

Door of Hope Northeast

Lent, Holy Week, & Easter Resources

Lent is a traditional forty-day period of fasting (Sundays excepted) that begins on Ash Wednesday and ends before Easter Sunday, representing the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness before he began his public ministry. Observing Lent involves fasting from food or self-denial of some other activity for the purpose of making space for more connection to God. Lent began to be practiced by Christians in this form in the seventh century, though it isn't something scripturally mandated. Those who participate do so recognizing the power of joining in on a spiritual discipline with a long history across many Christian theological traditions. **If you choose to participate in Lent with Door of Hope Northeast, we encourage you to make it a time of worship, pursuit, repentance, and gratitude for the finished, gracious work of Christ on the cross.**

The final week of Lent before Easter is often called Holy Week or Passion Week. Palm Sunday (the Sunday before Easter) celebrates Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem as the crowds laid palm branches before him (Matt. 21:1-11; John 12:12-19). Maundy Thursday celebrates Jesus's washing of the disciples' feet and the last supper. "Maundy" refers to the Latin word for "commandment," a reference to the new commandment Jesus gave his disciples that same night (Matt. 26:17-29; John 13). Good Friday commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus and his sacrificial death (Matt. 27:32-56; John 19). Holy Saturday is the traditional end of the Lenten fast, remembering the day that Jesus's body was in the tomb.

Easter Sunday, also called Resurrection Sunday or Pascha, celebrates the high point of history, the bodily resurrection of the Son of God, Jesus Christ. On that first resurrection Sunday, the disciples' hopes were restored as Jesus's identity, power, and claims were validated. Because death couldn't hold Jesus, we can trust that he has, in fact, bought us salvation, eternal life, and a place in his Kingdom that he will bring in full at his second coming.

However you choose to anticipate Easter, we've compiled a short list of resources to help you as an individual or family create some space in your life to reflect over the season.

BOOKS & DEVOTIONALS

[Bread and Wine: Readings for Lent and Easter](#) – This is a beautiful daily reader from a variety of theologians, writers, and poets meant to help you reflect on the depths of Easter. It includes readings from C.S. Lewis, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Dorothy Sayers, Fleming Rutledge, G.K. Chesterton, Henri Nouwen, John Stott, Mother Theresa, Wendell Berry, as well as some other strange but interesting choices.

[Lent: The Season of Repentance and Renewal](#) by Esau McCaulley – A short introduction to the themes of Lent and its place and function in the overall liturgical church calendar (from an Anglican perspective).

[Fasting](#) by Scot McKnight – A great introduction to the discipline of fasting. McKnight interacts with the Bible’s teaching, lessons from church history, and perennial questions about how to do it well while avoiding pitfalls.

[Jesus: A Very Short Introduction](#) by Richard Bauckham – A great introduction to the life and ministry of Jesus from one of our greatest New Testament scholars. This little book is almost comically powerful for how short it is.

[To Seek and to Save: Daily Reflections on the Road to the Cross](#) by Sinclair Ferguson – A daily devotional through the second half of the Gospel According to Luke for the entire Lenten season.

[Hope in Times of Fear: The Resurrection and the Meaning of Easter](#) by Tim Keller – This powerful book unpacks the meaning of Jesus’s resurrection and the incredible hope that it allows believers to walk in. Both theological and intensely personal, Keller’s book would make an excellent read for Lent.

[Surprised by Hope](#) by N.T. Wright – A powerful look at the historical case for the resurrection of Jesus, it’s meaning, and it’s significance for how we think about the future God has for us in Christ.

[The Mosaic of Atonement](#) by Joshua M. McNall – The Easter season is a great time to reflect on just what happened on the cross. McNall’s book is on the scholarly side, but it paints a beautiful, compelling picture of the multifaceted work of Jesus.

CHILDREN’S BOOKS

[Holy Week: An Emotional Primer](#) by Danielle Hitchen, illustrated by Jessica Blanchard (ages 0-4)

[Jesus Rose for Me: The True Story of Easter](#) by Jared Kennedy, illustrated by Trish Mahoney (ages 3-7)

[The Garden, the Curtain, and the Cross](#) by Carl Laferton, illustrated by Catalina Echeverri (ages 4-8)

[The Friend Who Forgives](#) by Dan Dewitt, illustrated by Catalina Echeverri (ages 4-8)

[Peter’s First Easter](#) by Walter Wangerin, illustrated by Tim Ladwig (ages 4-9)

[The Donkey Who Carried a King](#) by R.C. Sproul, illustrated by Chuck Groenink (ages 8-12)