

# Lenten Devotional 2026

“Honoring God in the Other, as We Journey Together Toward Wholeness”

Written by Pastor Jermell  
For the People of Admiral Church





Beloved Community,

We enter this sacred Lenten season in a time that calls for deep unity. We are living in days where injustice is loud, where fear walks freely in our streets, and where many of our siblings, immigrants, the poor, the marginalized, are made to feel disposable. In such a time, the call of the Gospel is not retreat, but radical togetherness.

We must learn again to see the God in others and bow to that holy beauty and brilliance. For God is multifaceted, she is expansive, tender, fierce, and liberating. She journeys with us, much like Jesus, through wilderness, wonder, doubt, deep pain, and beautiful victories.

Lent invites us to feel as Jesus felt, not only the weight of our own joys and burdens, but the ache, hope, and humanity of our siblings. We do not walk this road alone. We journey toward wholeness together, honoring the sacred image of God in every stranger, every neighbor, every “other.”

May this season soften us. May it stretch us. May it teach us to love beyond ourselves.

Pastor Jermell

### **THIS YEAR, WE HONOR THIS SACRED TIME WITH OUR MUSLIM SIBLINGS**

- Ramadan and Lent coincide approximately every 33 years. Because Ramadan follows the lunar calendar, shifting about 10-11 days earlier each year and Lent follows a solar-based liturgical calendar, their overlap is relatively rare. This year they align, what a Holy work!
- Considering this “sacred convergence” I invite us as Christians to stand in solidarity, with one overarching force, LOVE, into parallel seasons of fasting, reflection, repentance, generosity, and deeper devotion to God and neighbor. In this shared moment, we journey together toward wholeness.

## FASTING PRAYER

**Beloved people of Admiral UCC,**

**As we journey through this sacred season of Lent alongside our Muslim siblings observing Ramadan, I invite us into a shared rhythm of fasting and prayer that might deepen our compassion expand our consciousness and prick our hearts.**

**Each day I encourage you to set aside 10 intentional minutes to pray for someone experiencing displacement on their journey: immigrants seeking safety, families navigating housing insecurity, refugees longing for home, and all who feel uprooted in body or spirit. Let our prayers become acts of solidarity, holding their stories before God with tenderness and hope.**

Fasting, in my opinion, is a time to deny oneself so that we can hear more deeply the breath of God within us. It is not simply about abstaining from food, but about creating sacred space, space where divine presence speaks more clearly and compassion grows more fiercely. If you are able, **I invite you to join me in a simple fasting practice: fasting each day until 12:00 noon.** This gentle discipline can remind us of our dependence on God and our Connection to those who hunger, wait, and wander. I will be practicing this fast daily throughout Lent, and I have found it to be a beautiful and grounding spiritual rhythm, one that opens my spirit to God and aligns my heart more closely with the suffering and hope of our siblings.

May our fasting make us more just.

May our prayers make us more tender.

And may our shared journey lead us ever closer to wholeness, together.

**40-Day Lenten DevotionalHonoring God in the Other, as We Journey Together Toward Wholeness**





## **Wednesday, Feb. 18 – Entering the Wilderness Together**

### **Bible – Luke 4:1**

“Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness.”

### **Qur'an – 49:13**

“O humankind, We created you from a single male and female and made you peoples and tribes so that you may know one another. Surely the most honored of you in the sight of God is the most righteous.”

### **Reflection**

Lent begins where Jesus wrestled, in the wilderness. Yet even there, we are not alone. God forms us into communities meant to truly know one another. Our journey toward wholeness starts when we see companions, not strangers, walking beside us.



## **Thursday, Feb. 19 – Honoring the Stranger**

### **Bible – Matthew 25:35**

“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.”

### **Qur'an – 4:36**

“Worship God and associate nothing with Him, and be good to parents, relatives, orphans, the needy, the near neighbor, the distant neighbor, the companion at your side, and the traveler.”

### **Reflection**

The stranger carries sacred presence. When we welcome those who feel foreign or unfamiliar, we open ourselves to encountering God in living form



## **Friday, Feb. 20 – Love Beyond the Self**

### **Bible – Mark 12:31**

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.”

### **Qur'an – 5:32**

“Whoever saves one life, it is as if they have saved all humanity.”

### **Reflection**

Our lives are intertwined. Loving our neighbor is not charity, it is recognizing that their survival and flourishing are bound up with our own.



## **Saturday, Feb. 21 – Carrying Collective Burdens**

### **Bible – Galatians 6:2**

“Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”

### **Qur'an – 2:286**

“God does not burden a soul beyond what it can bear.”

### **Reflection**

Jesus carried the weight of humanity. Lent calls us to carry one another, not alone, but together, trusting that God strengthens us through shared love.

**Sunday, Feb. 22 - Come Together in Our Church Community**





## **Monday, Feb. 23 – Compassion as Resistance**

### **Bible – Luke 10:33**

“But a Samaritan, while traveling, came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with compassion.”

### **Qur'an – 7:156**

“My mercy encompasses all things.”

### **Reflection**

Compassion is not weakness; it is holy resistance. When injustice rises, mercy becomes a radical act of faithfulness.



## **Tuesday, Feb. 24 – Seeing the Face of God**

### **Bible – Matthew 25:40**

“Just as you did it to one of the least of these... you did it to me.”

### **Qur'an – 2:115**

“Wherever you turn, there is the Face of God.”

### **Reflection**

Every person we meet reflects divine brilliance. To honor the other is to bow before the sacred presence of God.



## **Wednesday, Feb. 25 – Doubt in the Desert**

### **Bible – Luke 4:3**

“The devil said to him, ‘If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.’”

### **Qur'an – 94:6**

“Indeed, with hardship comes ease.”

### **Reflection**

Even Jesus faced doubt and temptation. The wilderness teaches us that uncertainty is not absence of God, but a place where trust is refined.



## **Thursday, Feb. 26 – Healing Toward Wholeness**

### **Bible – John 5:6**

“Do you want to be made well?”

### **Qur'an – 5:16**

“God guides those who seek His pleasure to the ways of peace and brings them out of darkness into light.”

### **Reflection**

Healing is not solitary. Jesus asks not only individuals but communities if we truly desire wholeness together.



## **Friday, Feb. 27 – Sacred Hospitality**

### **Bible – Hebrews 13:2**

“Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing so some have entertained angels without knowing it.”

### **Qur'an – 24:22**

“Let them pardon and overlook. Do you not wish that God should forgive you?”

### **Reflection**

Hospitality softens hearts and bridges divides. In welcoming others, we practice divine forgiveness and grace.



## **Saturday, Feb. 28 – Love Stronger Than Fear**

### **Bible – 1 John 4:18**

“Perfect love casts out fear.”

### **Qur'an – 3:134**

“Those who restrain anger and pardon people—God loves the doers of good.”

### **Reflection**

Fear divides communities; love unites them. This season calls us to courageous love that dissolves barriers.

**Sunday, Mar. 1 - Come Together in Our Church Community**





## **Monday, Mar. 2 – God Among the Marginalized**

### **Bible – Luke 4:18**

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me... to bring good news to the poor... to let the oppressed go free.”

### **Qur'an – 28:5**

“We desired to show favor to those who were oppressed in the land and to make them leaders and inheritors.”

### **Reflection**

God stands with the marginalized. Walking with them is not charity; it is discipleship.



## **Tuesday, Mar. 3 – Fasting with Purpose**

### **Bible – Isaiah 58:6**

“Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice... and let the oppressed go free?”

### **Qur'an – 2:183**

“Fasting is prescribed for you... so that you may become mindful of God.”

### **Reflection**

True fasting transforms society, not just the self. It leads to justice, empathy, and deeper compassion.



## **Wednesday, Mar. 4 – Walking Humbly Together**

### **Bible – Micah 6:8**

“What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God?”

### **Qur'an – 16:90**

“Indeed, God commands justice, excellence, and generosity.”

### **Reflection**

Justice, mercy, and humility form the sacred path toward collective wholeness.



## **Thursday Mar. 5 – Listening Deeply**

### **Bible – James 1:19**

“Let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger.”

### **Qur'an – 50:37**

“In that is a reminder for whoever has a heart or listens while being present.”

### **Reflection**

Listening honors the divine story living inside another person.



## **Friday, Mar. 6 – Welcoming the Outcast**

### **Bible – Luke 15:2**

“This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

### **Qur'an – 93:9**

“So as for the orphan, do not oppress.”

### **Reflection**

Jesus built tables, not walls. Wholeness grows wherever the excluded are welcomed.



## **Saturday, Mar. 7 – Shared Joy, Shared Sorrow**

### **Bible – Romans 12:15**

“Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep.”

### **Qur'an – 57:22**

“No calamity befalls... except it is written... so that you may not despair nor exult excessively.”

### **Reflection**

Spiritual maturity means feeling life together, joys, griefs, and everything between.

**Sunday, Mar. 8 - Come Together in Our Church Community**





## **Monday, Mar. 9 – Faith in the Wilderness**

### **Bible – Matthew 4:4**

“One does not live by bread alone, but by every word from the mouth of God.”

### **Qur'an – 65:3**

“Whoever trusts in God—He is sufficient for them.”

### **Reflection**

The wilderness strips illusions and teaches us to trust divine sustenance.



## **Tuesday, Mar. 10 – Reconciliation as Holy Work**

### **Bible – 2 Corinthians 5:18**

“God... gave us the ministry of reconciliation.”

### **Qur'an – 49:10**

“The believers are but one family, so make peace between your brothers and sisters.”

### **Reflection**

Reconciliation is sacred labor that restores fractured relationships and communities.



## **Wednesday, Mar. 11 – Mercy for All**

### **Bible – Luke 6:36**

“Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.”

### **Qur'an – 21:107**

“We have not sent you except as a mercy to all worlds.”

### **Reflection**

Mercy extends beyond our comfort zones. It is the mark of divine likeness.



## **Thursday, Mar. 12 – Unity in Diversity**

### **Bible – 1 Corinthians 12:12**

“The body is one and has many members.”

### **Qur'an – 30:22**

“Among His signs is the diversity of your languages and colors.”

### **Reflection**

Difference is not division, it is divine artistry forming one sacred body.



## **Friday, Mar. 13 – Love in Action**

### **Bible – 1 John 3:18**

“Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.”

### **Qur'an – 2:177**

“Righteousness is not that you turn your faces toward the east or the west, but righteousness is in one who believes in God... and gives wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask, and for freeing those in bondage.”

### **Reflection**

Love becomes sacred when it moves from sentiment to service. We honor God in others when our care becomes tangible and embodied.



## **Saturday, Mar. 14 – Courage to Stand Together**

### **Bible – Joshua 1:9**

“Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

### **Qur'an – 3:200**

“O you who believe, be steadfast, endure, remain stationed, and be mindful of God so that you may succeed.”

### **Reflection**

Courage grows in community. When we stand together against injustice, we embody God's sustaining presence.

**Sunday, Mar. 15 - Come Together in Our Church Community**





## **Monday, Mar. 16 – Patience on the Journey**

### **Bible – Romans 12:12**

“Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.”

### **Qur'an – 103:3**

“Except those who believe and do righteous deeds and encourage one another to truth and encourage one another to patience.”

### **Reflection**

Patience is not passive; it is faithful endurance shaped by hope and shared encouragement.



## **Tuesday, Mar. 17 – Compassion for the Oppressed**

### **Bible – Psalm 82:3**

“Give justice to the weak and the orphan; maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute.”

### **Qur'an – 4:75**

“And what is wrong with you that you do not fight in the cause of God and for the oppressed among men, women, and children...?”

### **Reflection**

Faith calls us to defend dignity wherever it is threatened. Compassion demands action for justice.



## **Wednesday, Mar. 18 – Sharing Daily Bread**

### **Bible – Matthew 6:11**

“Give us this day our daily bread.”

### **Qur'an – 76:8**

“They give food, in spite of love for it, to the needy, the orphan, and the captive.”

### **Reflection**

Daily bread is never meant for one alone. God's provision becomes holy when it is shared.



## **Thursday, Mar. 19 – Peace-Making as Sacred Calling**

### **Bible – Matthew 5:9**

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”

### **Qur'an – 8:61**

“If they incline toward peace, then incline toward it also and trust in God.”

### **Reflection**

Peacemaking reflects divine kinship. To create peace is to mirror God's own heart.



## **Friday, Mar. 20 – Strength in Community**

### **Bible – Ecclesiastes 4:9-10**

“Two are better than one... If they fall, one will lift up the other; but woe to one who is alone and falls and does not have another to help.”

### **Qur'an – 5:2**

“Cooperate with one another in righteousness and piety, and do not cooperate in sin and aggression.”

### **Reflection**

Community is holy support. We rise together, or we do not rise at all.



## **Saturday, Mar. 21 – Humility Before God and Neighbor**

### **Bible – Philippians 2:3**

“Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves.”

### **Qur'an – 25:63**

“The servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth humbly.”

### **Reflection**

Humility opens us to reverence for the sacred worth of others.

**Sunday, Mar. 22 - Come Together in Our Church Community**





## **Monday, Mar. 23 – God With Us in Suffering**

### **Bible – Isaiah 43:2**

“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you... when you walk through fire you shall not be burned.”

### **Qur'an – 94:5**

“Indeed, with hardship comes ease.”

### **Reflection**

God does not promise absence of hardship, but faithful presence through it.



## **Tuesday, Mar. 24 – Radical Forgiveness**

### **Bible – Matthew 18:21-22**

“Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times? Jesus said to him, ‘Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.’”

### **Qur'an – 42:40**

“The recompense of an evil deed is its equivalent, but whoever pardons and makes reconciliation—their reward is with God.”

### **Reflection**

Forgiveness is not forgetting harm; it is choosing healing over endless cycles of pain.



## **Wednesday, Mar. 25 – Generosity as Worship**

### **Bible – Proverbs 11:25**

“A generous person will be enriched, and one who gives water will get water.”

### **Qur'an – 2:261**

“The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of God is like a grain that grows seven ears, in every ear a hundred grains.”

### **Reflection**

Generosity multiplies grace, transforming both giver and receiver.



## **Thursday, Mar. 26 – Loving Across Boundaries**

### **Bible – Luke 6:27**

“But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you.”

### **Qur'an – 41:34**

“Repel evil with what is better; then the one between whom and you is enmity will become as though a devoted friend.”

### **Reflection**

Love that crosses boundaries disrupts hatred and opens pathways toward reconciliation.



## **Friday, Mar. 27 – Trusting God in Uncertainty**

### **Bible – Proverbs 3:5-6**

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.”

### **Qur'an – 9:51**

“Nothing will ever befall us except what God has decreed for us; He is our protector.”

### **Reflection**

Trust steadies us when the path forward is unclear and uncertain.



## **Saturday, Mar. 28 – Hope in the Wilderness**

### **Bible – Romans 15:13**

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing.”

### **Qur'an – 39:53**

“Do not despair of the mercy of God. Indeed, God forgives all sins.”

### **Reflection**

Even in barren seasons, hope roots us in God's enduring mercy.

**Sunday, Mar. 29 - Come Together in Our Church Community**





## **Monday, Mar. 30 – Bearing Witness to Love**

### **Bible – John 13:35**

“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

### **Qur'an – 60:8**

“God does not forbid you from showing kindness and justice to those who do not fight you because of religion or drive you out of your homes.”

### **Reflection**

Our love becomes testimony. It reveals who we are and whose we are.



## **Tuesday, Mar. 31 – Liberation Together**

### **Bible – Exodus 3:7-8**

“I have observed the misery of my people... and I have come down to deliver them.”

### **Qur'an – 7:128**

“Seek help through God and be patient; indeed, the earth belongs to God, and He grants it to whom He wills.”

### **Reflection**

Liberation is collective. God hears communal cries and moves toward shared freedom.



## **Wednesday, Apr.1 – Faithful Perseverance**

### **Bible – Hebrews 12:1**

“Let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us.”

### **Qur'an – 2:153**

“O you who believe, seek help through patience and prayer; indeed, God is with the patient.”

### **Reflection**

Perseverance is sustained by prayer, community, and divine companionship.



## **Thursday, Apr. 2 – Preparing for Resurrection**

### **Bible – John 11:25**

“I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live.”

### **Qur'an – 30:50**

“Look at the effects of God's mercy—how He brings the earth to life after its death.”

### **Reflection**

Resurrection begins wherever God breathes life into weary hearts and broken systems.



## **Friday, April. 3 – Love That Serves**

### **Bible – John 13:14**

“If I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.”

### **Qur'an – 5:54**

“God will bring forth a people He loves and who love Him, humble toward believers and strong in justice.”

### **Reflection**

Sacred love kneels. Service becomes the posture of true discipleship.



## **Saturday, Apr. 4– Wholeness Through Collective Love**

### **Bible – Colossians 3:14**

“Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.”

### **Qur'an – 49:10**

“The believers are but one family, so make peace between your brothers and sisters and be mindful of God.”

### **Reflection**

Lent ends where it began, in community. We are made whole not alone, but together, honoring God in every other we meet.

