



February: Ash Wednesday and Lent

Note for parents: This lesson is meant to be broken apart and used as time permits throughout the month.

Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent each year. Lent is the season leading up to Easter, just as Advent was the time before Christmas. It is meant to be a time of preparation. The 40 days of Lent (not counting Sundays) mirror the time Jesus spent in the wilderness. Jesus prepared for his ministry with the disciples, so we prepare to meet him at the cross on Easter Sunday.

Matthew 4:1-11

Jesus in the Wilderness

Read the story from the Bible or Children's Bible Story Book, or watch it [online](#).

What do you think about when you hear the word "wilderness"? What is the wilderness like? Jesus was glad to go to the wilderness because he could spend time with God there. Look [online](#) for pictures of the Arizona desert wilderness in bloom.

Jesus used the wilderness time to fast (not eat much) and pray as he prepared for his work with the disciples. What do you do to get ready for work or school? Reading the Bible helps us prepare to do God's work in the world today. Make time to read the Bible and pray during Lent.

Read Psalm 8. It begins and ends with the same words of praise — "O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!" Think about the majestic, wonderful world that God made. What do you especially like? What words or pictures would you use to thank God? Write your own psalm of praise or draw a picture.

While Jesus was in the wilderness he was tempted by the devil three times. What tempts you? Divide a piece of paper in half. On one side, draw pictures or make a collage of things that keep you from being closer to God. On the other side, draw pictures or make a collage of things you could do to grow closer to God.

Help your family do good in the world! Collect food for the *Souper Bowl of Caring* canned food drive at church. Or save money during Lent to purchase a gift for Presbyterian mission around the world.

Learn what pretzels have to do with Lent. Try making pretzels at home.

Get out your family calendar. Mark/countdown the 40 days of Lent (not including Sundays). When is Easter Sunday? No fooling!

Thank God for quiet time together. Ask God to teach you something during Lent.