

Embracing the Uncertain: A Video Lenten Devotional

This handout supplements a daily Lenten devotional that is available to watch on:

- Friendship Haven channel 16 each day at 3:15pm and 6:30pm
- Facebook page of “First Presbyterian Church Fort Dodge” each day at 9:00am
- website: fpcfd.org/lent
- podcast “The Light is Still On,” a podcast from First Presbyterian Church.

Use these Scripture passages and reflection questions to gain a fuller Lenten experience.

Ash Wednesday 2-17. You Shouldn’t Stay and Shouldn’t Go Now. Mark 9:2-13. “Forty Days and Forty Nights” verse 1. Reflection: In what ways are you fixated on your past, either reliving past hurts or clinging to past achievements?

Thursday 2-18. Prayer is Simple but Not Easy. Matthew 17:14-21, Mark 9:14-29, Luke 9:37-43. “Forty Days and Forty Nights” verse 2. Reflection: When have you ever struggled with your prayer life? What do you think happens when you pray?

Friday 2-19. The Best Worst Advice Ever. Matthew 17:22-23, Mark 9:30-32, Luke 9:43-45. “Forty Days and Forty Nights” verse 3. Reflection: What is the best advice you ever received from someone, only to understand and appreciate it more fully in retrospect?

(Saturday 2-20.)

Sunday 2-21 Temple Taxes and Fishy Coins. Matthew 17:24-27. “Forty Days and Forty Nights” verse 4. Reflection: Have you ever developed friendships with people whose faith is different from yours? Not just different denominations of Christian traditions, but people of other religions? If not, what has prevented you from doing so? If so, what have been the benefits and challenges?

Monday 2-22. Who Is The Greatest? Matthew 18:1-5, Mark 9:33-37, Luke 9:46-50. “Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days” verse 1. Reflection: When are you most prone to squabbling with other Christians and missing something glorious that God is doing?

Tuesday 2-23. Draw the Circle Wider. Matthew 18:6-9, Mark 9:38-48, Luke 9:49-50. “Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days” verse 2. Reflection: When was there a time in your life when your opinion of a person improved as you got to know the person better? How might God be calling you to tear down walls of prejudice in your relationships with other people?

Wednesday 2-24. Really? Rain Down Fire? Luke 9:51-62, John 7:2-11. “Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days” verse 3. Reflection: What difference does it make for you to remember that Jesus died willingly, for you?

Thursday 2-25. Traveling Lightly. Luke 10:1-24. “Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days” verse 4. Reflection: What baggage are you carrying today? What do you think God is doing to strengthen and empower you to let go of that baggage?

Friday 2-26. Drawing Near. Luke 10:25-37. “What Wondrous Love Is This” verse 1. Reflection: What difference would it make to see people who are different from you as children of God, just like you?

(Saturday 2-27.)

Sunday 2-28. Goofus and Gallant. Luke 10:38-42 “What Wondrous Love Is This” verse 2. Reflection: In what way are you prone to pray like Martha? What can you start doing differently in order to pray like Mary?

Monday 3-1. The Way to Pray. Luke 11:1-13. “What Wondrous Love Is This” verse 3. Reflection: Do you know the Lord’s Prayer by heart? When have you ever recited it during a moment when it had deep significance to you?

Tuesday 3-2. Two Sides of the Same Soul. John 7:14-8:59. “The Glory of These Forty Days” verse 1. Reflection: Which character do you identify with the most in this story? When have you ever been like the Pharisees? When have you been like the woman?

Wednesday 3-3. Beyond Cause and Effect. John 9:1-41. “The Glory of These Forty Days” verse 2. Reflection: When have you struggled over the nature of suffering and evil in your life and in the world? How might you begin to look for God’s presence and power in the midst of your suffering?

Thursday 3-4. The Better-than-Good Shepherd. John 10:1-42. “The Glory of These Forty Days” verse 3. Reflection: In what ways are you struggling to hear God’s voice today? What changed can you make in the way you listen to God and must all the other voices in your world?

Friday 3-5. The Central Conflict. John 11:47-54. “The Glory of These Forty Days” verse 4. Reflection: In what way can you identify with the chief priests and the Pharisees? What parts of your life fall short of God’s ideal for you yet are part of your comfortable pattern of living?

(Saturday 3-6.)

Sunday 3-7. When Jesus Does the Calling. Luke 13:10-17. “How Firm a Foundation” verse 1. Reflection: In what ways is Jesus calling you to come over to him? What do you think Jesus is trying to tell you?

Monday 3-8. The Fox and the Hen. Luke 13:18-35. “How Firm a Foundation” verse 2. Reflection: What conflicts in your life might be considered mere distractions from what is most important? How might you go about resolving those conflicts, in order to stick to the mission of what God wants you to do?

Tuesday 3-9. True Humility. Luke 14:1-35. “How Firm a Foundation” verse 3. Reflection: Think about the fact that Jesus and a leader of the Pharisees had dinner together. How might that encourage you to build bridges of common understanding with someone with whom you disagree?

Wednesday 3-10. Unusual, Unconditional Love. Luke 15:1-16:18. “How Firm a Foundation” verse 4. Reflection: Is there anything about God’s love for you that you find too hard to understand, accept, or believe? What can help you grow in your appreciation of God’s love?

Thursday 3-11. The Parable of the Five Brothers. Luke 16:19-31. “I’ve Got Peace Like a River” verse 1. Reflection: What is your idea of heaven and hell? How important is it for you to have certainty about what will happen after you die?

Friday 3-12. Forgiveness and Faith. Luke 17:1-10. “I’ve Got Peace Like a River” verse 2. Reflection: What steps can you take today to release that mustard seed of faith and forgiveness and allow God to help rebuild your relationships?

(Saturday 3-13.)

Sunday 3-14. The Key to Deeper Healing. Luke 17:11-19. “I’ve Got Peace Like a River” verse 3. Reflection: What are the deeper ways that you need healing in your emotions, your mind, and your spirit?

Monday 3-15. Closer Than You Think. Luke 17:20-37. “My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less” verse 1. Reflection: In what ways do you feel like your life is filled with darkness today? What can you do to surrender yourself to God and allow Jesus to lead you through that darkness?

Tuesday 3-16. No Wimpy Prayers. Luke 18:1-14. “My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less” verse 2. Reflection: In what ways are you like the persistent widow? How would you like to be even more like her?

Wednesday 3-17. The Upside-Down Kingdom. Matthew 19:13-15, Mark 10:13-16, Luke 18:15-17. “My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less” verse 3. Reflection: Have you ever witnessed children relegated to the bottom of the power structure in your community?

Thursday 3-18. More Than Riches. Matthew 19:16-22, Mark 10:17-22, Luke 18:18-23. “My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less” verse 4. Reflection: What people have you known whose contentment and happiness was centered on something other than wealth and possessions? How is God calling you to simplify your life of excess?

Friday 3-19. The Economics of Grace. Matthew 20:1-16. “Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed” verse 1. Reflection: How do you identify with the late-arriving workers? How do you identify with the early-arriving workers?

(Saturday 3-20.)

Sunday 3-21. Spelling Servanthood. Matthew 20:20-28, Mark 10:35-45) “Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed” verse 2. Reflection: What different do you think it would make it more people in the world assumed a servant’s mindset?

Monday 3-22. An Encounter Between Royalty. Matthew 20:29-34, Mark 10:46-50, Luke 18:35-43. “Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed” verse 3. Reflection: What different does it make for you to remember that you are a child of God, offspring of honor?

Tuesday 3-23. Don’t Bury Your Calling. Matthew 25:14-30, Mark 13:33-37, Luke 19:11-28. “Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed” verse 4. Reflection: What do you think about the notion that God is entrusting you with such an important responsibility to help build the Kingdom?

Wednesday 3-24. Team Mary or Team Judas? John 12:1-8. “Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive” verse 1. Reflection: In what ways are you like Mary in this story? How are you like Judas?

Thursday 3-25. Committing Worship Theft. Matthew 21:12-14, Mark 11:11, Luke 19:45-48. “Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive” verse 2. Reflection: What do you tend to make the object of your worship instead of God?

Friday 3-26. The Fruitless Fig Tree. Matthew 21:18-27. “Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive” verse 3. Reflection: What fig trees are you facing in your life today? What is God calling you to do to remove those unfruitful parts of your life and begin to bear fruit?

(Saturday 3-27.)

Palm Sunday 3-28. Shrieking Stones. Matthew 21:1-11, Mark 11:1-11, Luke 19:29-44, John 12:12-19. “Hosanna, Loud Hosanna” verse 3. Reflection: As you enter this Holy Week, what risk is God calling you to take for the benefit of others?

HOLY WEEK:

Monday 3-29. Stories of Tough Love. Matthew 21:28-22:14. “In the Cross of Christ I Glory” verse 1. Reflection: Which of these three parables do you resonate with the most today?

Tuesday 3-30. Rethinking Power. Matthew 26:6-16, Mark 14:3-11. “In the Cross of Christ I Glory” verse 2. Reflection: How difficult is it to think of God’s power in this way? What difference would it make for you to do so?

Wednesday 3-31. The Silver and the Ointment. Matthew 26:6-16, Mark 14:3-11. “In the Cross of Christ I Glory” verse 3. Reflection: How are you most prone to acting like Judas? How might God be calling you to give your full commitment to Jesus?

Maundy Thursday 4-1. Four Important Verbs. Matthew 26:17-30, Mark 14:12-25, Luke 22:7-20, John 13:1-17. “Be Known To Us in Breaking Bread” verses 1 & 2. Reflection: Think about each of these four important words (taken, blessed, broken, given). When have there been times in your life when you could identify with each other?

Good Friday 4-2. A Tale of Two Bowls. Matthew 26:1-27:56, Mark 14:1-15:41, Luke 22:1-23:49, John 19:38-42. “O Sacred Head, Now Wounded” verse 2. Reflection: When was there a time in your life when your guilt over a past action felt like a stain you could not scrub away?

Holy Saturday 4-3. God Already at Work. Matthew 37:57-61, Mark 15:42-47, Luke 23:50-56, John 19:38-42. “O Sacred Head, Now Wounded” verse 3. Reflection: What are the top lessons you have discovered throughout these last forty days of this Lenten journey? What are you hoping to experience on Easter Sunday tomorrow?

Easter Sunday 4-4. Act Free! Matthew 28:1-20. “Jesus Christ Is Risen Today” verses 1 & 4. Reflection: In what way has this journey of Lent and Easter offered you surprising good news? What difference will the good news of Easter make in your life today and in days to come?

Created by Chaplain Jennifer Owen, Pastor Sara Hill, and Gabriel Alves. Filmed by Mary Alves.
Inspired by the book *Embracing the Uncertain: 40 Devotions for Unsteady Times* by Magrey R. DeVega