

2026 Lenten Guide



This Lent, we invite you to join us on a 40-day journey of reflection, prayer, and action. Each week, we'll focus on a different theme, guiding you to connect your faith with the work of justice in the world. Through scripture, reflection prompts, short prayers, and simple ways to take action, you'll have the opportunity to name the injustices that move your heart, hold them in prayer, and take meaningful steps toward change. Embrace this journey, and let your faith inspire both reflection and action throughout the season.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Week Theme: Introduction						
		<p>February 18 Read Joel 2:1-2, 12-17. Consider God's call to return, repent, and be renewed. As you read, reflect on how this season invites you to turn toward God and open your heart to both personal transformation and the work of justice in the world.</p>	<p>19 This Lenten Season write down 1 injustice that you feel called to hold in prayer this season. Carry this injustice with you as we journey through the coming weeks – returning to it in prayer, reflection, and action as we focus on various themes this Lent.</p>	<p>20 Commit to engaging with this Lenten calendar throughout the season, in ways that are meaningful and manageable for you. Share it with at least one person in your network and invite them to journey through Lent alongside you.</p>	<p>21 Prayer: God of justice and mercy, give me courage to see, name, and act against [insert injustice]. Open my heart to your truth, guide my hands to your work, and help me bring hope, healing, and love into the world. Amen.</p>	<p>22 Music keeps us connected to each other and our faith. Each Sunday, we offer a different arrangement of the Council's hymn, "God of the Movements and Martyrs," composed by David Lamotte. This First Sunday of Lent, listen to the anthem version arranged by Wil Smith.</p>

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
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Week Theme: Mental Well-Being

<p>February 23 Read John 3:1-17. Consider Nicodemus' honest struggle to understand Jesus' words about new life. Reflect on how we all need compassion, healing, and support in our physical, mental, and spiritual lives, and how our communities can embody that grace.</p>	<p>24 As of March 2025, 97 of North Carolina's 100 counties are designated as health professional shortage areas for mental health while more than 1.4 million people in N.C. have a mental health challenge. (NCDHHS & NAMI). These statistics show that mental well-being is a structural crisis. What efforts can we make for our community?</p>	<p>25 Mental well-being profoundly impacts our lives. The fact sheet shows that there are significant mental health challenges within North Carolina.</p> <p>Let's recognize that mental well-being is not confined to individuals and families, but is an issue of crucial social importance.</p>	<p>26 Reach out intentionally to one person this week to check in on their mental well-being - by text, call, or conversation, and listen without trying to fix anything. Mental well-being is sustained in community, and showing up for one another reminds us that healing and hope are not meant to be carried alone.</p>	<p>27 Learn about the Council's Abundant Life Study toolkit and share it with friends, family, and community members. Check in with those who may be struggling and listen without judgment. Reduce stigma by openly talking about mental well-being and supporting policies that promote emotional well-being.</p>	<p>28 Prayer: God of compassion, you know the burdens on our hearts. Help us care for ourselves and those who struggle, offering patience and hope. Guide us to speak comfort, act with empathy, and build communities of healing and support. Amen.</p>	<p>March 1</p> <p>Second Sunday of Lent Listen to the folk version of "God of the Movements and Martyrs," arranged by Zach Light-Wells.</p>
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Week Theme: Farmworkers

<p>2 Read Exodus 17:1-7. The Israelites cry out for water in the wilderness – God hears and provides. As you read, reflect on those who labor under difficult conditions, those who struggle to put enough food on the table, and those who don't have clean drinking water. Pray for fair treatment and an equitable sharing of the earth's resources.</p>	<p>3 What are you eating today? Try to recall three agricultural products used in your meal. Let's reflect on whose labor made this food possible. North Carolina is one of the states in the U.S. that employs the most H2A workers. Learn more about H2A workers here.</p>	<p>4 What does the Bible say about farmworkers? Let's examine Christian Scriptures and Farmworkers and reflect on how we, consumers, have perceived them. Based on the perspective offered by the Scriptures, reflect on how we can transform our approach and understanding.</p>	<p>5 Take one step to support farmworkers today: purchase fair or ethically sourced food, donate to or follow a farmworker-led organization, or contact an elected official about FW protections. FW justice is built through collective action, and when communities act together, dignity and safety become possible.</p>	<p>6 How can we actively stand in solidarity with migrant workers in our daily lives? North Carolina has many organizations dedicated to advocating for workers' rights. Check the following links and discover your place in supporting them in your life. : Farmworker Advocacy Network(FAN) / Farmworker Unit</p>	<p>7 Prayer: Creator of all, bless those who bring food to our tables in unfair conditions. Grant them safety, dignity, and justice, and stir in us the courage to advocate for fair treatment and wages. May our actions reflect gratitude and solidarity. Amen.</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Third Sunday of Lent Listen to the banjo/traditional version of "God of the Movements and Martyrs" arranged by Joe Newberry.</p>
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MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Week Theme: Creation Care						
<p>March 9 Read John 9:1-41. Jesus heals the man born blind, opening his eyes to God's work. As you read, ask God to help you see creation and communities with clear eyes and a just heart, caring for the earth and vulnerable neighbors.</p>	<p>10 The climate crisis is an immediate threat we are currently facing. Read the Council's bulletin on the climate crisis and examine what the Bible says about our responsibility for nature and how the world, beyond our immediate surroundings, is being affected by it.</p>	<p>11 The climate crisis is not a distant issue. North Carolina is a region where the climate crisis is clearly evident. Learn more about how climate change impacts North Carolina by exploring the data published by experts from North Carolina State University: link (1), link (2)</p>	<p>12 Write and send a card urging your state or congressional representatives to protect God's creation. Use this as a shared act of care - make or buy a card, involve family or friends, and remind our leaders that caring for the earth is a responsibility we hold together as a community.</p>	<p>13 Although we have built societies within the world God has given us, we sometimes become so subservient to them that we fail to truly see the nature God has provided. Take some time to immerse yourself in nature without your phone and listen attentively to the sounds around you. How is God's creation speaking to you?</p>	<p>14 Prayer: God of all creation, you have entrusted the earth to our care. Teach us to protect land, water, and air, and to act justly for communities harmed by environmental degradation. May our choices honor your creation and nurture hope for generations to come. Amen.</p>	<p>15 Fourth Sunday of Lent Listen to "God of the Movements and Martyrs," arranged by David Wilcox.</p>
Week Theme: Economic Justice						
<p>16 Read Ezekiel 37:1-14. Reflect on how economic hardship can leave individuals and communities feeling worn down, exhausted, and without hope. Pray for God to breathe new life into broken economic systems, living-wage jobs, an equitable tax code, and public budgets so all people can live with dignity and security.</p>	<p>17 For many households, the cost of basic necessities is rising faster than incomes, affecting work, family stability, and overall economic security. Learn the 5 Key Facts About North Carolina's Economy in 2026</p>	<p>18 In North Carolina, the richest 1% have average incomes nearing \$2 million. Because of tax cuts enacted since 2018, they will pay \$4.9 billion less in taxes in 2026 than under previous policies. (Read more about how Tax cuts cost North Carolina progress)</p>	<p>19 Order "Corporate Greed is Hurting NC" and "Tax the Rich" yard signs in your town. You can spread the word about the impacts of the elimination of the corporate income tax by requesting a batch of yard signs for yourself and your network. Email engage@ncbudget.org to order yard signs.</p>	<p>20 Support economic dignity today by spending or giving intentionally: shop at a worker-owned or local business, tip generously, or donate to an organization advancing fair wages. Economic justice grows through community choices, and together our everyday actions can help build a more just economy.</p>	<p>21 Prayer: Merciful God, guide us to work for a world where all have fair wages, basic needs, and opportunities to thrive. Give us courage to challenge inequality and generosity to share with those in need. Help us live lives of justice, compassion, and integrity. Amen.</p>	<p>22 Fifth Sunday of Lent Listen to the gospel version of "God of the Movements and Martyrs" arranged by The Many.</p>

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Week Theme: Immigration Justice						
<p>March 23 Read Matthew 21:1-11. Reflect on how Jesus' peaceful entry contrasts with the current violence of immigration enforcement. Pray for the strength to welcome and protect those harmed by policies that tear families apart and to work for justice, dignity, and safety for all.</p>	<p>24 There are 995,000 immigrants in North Carolina, including 562,000 who are non-citizens. Among those are an estimated 325,000 who are undocumented. (IRI) (Read more about the immigration status in North Carolina). Immigrants constitute 10% of North Carolina's population. Get to know the immigrants in your community.</p>	<p>25 In 2025, ICE arrests in North Carolina nearly doubled—from about 1,700 in 2024 to roughly 3,400 arrests. Fewer than half of those arrested had criminal convictions, revealing how expanded law enforcement cooperation is sweeping up many neighbors who pose no threat. Consider how our faith calls us to respond.</p>	<p>26 Take public, faithful action today. Join a Lent for Action gathering at your County Commission, or partner with one or two others to contact a county commissioner and urge them to prioritize feeding the hungry, welcoming the stranger, and tending the sick. Change happens when people of faith act together, publicly, locally, and with courage.</p>	<p>27 Preach and teach about the injustices our immigrant communities are facing. Commit to using this toolkit that includes talking points for leaders, worship materials, litany, Scripture references, and actionable steps your community can take to support immigrant neighbors.</p>	<p>28 Prayer: God of refuge and welcome, open our hearts to those seeking safety and belonging. Help us act with compassion, advocate for just policies, and welcome the stranger as you. May our communities be places of dignity and hope for all. Amen.</p>	<p>29 Palm Sunday This Palm Sunday, listen to the Spanish version of "God of the Movements and Martyrs," vocals by Horacio Vivares and translated by Gerardo.</p>
Week Theme: Democracy						
<p>30 Read John 20:1-18. As Easter draws near, we trust in God's promise of new life. Let this hope prepare us for bold action to protect our democracy: defending voting rights, challenging policies that silence the most marginalized, and working toward freedom, equality, and justice for all.</p>	<p>31 Voting statistics show that young voters and minority voters have significantly lower turnout rates compared to other groups. We still have work to do for ensuring voting rights for young voters and minority communities. Read the resource and consider how can we remove barriers to voting.</p>	<p>April 1 According to 2024 Civic Health Index, North Carolina has a low civic engagement rate. Civic engagement is a fundamental right. Beyond voting, the world will not change if we do not participate. Review the following resources on civic engagement and discover your place within society.</p>	<p>2 On Maundy Thursday, by cleansing disciples' feet, Jesus shows that true power is found in service and shared responsibility. Reflect on how democracy depends on humility, participation, and care for one another, and take one small action that supports inclusion or civic engagement.</p>	<p>3 On Good Friday, Jesus is executed through the misuse of power and public pressure, showing how injustice grows when voices are silenced. Read the Council's Grassroots Advocacy Toolkit, and take one small action to support democratic life.</p>	<p>4 Prayer: God of justice and truth, guide our civic life with wisdom, integrity, and care for the common good. Help us to participate faithfully, speak courageously, and work toward systems that uphold fairness, equity, and freedom. May our actions strengthen democracy and honor the dignity of every person. Amen.</p>	<p>5 Easter Sunday This Easter Sunday, listen to the original "God of the Movements and Martyrs" arranged by David LaMotte.</p>

Links from the Calendar

February 22: bit.ly/folkgodmm or scan 	March 11: bit.ly/4rntjTR bit.ly/3LoRpYF  	March 31: bit.ly/45jGxBU bit.ly/4sQgXhS  
February 24: bit.ly/3LLWWZb bit.ly/4sNPugZ  	March 15: bit.ly/davidgodmm 	April 1: bit.ly/45Q2IVY bit.ly/4b8ZLOu  
February 25: bit.ly/3YNJgQA 	March 17: bit.ly/3NSXgG9 	April 3: bit.ly/4pTYpL7 
February 25: bit.ly/abundantlifestudy 	March 18: bit.ly/4r6NPI2 	April 5: bit.ly/godofmm 
March 1: bit.ly/folkgodmm 	March 22: bit.ly/gospelgodmm 	
March 3: bit.ly/3NUNZgM 	March 24: bit.ly/4quUF3I bit.ly/4jPfb33  	
March 4: bit.ly/4r08yGZ 	March 25: bit.ly/49OaECS 	
March 6: ncfan.org farmworkerlanc.org/get-involved  	March 26: bit.ly/49wASLs 	
March 8: bit.ly/banjogodmm 	March 27: bit.ly/4bNRTlw 	
March 10: bit.ly/3YOj5cu 	March 28: bit.ly/spanishgodmm 	