
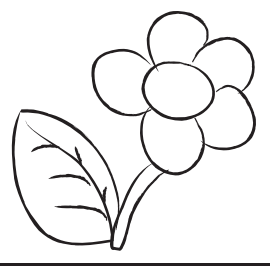


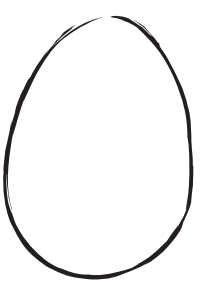




# Fridge Faith for Families during Lent

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	
<b>February</b>	<p>The day before Lent commences is often know as Shrove Tuesday or Pancake Day. On this day we often eat pancakes, YUM. This comes from an old English tradition, before Lent the family would use up all their eggs and milk, so that they could more easily fast during Lent.</p> <p>Are your church/school/family celebrating Pancake day? Why not check out: <a href="http://www.pancakeday.com.au">www.pancakeday.com.au</a></p>	<p><b>17th</b> <b>Ash Wednesday</b> On Ash Wednesday, people sometimes have a cross made of ash marked on their forehead. This is a way of saying sorry to God and seeking God's forgiveness.</p> <p>Lent Starts Today! Lent is 40 days long, but doesn't include Sundays as that is when we celebrate God. Can you count through the 40 days?</p>	<p><b>18th</b></p> <p><b>celebrate</b></p>	<p><b>19th</b></p>	<p><b>20th</b></p> <p>People sometimes give up something during Lent... can you think why this might be? Why not ask people at church if they are giving anything up and why. Have you decided to give up something? What is it:</p> <hr/>	<p><b>21st</b></p> 	
	<p><b>22nd</b></p> <p>Have you thought about planting a winter garden for Lent. What are some things that you could plant? What would grow at this time in autumn?</p> <p>The word Lent comes from an old English saying: to lengthen. This refers to Spring which is happening now in the northern hemisphere. What words can you think of to describe autumn and winter?</p>	<p><b>23rd</b></p> 	<p><b>24th</b></p>	<p><b>25th</b></p> <p>The colour that is used in church during Lent is purple.</p> <p>Find a friend, each get a piece of paper and a pen and try to think of as many purple things as you can... don't peek at the other persons list!</p> <p>Then see who has the most, I'll help you get started: Cadbury's Chocolate, Irises (flowers)...</p>	<p><b>26th</b></p>	<p><b>27th</b></p> <p>People give each other eggs at Easter, these symbolise new life and hope. Some people decorate their eggs, what decorations would you put on an egg at Easter? You might like to practice on our row of eggs.</p>	<p><b>28th</b></p> <p><b>THANK YOU Prayer</b> Who are two people you would like to thank God for?</p> <p>Take time to thank God for people who make a difference in your life.</p>
<b>March</b>	<p><b>1st</b></p>	<p><b>2nd</b></p> <p><b>40 days:</b> 40 is considered to be a significant number in the Jewish-Christian Scripture. The flood that destroyed the earth occurred over 40 days and nights of rain (Genesis 7: 4), the Israelites spend 40 years in the wilderness before reaching the promised land (Exodus 16:35), Moses fasted for 40 days before receiving the 10 Commandments (Exodus 24: 18) and Jesus spend 40 days fasting in the wilderness in preparation for his ministry (Luke 4: 1—14).</p> <p>These 40 days are central to our Lent experience. Lent for many of us is a time to prepare for Easter and to think about God, it is a time for giving up and doing things for others.</p>	<p><b>3rd</b></p>	<p><b>4th</b></p>	<p><b>5th</b></p> <p>Have you heard of a Grace Cube? If not and you want a different way to say grace as a family during Lent, why not download the grace cube from the web and give it a go, it is fun and easy to use: <a href="http://nsw.uca.org.au/boe/children/lent">http://nsw.uca.org.au/boe/children/lent</a></p>	<p><b>6th</b></p> <p><b>Thank you</b></p>	<p><b>7th</b></p> <p><b>THANK YOU Prayer</b> Share three things that you are thankful for today?</p>
	<p><b>8th</b></p>	<p><b>9th</b></p> <p>Lent lasts 40 days and started on 17th Feb but doesn't include Sundays, because that is when we always celebrate God.</p> <p>Can you count the 40 days?</p>	<p><b>10th</b></p>	<p><b>11th</b></p> <p>Did you know that in Ethiopia during Lent Christians don't eat or buy any animal products like meat, butter, milk, eggs, etc...</p> <p>Can you find Ethiopia on a Map of the World?</p>	<p><b>12th</b></p>	<p><b>13th</b></p>	<p><b>14th</b></p> 
<p><b>15th</b></p> 	<p><b>16th</b></p>	<p><b>17th</b></p> <p>At Easter we often give chocolate eggs to each other. Long long ago eggs and chickens were seen as signs of new life. Christians also associate the egg with the tomb that Jesus was put in once he died, that is why Easter eggs are often empty - this is a sign that Jesus is risen.</p>	<p><b>18th</b></p> 	<p><b>19th</b></p> 	<p><b>20th</b></p> <p><b>What is something that you could do as a family together this weekend: have a picnic, go out to dinner, visit your Grandparents, etc.</b></p> <p><b>Why not have some special family time together to laugh, play and share...</b></p>	<p><b>21th</b></p>	
<p><b>22th</b></p> <p>SORRY Prayer: God hears us when we are hurt and when we hurt others. Are there things that you did last week that you are sorry about?</p> <p>Or are there things in the world that you are sad about? Talk to God about these and you will find comfort and peace.</p>	<p><b>23th</b></p> <p><b>Sorry</b></p>	<p><b>25th</b></p>	<p><b>26th</b></p> <p><b>What is something that you could do to help out someone else this week?</b></p>	<p><b>27th</b></p>	<p><b>28th</b></p> <p><b>Palm Sunday</b> On this day we remember how Jesus entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey. It is called Palm Sunday because people were so happy to see Jesus that they lined the streets with palm branches and waved them in the air.</p> <p>To read this yourself go to: Luke 19: 28-38</p>		
<p><b>29th</b></p>	<p><b>30th</b></p> <p><b>Just for Fun</b> How many words can you make out the words <b>Lent</b> and <b>Easter</b>?</p> <p><b>LENT EASTER</b> For example: East, Tea, Tease...</p>	<p><b>31th</b></p> 	<p><b>1st April</b></p> <p><b>Maundy Thursday</b> This day in the calendar represents the day that Jesus had his last meal with his friends. This meal is called the Last Supper. Before the meal Jesus washed his disciples feet, this demonstrated that it is important to help and serve others. Normally this task was that of the lowest servant in the house, as people had pretty dirty feet in those days!</p> <p>What have you done this week to help or serve someone else?</p>	<p><b>2nd</b></p> <p><b>Good Friday</b></p>	<p><b>3rd</b></p> <p><b>celebrate Gods love together</b></p>	<p><b>4th</b></p> <p><b>Easter Sunday</b></p>	

## Fridge Faith for Families: Why?

For many families the fridge is the central place in the house, what better place then to place a resource that will engage the whole family during Lent. Lent is a season in the church calendar that many leaders, parents, guardians and other adults find difficult to approach with children, it is a time many of us feel is for 'doing' rather than talking about. I read an interesting article by Matushka Nadia Koblosh recently online and she said:

"Lent is a time to concentrate on life, on being human. Thus my struggle - with myself and my children - is to keep Lent from degenerating into something silly and petty - such as simply giving up candy or movies. The struggle is to cultivate and understand the revelation that there is something deeply wrong and sad about human life; that there is evil in the world and that this evil, subtle as it is, often enters into our hearts and minds; that we sin and are disobedient to God...

To love God, just to learn to love God and understand and rejoice in God's Word; to stand before God with humility - like the Publican in the Temple; to be tender-hearted and sensitive toward others and their sufferings; to understand that life is meaningless without Christ: this I think is part of the essence of Lent and what I strive to instil in my children."

Reading this article I was inspired to take some time to pull together a resource that would assist adults working with children to really explore the message of Easter appropriately with children. So, Bec Wilson from the Victorian Tasmania Synod and myself have brought to you Experience Lent – a time for action with children. Bec has written a great resource for worship and I have pulled together this Fridge Faith Calendar for Families During Lent.

I hope that this Calendar will assist families in exploring Lenten traditions that they can conceivably fit into their already hectic schedules in a way that brings Christ closer and more deeply into family life. On this side of the calendar are ideas you can take up, explore, change, toss around together as a family and will ultimately give you some ideas for how to explore this time of Lent together.

**Meg Everard**  
Ministry and Mission with Children and their Families  
Board of Education, NSW Synod, Uniting Church in Australia

## Story Ideas for Bedtime, for Anytime

Children love a bedtime story, and as many as possible (probably because it delays the actual having to go to sleep time!), but whatever the reason, children love to hear stories and from this grows imagination and much much more. Here are some ideas for books that you can find at your local library or you local bookstore, that explore some of the themes for Lent: hope, loss, friendship, loyalty, trust, etc...



### Older Primary

**The Lost thing:** Shaun Tan

This is a story about a young boy who finds a lost thing, it is about his journey to find a place for the lost thing. It is a story about identity, place, and finding yourself.

**The Red Tree:** Shaun Tan

This is a story about depression, being lost, losing oneself and then finding it again. Children will enjoy looking at the pictures and finding the red leaf that is on each page - a message that even in our darkest times there is hope.

**Fox:** Margaret Wild

This story is about betrayal and friendship, it has some dark themes but is a great discussion point with older primary.

### Younger (+older) Primary

**The Rainbow Fish:** Marcus Pfister

A lovely story about friendship and sharing.

**The Tale of Three Trees:** by Angela Elwell Hunt

This story explores the journeys of three trees, their hopes for their lives and then the reality as one become the cradle for the baby Jesus, another the boat that Jesus is on with the disciples and then the cross on which Jesus is crucified. A terrific story for all ages.

**The Tin Forest:** Helen Ward

This story is one of hope, an old man hopes for a different life, through imagination, hard work and wishes he achieves what he had dreamed of. This story can easily be linked to prayer.

\*For more story ideas go to:  
<http://nsw.uca.org.au/boe/children/resources/books>

## Creative Families

As a family you could make a HUGE paper Mache Easter egg. Take a Balloon, blow it up and tie it off, then using Clag glue and newspaper strips cover the balloon. Let this dry and then add another layer or two – until it is strong. When the glue is dry insert a pin to pop the balloon within the paper Mache.

As a family you can then paint your egg any way you choose, or stick photos and pictures on it of meaningful things to your family. Then get Mum or Dad to either cut your HUGE egg in half or make a biggish slit in the top.

Over the weeks as we move towards Easter, you and your family can pop into the EGG – notes, letters to each other, prayers, chocolate, treats, money for others in the world - Whatever you choose.

And then crack open your egg on Easter Day for a FABULOUS treat!



## Living Simply During Lent

During Lent many families choose to give up something and contribute the money that would have been spent on this item to a charity organisation. To give to others who have basic needs for food and shelter in our world. For other families they choose to live more simply and commit a certain amount of money that they feel they can give at this time. This can involve the whole house, and can be something that you plan together as a family.

### Some ideas and suggestions:

**Garden:** Water only with the watering can. Let the lawn grow a little longer and therefore don't mow it as often, or use a people powered mower not a petrol/electric mower.

Mulch your garden so you don't need to water as much. Put in a winter vegetable garden to supplement your bought vegetables. Growing a vegetable patch at Lent with children can be a great way of exploring growth, life and the need for weeding!



**Lights:** Don't turn lights on in the house unless they are really needed. Change all your bulbs to eco bulbs and save some money.

**Lounge:** Don't automatically turn the television on when you get home. Work through the television guide together as a family and work out how many hours you will watch that week and what programs they will be.

Watch the news together on the television and discuss as a family, if you don't know where a country is in the world, get out the atlas and look it up together.

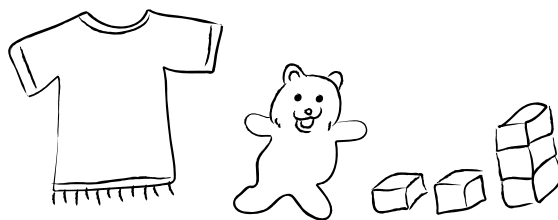
**Kitchen:** Think before you open the fridge door, think: what do I want, where will it be. Every time we stand at the fridge door with the door open we waste electricity. Use your dishwasher on economy wash during Lent.

Eat a vegetarian meal once a week, eating vegetarian can be cheaper than eating meat at each meal. Find recipes from around the globe and whilst you eat your meal, discuss what you think other families might be doing around the world.

Do you have a pantry full of food? If so, take some of your tinned food, pasta, etc... to your local charity organisation and contribute this to people who are hungry - call first to find out what their needs are. Perhaps when shopping for the family one week, choose to contribute what you spend on groceries to a charity organisation.

**Bedrooms:** Look through your wardrobe, are there any clothes you don't really need or don't fit you anymore? Bundle them up and send them to your local op-shop.

Do your children have a toy that they would be willing to give to another child so that they can have toys? If so, contact your local care facility and ask them to pass on the toys to a family in need.



**Bathroom:** Does your toilet have a half flush? If not, fill a small water bottle and place this in your cistern, you will use a lot less water this way.

Have an egg timer or some other system so that everyone has to take shorter showers. Don't run the water whilst brushing your teeth. Again, only turn the light on if you really need it on. Think about each room/place in your house and as a family think of some ways that you can live more simply...

## Grace/Meal time blessings for families

Many families these days find it difficult to sit together at the dining table for a meal; there are television shows to watch, mum or dad might have to work late, the children have commitments, things are busy. Why not during Lent make the commitment to have one meal together at the dining table each week.

During this time talk together as a family of your concerns, things you are thankful for and things you want to praise God for. Perhaps you might like to use the following liturgy:

**Materials:** Bowl for the center of the dining table, tea light candle for each member of the family.

You might like to change your leader each week and let each member of the family have a go at reading the passage.

### A Time for Togetherness

**Week 1.** As a family talk about things that are important in your lives, what would be difficult to do without? Electricity? Gas? Flour? What things could you give up that would make a difference in your lives? What could you give up that would save money that you could contribute to the lives of others?

If you choose to, decide as a family on what you might give up for Lent, you might decide individually OR you might as a family decide to give up something together.

**Leader: Together we gather to share a meal, just as Jesus did with his friends and followers before he died. Together we gather around this bowl, an empty space that we will fill with our gifts over the next 40 days. Tonight we each light a candle and commit ourselves to giving up \_\_\_\_ over this time of Lent. Help us in this pledge. Amen.**

Each member of the family might like to light a candle and put it in a ring around the bowl.

**Week 2.** Talk about how you are going with what you have given up – is it more difficult than you thought, how does it feel. Place the amount of money that you think your giving-up raised in the bowl and reflect on how this money might help others. Who would you choose to help? People in your town struggling or people in Africa struggling?

**Leader: Together we gather to share a meal, just as Jesus did with his friends and followers before he died. Together we gather around this bowl, which holds our gifts for your people this week. We pray that this money will help others... (members of the family might like to pray for people around the world or at home who need help, lighting a candle as they do so).**

**Tonight we each light a candle and commit ourselves to giving up \_\_\_\_ over this time of Lent. Help us in this pledge. Amen.**

**Week 3.** Read Psalm 95 together, verse by verse and talk about what the words mean to you as you eat your meal. Do they make you think of poems, books, songs you have heard? Place the money that you have raised this week in the bowl.

**Leader: Together we gather to share a meal, just as Jesus did with his friends and followers before he died. Together we gather around this bowl, which holds our gifts for your people this week.**

**We pray that this money will help others, and that through our giving they might sing and make a joyful noise to God. That they will come into your presence and know you. We commit ourselves to giving up \_\_\_\_ over this time of Lent. Help us in this pledge. Amen.**

**Week 4.** The Psalm reading this week is a well known reading, Psalm 23. As a family read this together and reflect on what the images mean to you. Let the children talk about what they think and feel when they read the words.

**Leader: Together we gather to share a meal, just as Jesus did with his friends and followers before he died. Together we gather around this bowl, which holds our gifts for your people this week. We pray that this money will help others, and that through our giving they might know you as their Shepherd. We commit ourselves to giving up \_\_\_\_ over this time of Lent. Help us in this pledge. Amen.**

**Week 5.** All that has been given up is nearing the end. How has it felt to give up something as a family and to gather together intentionally each week to have some faith time? What have been the positives and what have been the negatives? How do you think your efforts will have helped others?

**Leader: Together we gather to share a meal, just as Jesus did with his friends and followers before he died. Together we gather around this bowl, which holds our gifts for your people. We thank you for this opportunity to give to others, to make their lives a little easier by our giving. Help us to continue to give in your name and to think of others in our everyday. Amen.**

**Week 6 - Holy Week.** Talk together about the things that you love about your family, what you like about each other and why. Talk about ways that you can work together to share in family time in the following months and enjoy each others company. What is special about your family?

**Leader: Together we gather to share a meal, as a family that laughs together, shares together and loves each other. We thank you for our family and for the experiences that we have shared throughout Lent. Help us to continue to listen to each other, to think of others and to share. Amen.**

\*any of the 'Leader' statements above can be changed, reworded, etc... use as you see fits your family best.

