

FAITH @ HOME

Week of March 10

First Sunday in Lent

ADULT AND SMALL CHILD

READ: Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16

REFLECT: The world can be a scary place where it can feel like so much can go wrong. For young children, who have a very strong sense of justice, life can feel unfair. It's unfair when other kids don't share. It's unfair when someone says no. It's unfair that anyone would have to go to bed before the sun sets. As these obstacles present themselves, explore what it means to trust. Can we trust that the sun will rise again tomorrow? Can we trust teachers and parents? Who else can we trust? Who are the angels that God puts in charge of us to protect us wherever we go? Who are the ones that hold up their hands so we don't hurt our feet? Consider together how you can know that God will protect you and keep you safe.

RESPOND: Even if your children are not fully verbal and can't share in all of this reflection with you, use this week as an opportunity to reflect upon the angels that are always around you and your family, even when we don't see those people every day. Make a mobile for your baby with all of the angels in their family that watch over your sleeping babe. Draw a family tree together that includes chosen family on those many branches. Make special time on your family calendar to have lunch or dinner with the people you love but don't see every day.

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: ELSA ANDERS COOK



Elsa Anders Cook is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ who has served churches in New York, Maine, Washington and Pennsylvania. She volunteers at church now while supporting her husband in his service as a Major in the United States Army. Together, they have a toddler and a baby on the way. She blogs at cookingwithelsa.org.

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ADULT AND ELEMENTARY

READ: Luke 4:1-13

REFLECT: “After his baptism, Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit... was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil.” Jesus’ baptism marks the start of his ministry on earth. Why does he retreat for forty days? Maybe he hopes to pray, prepare, and plan how to call all people into the Kingdom of God and to share with them the good news of a God who loves them. Surely he is excited about his ministry and eager to get started. But Jesus’ ministry will also be incredibly hard – he knows he will be mistrusted and ultimately betrayed. He must face the harsh reality of how his earthly ministry will end. During this time of preparation, the devil tempts Jesus, offering him choices that might sound good – but are choices that take Jesus away from his ministry. So Jesus tells the devil NO.

RESPOND: Lent is a time of prayer and reflection when we remember Jesus’ time in the wilderness. Many people give something up for Lent, like candy or desserts, or they decrease their screen time. People also can add something to their lives, like saying grace at every meal, or reading Bible stories, or saving their spare change for others. What will your family do in Lent? Talk about what God is calling you to do as a family. What is your ministry? How can you best prepare for this ministry together? How can you be your best selves that which God made you to be? If you aren’t sure, a great tool to help you through Lent is using the Way of Love calendar, found here in both English and Spanish: <https://www.churchpublishing.org/livingthewayoflove>. Whatever you decide, choose something that brings you closer to God and closer to one another.

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: LISA BROWN



A native of Pittsburgh, Lisa is passionate about creatively enriching the spiritual lives of people of all ages. She is the author of *The Best VBS Workbook Ever!* She is also a contributor to: *Faith Formation with a New Generation*, 2020 InsideOut camp curriculum, The Anglican Communion’s Thy Kingdom Come global prayer initiative, and the 2018 Lenten Kyrie Project. She is also a frequent writer for Building Faith, a workshop leader, and an active member of Forma and the eFormation communities. Lisa was previously the Director of Children’s Ministry at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Mt. Lebanon, Pennsylvania. She is currently the Director of Digital Ministry for Membership Vision. She is intrigued by the idea of helping people find God in the digital space and writes about it on her digital ministry blog at <https://www.membershipvision.com/latest-posts/>.

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ADULT AND YOUTH

READ: Luke 4:1-13

REFLECT: While Jesus was in the wilderness, the devil came to Jesus and tested him. In today's terms, Jesus was tempted with food that would feed him physically, the power and authority to rule the world, and the pride of knowing that he was the Son of God. Each time, Jesus rejected the temptations of the world that the devil presented him. Each time, he reminded the devil and himself that God could feed him, that God was to be worshiped, and that he did not need to test God. When have you been tempted in your life? Were you able to trust God in that moment? Why or why not?

RESPOND: Draw three triangles and label them Power, Pride, and Physical. Inside each one, write or draw temptations that you might experience that would fall into that triangle. Create a plan of how you are going to reject those temptations and look to God to help you past them. Pray over that plan and post it in a place you will see frequently.

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: WALLACE BENTON



Wallace Benton serves as the Assistant to the Rector for Youth Ministries at St. David's Episcopal Church in Roswell, GA. He's been fortunate to have grown up in the Episcopal Church and became interested in youth ministry after volunteering with his former youth program after college. Wallace has worked diocesan retreats and activities such as New Beginnings and Happening. Currently, he is the lay director for New Beginnings in the Diocese of Atlanta. He is also a member of the Episcopal Youth Ministry in ATL podcast (which you should check out immediately!).

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ADULT AND ADULT

READ: Romans 10:8b-13

REFLECT: Who are we following? Who are we imitating? We need to be careful about imitating those who live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Those who live contrary to the word of God will lead us down a path to destruction. We can recognize them because “...their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things.” Instead, we need to follow those who are citizens of heaven, those whose minds are on things above, not on things on the earth. When we imitate those who set righteous examples, we will see love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (see Galatians 5:22-23). In addition, we should desire to set godly examples for others to follow. We should want others to see the light of Christ in our day-to-day living. Can others find their way to the Lord through our example?

RESPOND: List out ten practical ways in which you can be an example to others. Ask the Lord to lead you to someone with whom you can be an example in holiness.

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: ARETHA L. GRANT



Aretha Grant serves her local church as a Bible teacher and elder. She loves writing and is the author of *Overcomer: 25 Keys to Walking Victoriously*. Aretha resides in Hagerstown, MD with her husband and two youngest children. You can read Aretha’s blog at www.arethagrants.com.

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