.

White: Praying for other people.

You can use this to help you pray all the way through Lent.



# 1st Sunday of Lent

## ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT ASSESSMENT



There are lots of things that we believe as Christians, and one of them is that the whole Earth is a good gift from God, and that God wants us to take care of it. Sometimes when we talk about the earth we call it creation.

It can be hard sometimes to know what the best thing to do is to help take care of creation. One thing that can be helpful is to use an environmental footprint calculator online to help figure out what things we can do better.

There are lots of tools like this, so you can look online to find one that looks like a good fit for your family. Here are two that we like:

<http://www.parkcitygreen.org/calculators/Kidscalculator.aspx>

<https://www.conservation.org/carbon-footprint-calculator#/>

Or, you might decide that rather than use a calculator, your family could just look at the way that you live and think about what you might be able to do differently to better care for creation.



# 2nd Sunday of Lent

## PRAYING IN COLOUR

Praying in Colour is another new way for your family to pray. It's still about connecting with God, but it might be a good way to pray if sometimes it's hard for you to focus when you try to pray.

In your box, you should have some papers ready to go to pray in colour. You'll need to find something to colour with, and then here's what to do:

- Write whatever you call God, or draw a picture of what you think God might look like in the middle spot.
- Colour it in, and while you colour, ask God to be with you and to help you pray
- If you want to pray for someone, write their name or draw their picture in one of the spaces around the middle. If there's something else you want to pray about, write or draw that in one of the spaces.
- Colour it in, and pray as you colour.
- Keep going with the other space on your page until they are all full or until you are done praying.
- Finish by saying Amen.

If you like this way of praying, you can keep doing it with the pages in your box, or you can start with a blank page and make your own shapes and doodles as you pray.



# 3rd Sunday of Lent



## PRETZELS

Did you know that originally pretzels were a special food for Lent?

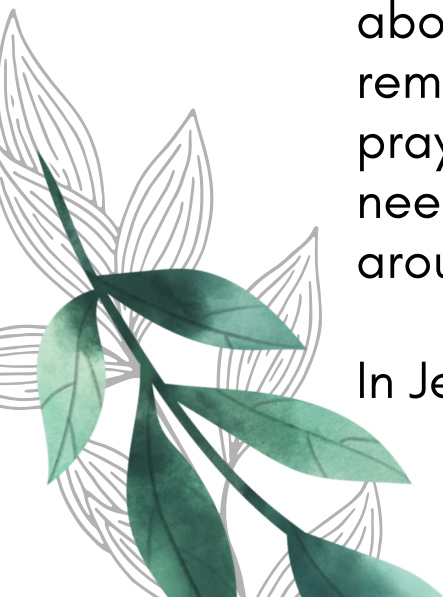
They are made from simple ingredients, so they aren't too much fun to be part of Lent, but they sure taste yummy, and the shape is a reminder of arms crossed in prayer.

We've given you just about everything that you need to make some pretzels (except for an egg and some butter!), so you can make some as a family. The next page has the instructions, but here's a prayer to get you started:

Dear God,

We ask you to bless these pretzels which we are about to eat. Each time we eat them may we be reminded that this is the season of Lent, a time of prayer. Help us to remember to pray for those who need our prayers each day. Keep your loving arms around us, O God, to protect us.

In Jesus's name, Amen.



# PRETZELS

## Ingredients

1 ½ cups hot water  
1 tablespoon sugar  
1 tablespoon salt  
1 package active dry yeast (2 ¼ teaspoons)  
4 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted  
4 ½ cups flour  
10 cups water  
⅔ cup baking soda  
1 egg, beaten and mixed with 1 tablespoon of water



## Instructions

1. Mix the water, sugar, salt, and yeast together in a large bowl. Let the mixture sit for five minutes, until the yeast starts to bloom (it should look like a layer of foam on the surface of the water).
2. Add in the butter and flour, and mix until the dough is smooth like satin.
3. Cover the bowl and let it sit until the dough is doubled in size, about 1 hour.
4. Preheat your oven to 450 degrees F and spray baking sheets with oil.
5. Boil water with baking soda in a large saucepan.
6. Divide the dough into eight pieces. Shape each piece of dough into a 24-inch rope and then twist it into pretzel shape.
7. Dip each pretzel in the boiling water for 30 seconds on each side before placing it on the sheet pan.
8. Brush the pretzels with egg wash and sprinkle them with salt.
9. Bake for 12-14 minutes.

Recipe + prayer from: <https://www.faithward.org/lent-pretzels-recipe-and-pretzel-prayer/>

# 4th Sunday of Lent



## PLAY A GAME TOGETHER

Lent is a time to change our patterns, to change the normal way that we do things.

Families spend time together in all kinds of ways, so maybe you already do this, but lots of families don't play together very often. Today, or some time this week, we encourage you to take some time to play together and to pray for one another.

If you have board games, maybe you could choose one of those to play, or maybe you'll go outside and play tag, your family can decide together what they'd like to do, but here are some ideas of things you can do without needing anything special if you need them:

- A drawing game - each person draws a shape on a piece of paper, then you pass it to the next person who adds to it. Keep passing it and make pictures together!
- Hide and seek
- Memory - Put an assortment of items on a tray, everyone tries to memorize the items. Everyone closes their eyes then one person removes a few items and players try to guess what was removed





# 5th Sunday of Lent

## SERVE YOUR COMMUNITY

In God's kingdom, there is more than enough for everyone, and everyone's needs are met. As Christians, we are supposed to help make the world more like God's kingdom, more like the way God wants it to be.

In our community, people have lots of needs that go unmet, and there are things that we can do to help them, and to help our community become more like God wants it to be.

Every community is different, so take some time as a family to think about your community - what needs are there?

Maybe there are people who don't have enough to eat.  
Maybe there are people who are lonely.  
Maybe there are people who need help picking up groceries.  
Or maybe there are completely different needs!

Take some time to think about what your family can do to help make a difference. Like giving food to the food bank, or taking cards to a nursing home, or asking your neighbours if there is anything you can do to help them.

Whatever you do, remember to follow public health guidelines AND be sure to also pray for your community, and pray that things will change so that people have fewer needs that go unmet.



# 6th Sunday of Lent

## PALM CROSSES

This Sunday, we remember when Jesus came into Jerusalem and was met with a big celebration and people waving palms.

We know what is to come in the next week, but still celebrate.

There is so much that we can learn from that – even if things aren't great or we know something bad might happen, we can still celebrate when we have the chance.

We often fold palms into crosses to mark this day, but you could also use paper or ribbon. We've got some instructions for you to make your own crosses included in this envelope. They can be a bit tricky to make, so we've also included some palm fronds that can just get coloured in. Your whole family doesn't have to do the same thing, maybe a mix might work best for you!

When you are all done, you can have a palm parade around your home, or you can put the palms up somewhere to help you remember this day of celebration. Whatever you choose to do, take some time to pray, saying thank you to God for this day and for all of the things that you have to celebrate.



# Maundy Thursday

## SPECIAL FAMILY MEAL

Today, we'd like to invite you to a special meal.

Well... sort of. We'd like to invite you to share a special meal with your family. It doesn't matter what you eat or where you eat or what you wear, the thing that will make it special is gathering together.

On Maundy Thursday we remember the night when Jesus gathered together with his friends to share one last special meal together - we call it the Last Supper.

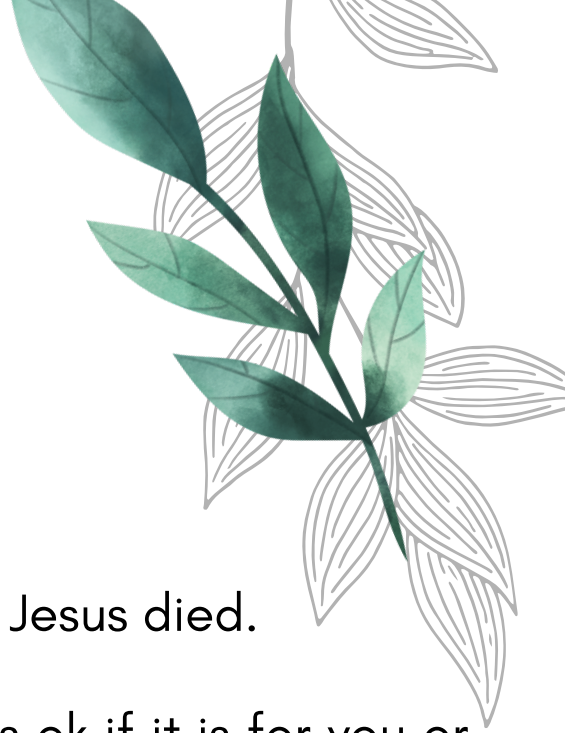
Of course, we don't want this to be your last supper with your family, but sharing a meal like Jesus did with his friends is a good way to remember that day. You don't have to do anything special, but you might want to think about what traditions your family has for special meals and do some of those things for this meal today.

Maybe you'll light candles, or wear fancy clothes, or eat in a different room, or have a video call with another family having their special family meal - whatever it is that will make this feel a little extra special.

And, as part of your meal, be sure to say a prayer to give thanks for the food you will eat and for this time with your family.



# Good Friday



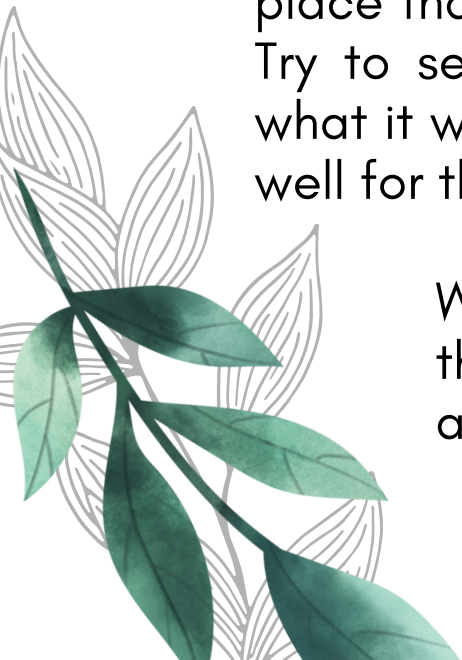
On Good Friday we remember the day that Jesus died.

It can feel scary to think about death, so it's ok if it is for you or for people in your family. It's not easy, but it's an important part of the story of Easter. We don't get the celebration and joy of Easter without the sadness of Good Friday.

When Jesus died, his friends probably felt like everything was different and that nothing would ever be the same again. Sometimes, when something sad happens it makes us see things a little differently, even things that we've seen a million times before.

Today, go for a walk with your family. Walk around a place that is familiar to you, but try to see it differently. Try to see what new things you can find or imagine what it would be like to see this place that you know so well for the very first time.

While you are walking, say a prayer of thanks for the places that you go, the things that you see, and the people that you meet.



# Holy Saturday

## RESURRECTION ROLLS

Today is kind of an in-between day. It's not Good Friday anymore, but it's not Easter yet.

Today, we have a fun thing for you to do.

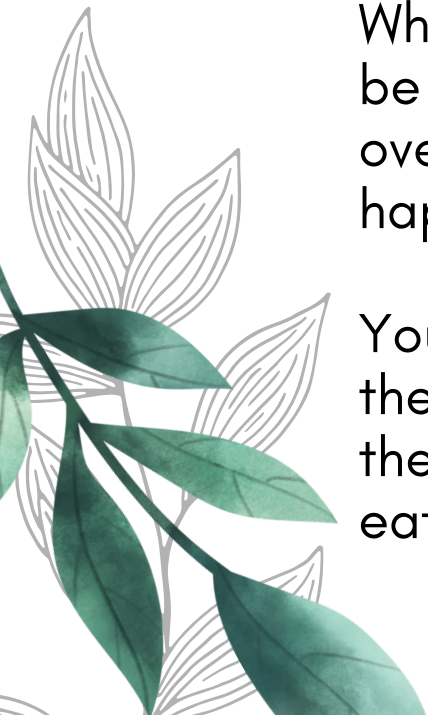
After Jesus died, his body was prepared and it was put in a tomb. On Easter Sunday, when the women went to the tomb to take care of Jesus's body, they found that it was empty.

The place that was full, was now empty.

To remember that, we hope you will make a sweet treat.

When you make these resurrection rolls, they will be full (like the tomb) when you put them in the oven, but you'll have to wait and see what happens after they are baked.

You could keep them until tomorrow and check the "tomb" on Easter morning, or you can break them open as soon as they are cool enough to eat!





# RESURRECTION ROLLS

## Ingredients:

1 package crescent roll dough  
8 large marshmallows  
2 tbsp melted butter  
1/4 cup sugar + 1 tsp cinnamon mixed together

## Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Open crescent rolls and lay out the triangles. Flatten the wide end a little bit.
3. Dip marshmallows in melted butter, and then roll them in the cinnamon sugar.
4. Wrap the marshmallow up tight in the crescent roll dough, making sure all the edges are closed up, and place them on the baking sheet.
5. Bake for 10-12 minutes