



Book of Faith Lenten Journey: 40 Days with the Lord's Prayer

These worship helps are for congregations shaping their Lenten Wednesday worship services around the Lenten Resource—*Book of Faith Lenten Journey: 40 Days with the Lord's Prayer*. This resource focuses on one petition of the Lord's Prayer for each of the seven weeks in Lent. In these Worship Helps you will find bullet points highlighting each week's key themes from *Book of Faith Lenten Journey*, a Prayer of the Day, scripture readings, hymn suggestions, and several ideas and images to build the worship experience around. Worship planners are encouraged to pick and choose from these worship helps—and even to go beyond them—in planning Lenten worship that speaks to the context of your congregation. Each week in Lent, the worship planner should have read each of the six daily readings from *Book of Faith Lenten Journey* in order to plan worship and prepare a sermon that speaks to the experience of congregational members who are working through this resource as a personal or small group Lenten discipline.

The following types of material is available in each set of Worship Helps.

Introduction to the Day

Sets a thematic course for the day's worship that is aligned with the scripture readings and theme of the course session

Prayer of the Day and Prayer Prompts

A Prayer of the Day and creative prayer prompts connect to the day's theme

Scripture Readings

Support themes of the course sessions and help set the direction for the worship service. (1 Old Testament reading, 1 psalm, 1 epistle, 1 gospel reading)

Hymns for Worship

Nine hymn suggestions for each worship service

Ideas and Images for the Day

Compelling ideas from a wide variety of categories that support and interpret the day's theme in creative, engaging, and interactive ways



Worship Helps for Ash Wednesday

■ Introduction to the Day

To be used as a sermon starter and springboard into the worship service

Ash Wednesday begins the season of Lent and sets the tone and direction for worship on the seven Wednesdays in Lent. It is a solemn service, looking ahead, as it does, to the Passion of Christ and calling followers of Christ into a time of penitence, prayer, and deep reflection on the key themes of Christian faith. In *Book of Faith Lenten Journey*, the theme for Ash Wednesday is taken from the introduction to the Lord's Prayer in both Luke and Matthew: "Lord teach us to pray. . ." and "Pray then in this way. . ."

The preacher might focus on:

- The many times Jesus went alone or with his disciples to places of solitude for prayer.
- The Christian's need and desire to pray.
- The encouragement, the strengthening, and the empowerment that comes from encounters with God in deep, intentional times of prayer.
- "Pray then in this way. . ." is in the imperative, a word of command to people *chosen* to follow Jesus in God's mission.

The theme for the first week in Lent is the first line in the Lord's Prayer: "Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be your name." If the preacher chooses to begin on Ash Wednesday with the Lord's Prayer itself rather than the introductory words, she or he might focus on:

- The importance of reflecting on the little word "our" in "Our Father. . ." It establishes us as members of the family of God, brothers and sisters who never pray this prayer alone, but always in community.
- The significance of the fact that Jesus—and we—call God "Father." What is there about the parent-child relationship that serves as a metaphor for the divine-human relationship?
- How praying to "Our Father *in heaven*" is a warning not to domesticate God. Those words, "in heaven," insist upon the awe and wonder that is appropriate for the creature in the presence of the creator.
- How we hallow God's name in worship, and how we hallow God's name out in the world where we live and work and play.
- How God's name—Yahweh—declares that God is in a way that humans are not, and God should thus be taken with great seriousness.



Prayer of the Day

Use this prayer as the Prayer of the Day.

Holy God, teach us to pray; teach us to come to you at any and all times with confidence, trusting in your love, trusting in your mercy, trusting that your Spirit is guiding us, teaching us, praying for and with us. Lead us in the path of prayer through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, who taught us to pray “Our Father. . .” Amen.

or

Our Father in heaven, teach us to hallow your name in all that we desire, in all that we say, and in all that we do. May our lives be a clear witness to your holiness, through Jesus Christ, in whom we see your holiness in human flesh. Amen.

Use these prayer prompts during the Prayers of Intercession portion of the worship service.

- For this community of faith, that the Spirit who leads God’s people into truth would guide our Lenten journey with our Lord’s Prayer.
- For our community of family and friends, colleagues and coworkers, acquaintances and strangers, that we who journey with Christ might bear Christ among them.
- For all who are sick in body, mind, or spirit (especially those we name in our hearts), that they would know the comforting and healing power of the Holy Spirit.
- For pastors and teachers charged with opening your Word to your people, that they might embody your Word and preach and teach with courage and boldness.

Scripture Readings

Use these readings and reading introductions as the day’s lectionary texts.

ISAIAH 42:1-9

The prophet announces the coming of God’s servant who will “bring forth justice to the nations” and bring both comfort and aid to the downtrodden and oppressed. The church has taken this text as a messianic prophecy pointing to the ministry of Jesus.

PSALM 63:1-8

The psalmist gives voice to the deep desire for God that lives in human hearts and is expressed in worship, prayer, and meditation.

EPHESIANS 4:1-6

The author reminds us that Christian unity and community is grounded in the “one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.”

MATTHEW 7:21-28

The gospel writer reminds us that God’s name is not hallowed by repeating it, but rather is hallowed when we know the will of God and do it.



Hymns for Worship

Become familiar with the selections in your hymnal's Word section. Consider having your congregation learn a new hymn or song celebrating the gift of the Bible that can be sung each week during the time your congregation is engaged in the Book of Faith Lenten Journey study. Consider trying a hymn or song that is different in style from what your congregation is most familiar with.

GATHERING

Father Most Holy ELW 415, LBW 169
Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty ELW 413, LBW 165

HYMN OF THE DAY

Restore in Us, O God ELW 328, WOV 662
Change My Heart, O God ELW 801
Be Thou My Vision ELW 793, WOV 776

OFFERING

Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful ELW 181-184
Accept, O Lord, the Gifts We Bring ELW 691, WOV 759 (only verses 1 & 3 if no Communion)

SENDING

Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service ELW 712, LBW 423
O Sun of Justice WOV 659

Ideas and Images for the Day

Use one or more of these ideas to interpret the day's theme in creative, engaging, interactive, and surprising ways during worship.

PARAPHRASE OF THE LORD'S PRAYER BY ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

(Each week in these Lenten Worship Helps, that portion of St. Francis' paraphrase that corresponds to the petition of the Lord's Prayer that is the focal point of the week will be reproduced here. If you have a projection screen, you could project the prayer for the congregation to read; if not, it could be printed in the bulletin or incorporated in the sermon.)

OUR FATHER most holy,
our Creator and Redeemer,
our Savior and our Comforter.
WHO ART IN HEAVEN
in the angels and the saints,
giving them light to know you,
since you, Lord, are light;
setting them afire to love you,
since you, Lord, are love;
dwelling in them
and giving them fullness of joy,
since you, Lord,



are the supreme, eternal good,
and all good comes from you.
HALLOWED BE THY NAME,
may we grow to know you better and better
and so appreciate the extent of your favors,
the scope of your promises,
the sublimity of your majesty,
and the profundity of your judgments.

<http://www.cwo.com/~pentrack/catholic/francis1.html>

BACKGROUND

The Lord's Prayer from Luther's *Small Catechism*, which could be used as a PowerPoint slide:

<http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/luther/little.book/web/book-3.html>

ARTICLE

An online article by two Lutherans on preaching the Lord's Prayer:

http://www.luthersem.edu/word&world/Archives/10-1_Catechism/10-1_Arnquist-Flessner.pdf

THE LORD'S PRAYER IN OTHER LANGUAGES

A website with the Lord's Prayer in 1442 languages and dialects for those with diverse congregations:

<http://www.christusrex.org/www1/pater/index.html>

DRAMA

A two-person drama that could be done in place of the sermon or to compliment the sermon:

<http://www.users.on.net/~pole/drama/lordsprayer.html>

FOR THOSE WHO PRACTICE THE IMPOSITION OF ASHES

As they make the sign of the cross on the foreheads of their members, worship leaders say "From dust you came, to dust you shall return," or something similar. This year you might say, "From dust you came, to dust you shall return, and from dust you will rise to new life in Christ." In this way, you bring the promise of the Gospel into this reminder of our mortality. Easter is thus prefigured on Ash Wednesday.

ARTWORK IF YOU USE A PROJECTION SCREEN

A traditional presentation of Jesus teaching in the Sermon on the Mount where he taught his disciples to pray the Lord's Prayer: http://www.artrenewal.org/images/artists/D/Dore_Gustave/large/Dore_Gustave_JESUS_PRECHANT_SUR_LA_MONTAGNE.jpg

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

A contemporary African representation of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount:

<http://www.jesusmafa.com/anglais/imag17.htm>

