

# A JOURNEY THROUGH LENT

*Traveling a Lenten journey  
with people in the third third of life*

**Week 4**



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## MONDAY, MARCH 8

How lovely is your dwelling place,

LORD Almighty!

My soul yearns, even faints,

for the courts of the LORD;

my heart and my flesh cry out

for the living God.

Even the sparrow has found a home,

and the swallow a nest for herself,

where she may have her young—

a place near your altar,

LORD Almighty, my King and my God.

Blessed are those who dwell in your house;

they are ever praising you.

Psalm 84:1-4

This week we reach the midpoint of our Lenten journey. While the Ash Wednesday words “repent and believe the gospel” still echo in our ears, this week we hear new words of encouragement from our daily scripture readings:

- God will provide strength for the pilgrimages of our hearts.
- God will direct and protect us as we continue our journey.
- God will gather us when we wander off the path.
- God will quench our thirst and satisfy our hunger.
- God will gift us with love and light as we travel.

We invite you to spend time with these reflection questions as you continue your Lenten journey this week:

- For what blessing(s) are you most grateful right now?
- What poem or hymn captures your sense of gratitude to God?
- If you were to write a thank-you note to God, what would you write?

**Prayer:** O God, thank you for responding to the yearnings of our souls and the cries of our hearts as we travel our journey. Amen.

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## TUESDAY, MARCH 9

Blessed are those whose strength is in you,  
whose hearts are set on pilgrimage.  
As they pass through the Valley of Baka,  
they make it a place of springs;  
the autumn rains also cover it with pools.  
They go from strength to strength,  
till each appears before God in Zion.

Psalm 84:5-7

I am most grateful right now for being blessed to enter a new year with a new zeal for life. My spirit, mind, body, and even my soul have been lifted at various times to the presence of Jesus Christ in my life.

The Lord has been my help. It is essential that I help someone else because of the goodness and mercy that Jesus extended to me.

“He is the source of all my joy without him I would fall. I don’t know what he is to you, but to me he’s my all and all.” (*God Has Smiled on Me*)

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, I give thanks for the joy I have found in serving you. Help me to find ways to share my joy with others. I simply ask for your continued love, mercy, and grace. In the name of Jesus, I pray. Amen.

Bettye Williams Clanton  
Olney Street Baptist Church, Providence

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## WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10

Better is one day in your courts  
than a thousand elsewhere;  
I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God  
than dwell in the tents of the wicked.  
For the LORD God is a sun and shield;  
the LORD bestows favor and honor;  
no good thing does he withhold  
from those whose walk is blameless.

Psalm 84:10-11

Have you ever had one of those days that somehow seems perfect? For me, those days usually don't involve something big happening. Instead, there is a sequence of small things that just fit together.

As I think about such days in my life, I have a sense that what made them different was the eyes with which I saw them. The poet John O'Donohue captures that experience in a blessing he wrote:

May your inner eye  
See through the surfaces  
And glean the real presence  
Of everything that meets you.  
May your soul beautify  
The desire of your eyes  
That you might glimpse  
The infinity that hides  
In the simple sights  
That seem worn  
To your usual eyes.

**Prayer:** Gracious God, may we have days in which our usual eyes glimpse your presence in the life that surrounds us. Amen.

Kathryn Palen  
First Baptist Church in America, Providence

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## THURSDAY, MARCH 11

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;  
his love endures forever.

Let the redeemed of the LORD tell their story—  
those he redeemed from the hand of the foe,  
those he gathered from the lands,  
from east and west, from north and south.

Psalm 107:1-3

What am I most thankful for? Love! Love of family, love for my work, love for justice, love of nature, love for my church, love for my friends of all shapes, species, and colors.

I really believe love is what gets us out of bed each day and helps us to survive and even thrive in these trying times. Even as a child the church message that I always believed was GOD IS LOVE!

When my brother visited a hospital as a minister for the first time, he was asked to speak to a dying man. He was so young and inexperienced. He asked the nun nurse, "What shall I say?" She said, "Tell him of God's love." This he did, and the man smiled his thanks and peacefully died.

**Prayer:** Loving Lord, thank you for showing us the power of love. Your example of love is the greatest teacher. Amen.

Elsa Grieder  
First Baptist Church in America, Providence

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## FRIDAY, MARCH 12

Some wandered in desert wastelands,  
finding no way to a city where they could settle.  
They were hungry and thirsty,  
and their lives ebbed away.  
Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble,  
and he delivered them from their distress.  
He led them by a straight way  
to a city where they could settle.

Psalm 107:4-7

“I know not why God’s wondrous grace to me he hath made known; nor why, unworthy, Christ in love redeemed me for his own. But I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”

I am so thankful for Christ’s love and for his protection for me as I commit myself to him. He is keeping me in his grace till I “walk the vale with him or met him in the air.”

**Prayer:** Blessed Yehoshuah, thank you for protecting what I have committed to you, for your forgiveness and mercy when I fall short, for your love and grace that bring peace into my heart. Amen.

Donna Sherman  
Warwick Central Baptist Church, Warwick

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## SATURDAY, MARCH 13

Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love  
and his wonderful deeds for mankind,  
for he satisfies the thirsty  
and fills the hungry with good things.

Psalm 107:8-9

Sometimes new words help us hear ancient texts in ways that speak to our hearts—new words such as these from Wendell Kimbrough’s song *Oh Give Thanks*:

We were wand’ring in the desert with our souls so starved and weak.  
We were hungry for a homeland we did not know how to seek.  
But we lifted up our voices to the only One who hears;  
And the God of mercy came and brought us near.

Oh give thanks to the LORD for His love endures forever!  
We were wandering and lost, and our Father brought us home,  
To a safe dwelling place, to a feast of joy and laughter.  
Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good!

We were fools in our rebellion, with our hunger strike of pride.  
We were sick and growing closer to the death we should have died.  
Then he heard of our condition, and he called us by our names;  
And the God of glory took away our shame.

*What new words might you write or speak or sing as you reflect on the ancient words of the psalmist?*

**Prayer:** O God, we give thanks that your love endures forever.  
When we were wandering and lost, you brought us home to a safe dwelling place and a feast of joy and laughter. O God, we give thanks for you are good. Amen.

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## FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT, MARCH 14

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.

John 3:16-21

Although some winter days are cold, dark, and bleak, there is still beauty to behold in the peace and quiet of falling snow, the dazzling beauty of ice-covered trees, and the sunlit sparkle of new-fallen snow.

As the season progresses, the daylight hours lengthen and there is the anticipation of the promise of spring. One of my favorite hymns, *Hymn of Promise*, has beautiful verses about the mysteries of nature and life that remain “unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.”

**Prayer:** Thank you, Lord, for spring that follows winter, for butterflies from cocoons, for bulbs and seeds, day and night, and the “promise” of eternal life in our resurrection. Amen.

Dee Kolb  
Oak Lawn Community Baptist Church, Cranston

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