

## Walking the Way in Lent – a menu of ideas

Lent is a special period in the Church calendar when we remember Jesus' time alone in the wilderness. [Matthew 4:1-11](#) and [Luke 4:1-13](#) tell us how, for 40 days and nights, Jesus fasted and prayed to prepare for his work while resisting temptation from the devil. Traditionally, Lent provides Christians with space to reflect and contemplate. When recalling Jesus' sacrifice in the desert, we consider items or habits in our own lives we may want to change and Lent can help us to focus more clearly on living a more Christ-shaped life.

As part of Walking the Way we've created a pick and mix-style menu of ideas for Lent activities suitable for church groups or individuals. We hope the ideas on this page will offer a bit of inspiration to who observe Lent as a time of personal restraint and reflection.

### Starters

Set up a prayer station, including a notice board where prayers can be pinned, in a place where all users of your building will see it. Encourage everyone to add to it. For example:

- Suggest people can cut out and pin up local newspaper stories that touch them. (Keep papers, scissors etc to hand!)
- Make a feature of any global concern of interest to the congregation
- Pick a time each week to announce and share new prayers on the board
- Encourage all who use the prayer station to look out for answers to prayer as well as making personal prayer requests.

### Old favourites

- Go on a series of prayer walks, either following set routes, or finding random ones, for example by tossing a coin for left or right at a junction. Perhaps invite someone to lead you to places you might not normally go. Be attentive – try to see the place through God's eyes. Let God's spirit pray through you.
- For 2018 Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) has partnered with [Hope](#) to offer a Lent course suitable for study groups. The course is based on the book [40 Stories of Hope](#), by Catherine Butcher, published by CWR. CTBI is also offering [weekly downloads](#) for individual reflection and group discussion.
- Other materials for Lent study groups include:  
[40 acts](#) – a generosity challenge for Lent that resonates with Walking the Way, created by the Christian charity, Stewardship; and;  
[The Pilgrimage Pack](#) from Shoreline Conversations – seven booklets inviting reflections on discovering meaning and significance through our experiences.

## **Try something new**

Pick a [Holy Habit](#) that challenges the congregation – six weeks should be enough to make it stick.

Prepare your sanctuary for a creative Easter celebration. Find partners to help you turn vision into reality: a local drama group, art class, writers' circle or florist. Add to the sanctuary week by week.

## **Set menu**

The [On the Road to Emmaus](#) story (Luke 24:13-35) reminds us that in walking the road with apparent strangers, we might meet the risen Christ. Offer a series of sessions encouraging members of the congregation to step outside of church boundaries and engage with people beyond the church.

Session 1, below, may be essential, but those that follow need not be done in order, or at all! Do what works for you in your locality.

### **Session 1: Preparation for the journey**

Plan worship or Bible study exploring why it might be important to go outside of the church and outside our comfort zones, in order to seek and be God's presence in our communities.

The temptations of Jesus (Matthew 4:1-11 and Luke 4:1-13) and the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35) are key stories for this season and Walking the Way, but you could ask your group to suggest other Biblical stories of challenge or being out in the community. Another idea would be to look up hymns about temptation or specifically for the season of Lent – what do they say about the Christian journey? End by planning sessions for the other weeks, perhaps using these sessions as a guide:

### **Session 2: [Walking the Way – watching the screen](#)**

Set up a film screening, or choose one on current release and go to the cinema.

### **Session 3: Walking the Way – meeting the other**

Arrange a social night (bowling or a quiz, for example) and invite a community group, perhaps one that uses or shares your building, to join you. Take food to an overnight shelter. Ask the people you meet to tell you their story.

### **Session 4: Walking the Way – in foreign territory**

As a group, visit somewhere unfamiliar. Depending on who is in your group, that could be, for example:

- another church
- another faith's place of worship
- a bingo hall
- a football match
- travel to a different part of the area – a country village, seaside town, or city centre

Don't just observe – join in where possible. Notice what feels unfamiliar. Imagine where God may be at work there. Reflect afterwards on how visitors might experience your church and other places familiar to you.

**Session 5:** [Walking the Way – a night out with Jesus](#)

Jesus ate and drank with all sorts of people. He was even accused of being a glutton and a drunkard. Arrange a visit to the pub and think about what good news might look like here? Engage in discussions and be open to the spirit moving.

**Session 6: Walking the Way – sharing a meal**

Gather (possibly in someone's home) for food and friendship. Reflect on what has been experienced in the last few weeks. Perhaps take food to one of your housebound members. Consider having an agape meal.

**Dessert**

Have a party on Easter Sunday evening!

It's April Fool's Day, so let your hair down with fireworks and silly games to celebrate Jesus' Resurrection.

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