

Guide to the Season

March - April 2025

Lent



PRAY



FAST



GIVE

 **FIRST**
METHODIST CHURCH
ENTERPRISE ALABAMA

FMCE

March - April 2025

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Introduction

What Is Lent?

Lent is a unique season, in the life of the church, of self-denial. It's a season of the church where we, the people of God, deny ourselves and fast for 40 days as we seek to grow closer to Christ on the journey to the cross. It seems strange, in a culture like ours where the goal is to gain as much as possible, to deny ourselves. If we need something, our culture tells us, we just ask or apply for it. Our culture tells us we should never go without. Our culture tells us we have everything at our fingertips, and they are right. The truth of what our culture says is all the more reason to practice Lent fully this year. To tell our soul, "You have everything, but I'm going to give everything up for the sake of knowing Christ." Jesus says, "If you're going to follow me you must deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow me. What does it profit a man to gain the world and lose his soul? The one who seeks to save his life will lose it and the one who loses his life for my sake will save it." In a world where everything is a click away, a charge on our credit card and 48-hour shipping, and a world where we can reach anyone in the world in seconds, we must practice denying ourselves for the glory of God and knowing Him.

*I pray this *Guide to the Season* will bless you as you hear from our staff on why Lent is so important. In this edition, you'll notice a few things of great importance: a list of what to fast from and fast for; a schedule of happenings throughout Lent including special services and emphasis through this season; our *Family Discipleship Guide* which will be the theme of our **Know Grow Go** podcast, Wednesday night studies, and Lenten Luncheons throughout the season of Lent. I hope this *Guide to the Season* is a tool to help you along the journey to the cross and the empty tomb as we begin with self-denial. May God be with you on this journey.*

Yours Sincerely,

Rev. Matt Jordan

Senior Pastor

Our Journey to

Easter

Ash Wednesday Service

March 5 ~ 6:00pm ~ Sanctuary

Lenten Lunches & Communion

March 12 - April 9

Wednesdays @ Noon ~ Fellowship Hall

Lunch - \$7

“Home Grown Faith” Study

March 12 ~ 6:00pm ~ Fellowship Hall

“BLESSED”

A Holy Week Journey Through the Beatitudes

Musical presentation by the
FMCE Easter Choir

Maundy Thursday, April 17 ~ 6:00pm ~ Sanctuary

Easter Sunday Worship Services

C3 Contemporary Worship ~ 9:00am ~ Fellowship Hall

Traditional Worship ~ 11:00am ~ Sanctuary

home grown
FAITH 

Wednesdays in the Fellowship Hall

March 12 - April 9 5:30-6:15 PM

✝ First Methodist Church Enterprise

Lenten Lunches

First Methodist Church Enterprise

Weds at 12:00 in the Fellowship Hall



March 12

Dr. Amy Young

Director of Family Ministries
First Methodist Church Enterprise

March 19

Rev. Ralph Sigler

Founding and Lead Pastor of
Harvest Church of Dothan



March 26

Rev. Ryan Martin

Lead Pastor at Bonifay United
Methodist Church

April 2

Dr. Brian Miller

Vice President for External
Church Relations



April 9

Rev. Dr. Chris Montgomery

Senior Pastor at Frazer Church





Maundy
Thursday

BLESSED

A Journey Through the Beatitudes

April 17th 6:00 PM
in the Sanctuary



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ENTERPRISE

Something More

Sacrifice. Repentance. Contemplation. These words call us to something deeper than abstaining from sugar or social media. Lent is a time of self-reflection, prayer, and fasting to quiet our hearts, still our minds, and remember the mission and sacrifice of Christ. This is the key focus of George Herbert's poem "Lent." Below are a few of the stanzas, but I encourage you to find and read the full work. This season of Lent, I'm going to "improve [my] fast," not let one's "abuse of Lent spoil [its] good use," and give up something that will help me in my striving towards holiness.

*Then those same pendant profits, which the spring
And Easter intimate, enlarge the thing,
And goodness of the deed.
Neither ought other men's abuse of Lent
Spoil the good use; lest by that argument
We forfeit all our Creed.
It's true, we cannot reach Christ's forti'eth day;
Yet to go part of that religious way,
Is better than to rest:
We cannot reach our Saviour's purity;
Yet we are bid, 'Be holy ev'n as he,'
In both let's do our best.
Yet Lord instruct us to improve our fast
By starving sin and taking such repast,
As may our faults control:
That ev'ry man may revel at his door,
Not in his parlour; banqueting the poor,
And among those his soul.*

From "The Temple" (1633)
George Herbert

In Christ,
Dr. Amy Young
Director of Family Ministries

NO HALLELUJAHS

In the ancient church, a practice during Lent was not to echo a hallelujah throughout the entire season. Hallelujahs of the church echo in Heaven at the culmination of Lent on Easter Sunday when we all proclaim, “Hallelujah! He is risen!” At the heart of Lent is the cruciality of denying ourselves and all we have for the simple sake of knowing Christ and His good news, and experiencing suffering as He did. As we make this journey together I hope you are as excited as I am for what the Lord will do in our church as we commit to this time together. Please, consider a few things this Lent:

1. Pray with and for your family.
2. Read through the Gospels with your family.
3. Find a new area in the church or community to serve once weekly as part of your spiritual discipline.
4. Fast from food for an entire day (safely if you have medical conditions or medicine which require a standard diet adhere to your doctor's recommendations).
5. Journal at the end of each day where you've seen God, where you've sinned, and where you fell short. Then pray for God to enable you to do better tomorrow.

These are just a few ideas of things to do, as a **family** this season, to increase spiritual intimacy and depth with everyone in your family. If you don't have any family in the church then adopt one and see how you can connect with them. May this season of Lent be impactful and life-changing for you and your family.

In Christ,
Pastor Matt
Senior Pastor

My Struggle

I am not sure about you, but I have struggled over the years with fasting during Lent. I have never been able to grasp how giving up chocolate or Diet Coke draws me closer to God, so I just skip over the fasting aspect of Lent. My problem, I think, is connecting fasting to a deeper relationship with God. I did not grow up practicing Lent, and my first Ash Wednesday service was here at our church in the early 2000s. Over the years when fasting discussions have come up, I've never quite grasped its significance or the impact it should have on my spiritual life. This year I decided enough was enough. I needed to figure this fasting thing out. I've spent time reading articles, listening to podcasts, and talking to Matt, after which I realized my problem has been thinking that fasting and abstaining are the same when, in fact, they're not. To abstain from something is to simply refrain from doing or partaking in something you're used to doing or having. But fasting is deeper than that. True fasting is giving up something that the absence of that thing causes discomfort or is an inconvenience. In this sense, fasting is more sacrificial than abstaining. Biblical fasting is giving up all food for a time, not just soda, coffee, or sugar. While you sit in the discomfort of feeling hungry, you pray, read Scripture, listen to podcasts, or do anything that helps fill you spiritually. Because I am a Type 1 diabetic, medically I cannot fast for any length of time. Therefore, for Lent, I'll abstain from mindlessly scrolling on social media and replace the time with reading and listening to things that will feed my soul.

Milesa Eagan

Director of Children's Ministries

I LOVE THE SEASON OF LENT

I love the season of Lent. Lent can be a very difficult time; looking deep inside is not always an easy thing for humans to practice. It is a time when we look closely at our lives and hopefully, take time for some deep soul searching, winnowing out those unconfessed sins and habits we all have that harm the intimacy of our relationship with God.

Lent is a time of repentance, coming to terms with our human condition of sin by bringing our need for a savior to the forefront. That does not mean we feel shame for our sin, but we feel the awareness that sin separates us from God, and of what Jesus endured for us on the cross. When we come to the place in our lives that we realize we are but poor beggars in need of a savior, God can begin to transform us.

Matthew 5:3 Says, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” What does it mean to be poor in spirit? It is the exact opposite of being rich in pride; to be spiritually bankrupt before God, recognizing our need, and responding to God with sorrow.

Why are the poor in spirit blessed? Because they are fully aware of their need and have responded to God in sorrow. It is through God’s grace we experience the great joy, and the comfort of forgiveness God offers. When we recognize the great need we have, we are positioned to see the great grace of God.

During this season of Lent my prayer is that we each will open our heart a little wider so we can love our savior more deeply.

“Sing”cerely,

Pastor Billy

Associate Pastor & Minister of Music

Sacrifice

In all honesty, the practice of Lent is a foreign concept to me as a Baptist. However, I can see the value in taking time to sacrifice for the Almighty. In the old times, sacrifice was common, but today it seems we rarely sacrifice anything for the Lord. What steps are we taking in our day-to-day lives to put Him at the forefront of our minds? Although I pray to God daily, I see this as another opportunity to help me focus solely on the gratitude I have for Him for sacrificing His one and only son for a lowly sinner such as myself. After some prayer, I have decided to give up TV during this season. Life keeps me running 100 mph, and I pray this time will help me to take a moment to breathe, gain focus, and keep distractions from the Lord at bay.

Gina Cruz

Financial Secretary

Spiritual Growth

Like many, I seek God's powerful grace and forgiveness daily. In other words, I regularly acknowledge my humanity! Lent is a time to seek God's mercy and forgiveness through repentance and reflection on our lives by engaging with Scripture, praying, and fasting. I was not raised in a church where Lent was observed, nor did we practice the tenets of 40 days of prayer and fasting. However, I have grown to understand the significance of sacrifice and increased charity during this season. I pray that my sacrifices and acts of kindness during this time of Lent will help me grow spiritually as I prepare my heart and mind to celebrate Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection!

Janis Luttrell

Administrative Assistant

PREPARING THE SOIL

I like to piddle with a garden. A couple of tomato plants. Maybe some green beans and squash. I even tried carrots one year. But before I can plant any seeds, I first need to prepare the soil.

Jesus knew this as he told the Parable of the Sower in Mark 4 to remind us that the quality of the soil of our lives determines whether the seeds of the gospel are able to take root and thrive.

People often choose to either give something up or take something on for Lent. Giving something up, like dessert or gossiping, is analogous to removing rocks or weeds from the soil of our spiritual lives. We all have habits that make it more difficult for spiritual fruit to take deeper root in our lives. Making a conscious choice to change these habits can be an important turning point in preparing our spiritual soil.

On the other hand, taking something on for Lent can be compared to adding good nutrients to our soil. Making a commitment to pray every day, reading Scripture regularly, or connecting more deeply with our faith community are positive ways we can enrich the soil of our spiritual lives.

While John the Baptist's words to "prepare the Way of the Lord" are most commonly heard during Advent, they are good advice for us during Lent as well, as we prepare to cultivate the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control) in our lives.

Are you giving something up this Lent or taking on something new on? How might you cultivate the fruit of the Spirit more intentionally in your life during the season of Lent and beyond?

Rev. Gary Daniel
Pastor Emeritus

Don't Give Up Sweets!

During Lent, we give up good things to make time and space for the best of things, focusing our attention on our Lord, Jesus Christ.

As the MDO/SSP Director at FMCE I would like to share this silly “Lenten Poem for Kids”.

Don't Give Up Sweets
(Author Unknown)

First you take a candy bar,
Give the thing away.
And Next, a piece of gum,
Avoid it every day.
Should you see a slice of cake,
Get out of the way
Take a brownie out your door,
Do not let it stay
Ice cream needs a barricade
To keep the thing at bay
Nothing sweet can touch your lips
This is what you say:
Give up sweets until Lent's end?
No, not me, my friend!

Tammy Ezzell

Director of FMCE MDO/SSP



Family Discipleship Guide

Helping Kids and Students Become Disciples of Jesus

FIRST METHODIST CHURCH ENTERPRISE



WE WILL NOT HIDE THESE TRUTHS FROM OUR
CHILDREN BUT WILL TELL A FUTURE GENERATION
OF THE PRAISEWORTHY ACTS OF THE LORD.

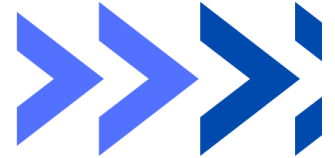
-- PSALM 78:4 --

217 Main Street Enterprise, AL 36330 | 334.347.3467 | fmce.church





WELCOME



The Family Ministry of First Methodist Church exists to help kids and students become disciples who, empowered by the Spirit, know Jesus, grow as Christ-followers, and go live on mission. It consists of all our age-graded ministries, including Preschool (Birth-K), Kids (1st-6th), Students (7th-12th), and Young Adults.

It is never too late to spiritually invest in the lives of your children. If you missed a milestone or key event, we would love to talk with you about alternative options for your family and meet you where you are today. The family ministry here at First Methodist is a ministry of the whole church. We are here to partner with you as you raise your children to know, follow, and serve the Lord.

MISSION OF FMCE

TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD WITH THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST

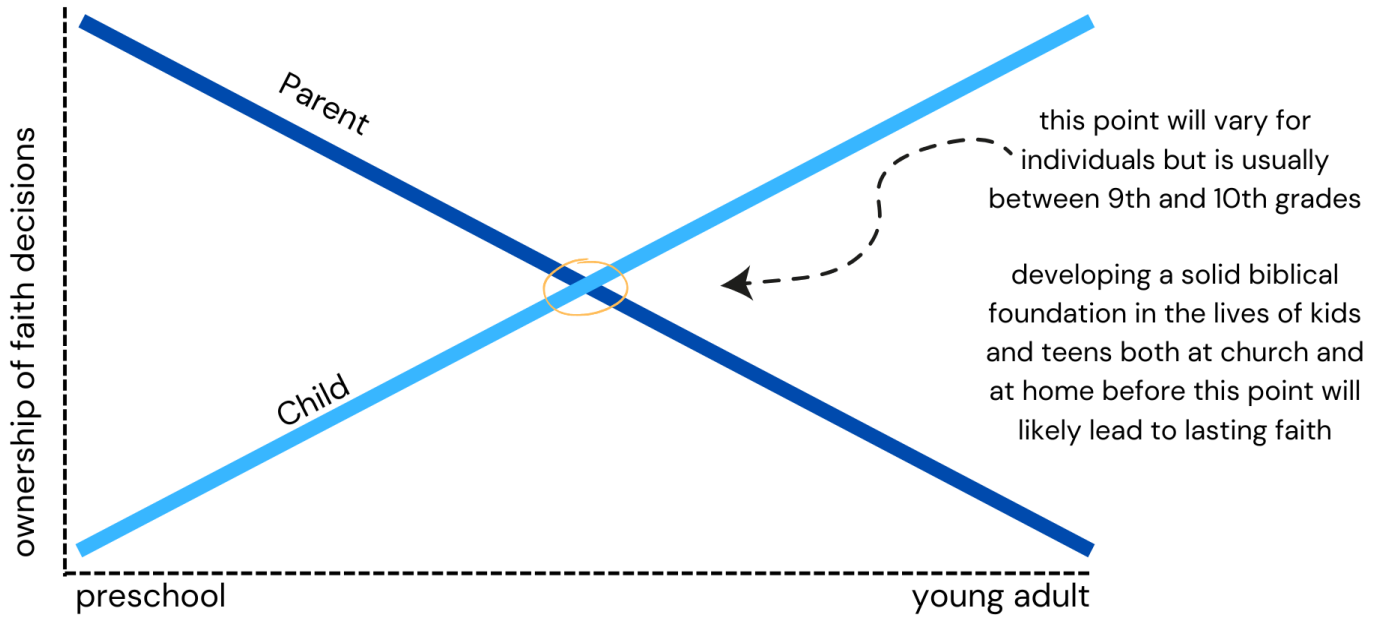
OUR STRATEGY



OUR MEASURES

- Know: Do I know the gospel?
Do I own the mission?
Do I know my purpose?
- Grow: What Scripture is shaping me?
Who are my 2AM friends?
What spiritual discipline am I working on this week?
- Go: Who am I currently discipling?
How am I serving in the church?
Where am I going on mission this year?

FAITH JOURNEY



The Family Ministry of FMCE exists to develop disciples of kids and students who, empowered by the Spirit,...

KNOW

Jesus and His Word.
What they believe and why.
How to share the gospel.

GROW

In community with each other and the church.
In their practice of the spiritual disciplines.
As resilient disciples of Jesus, becoming more and more like Him.

GO

Live out their faith in obedience to God's Word.
Serve the Lord by serving others.
Share the gospel of Jesus in their contexts.

The Family Ministry of FMCE commits to being:



CHRIST-CENTERED

Everything in the Bible points to Jesus; therefore, what we do points kids and students to Christ as Lord, Savior, and Friend.

WORD-GROUNDED

The Bible is God's living Word. It feeds us, comforts us, teaches us, and disciplines us. It is to be read, meditated on, and memorized.

FAITH-DRIVEN

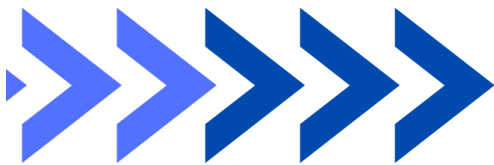
It is by faith that we believe, and it is by faith that we are saved from our sins. True faith always produces observable fruit.

RELATIONSHIP-ORIENTED

Just as Jesus had a circle of friends, we cultivate relationships at FMCE. We provide multiple opportunities for kids and students to fellowship within each ministry and together.

MISSION-FOCUSED

Jesus came to earth as a servant and taught us how to love and serve others. We provide opportunities for kids and students to live out their faith through mission and service projects.



The Family Discipleship Pathway is made up of four age-graded ministries aligned in three areas with one vision to make disciples of the next generation.



CURRICULUM

PreK/K, Kids, Students, and Adults use the same or similar curriculum to facilitate intergroup and at-home discussions of God's Word.

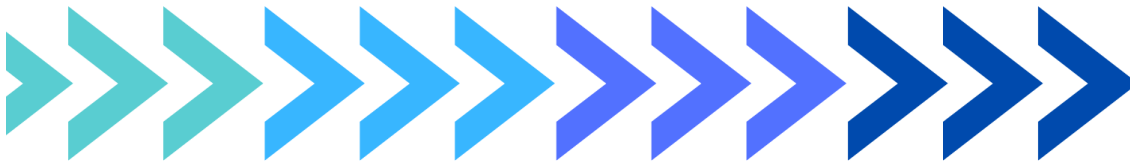
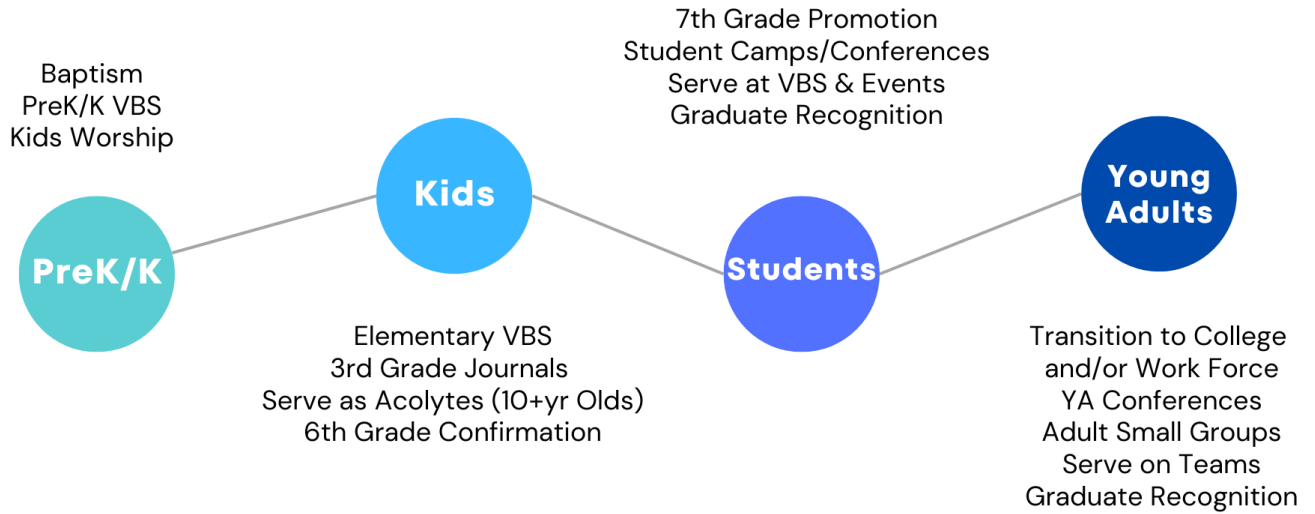
MILESTONES

As a church family, we recognize and celebrate significant milestones such as baptism, confirmation, and graduation. We also encourage family units to celebrate milestones specific to their households.

TRANSITIONS

Growing from PreK/K to Kids to Students to YA is often difficult. Therefore, the church strives to make these transitions as fluid as possible through alignment between ministries and strategic, intergenerational events.

MILESTONES AND KEY EVENTS



In FMCE Kids, we strive to create a safe and fun environment where kids worship God, learn His Word, and are equipped to live for Him. We also seek to partner with parents in helping kids become disciples of Jesus and grow as Christ-followers. All of our Bible studies and events are geared toward making this vision a reality for each child and family unit.

For more information about FMCE Kids, contact our Children's Director at children@fmce.church.

Regular, In School Schedule
Summer Will Vary

Sunday

- 9 AM Kids Worship (preK-2nd Grade)
- 10 AM Bible Study
- 11 AM Kids Worship (preK-2nd Grade)
- 5:30 PM Kids Worship

Wednesday

- 5:30 PM Activity & Bible Study





In FMCE Students, we strive to create a contemporary and welcoming environment where teens want to be and are excited to come. Our primary goal is to worship God, learn His Word, and live as citizens of His Kingdom. We also seek to partner with parents as they spiritually lead their teens to love and follow Jesus. Everything we do in FMCE Students is to accomplish these goals for all teens and family units.

For more information about FMCE Students, contact our Family Ministries Director at familymin@fmce.church.

Regular, In-School Schedule
Summer Will Vary

Sunday	10 AM Bible Study
	5:30 PM Student Worship
Wednesday	5:30 PM Activities & Bible Study
Thursday	6:30 AM AWAKEN Bible Study @ local coffee shop



Young Adults College and Career

Young adulthood (18-29ish), is one of the most exciting times in one's life, but it can be challenging to transition from high school to college and/or the work force.

At FMCE, we seek to provide resources and encouragement to equip young adults to live out their faith on their campuses and in their careers. We also desire to celebrate milestones such as college graduation, promotions, engagements, weddings, childbirths, and adoptions.

Our young adults are encouraged to join a small group, participate in both young adult and adult events, and serve the church on a Team.

Sunday Morning Group | 10 AM in the Library.

For more information about Young Adult ministry, contact our Family Ministries Director at familymin@fmce.church.





Biblical Foundation for Family Ministry

Deut 6:1–9

“This is the command—the statutes and ordinances—the Lord your God has commanded me to teach you... Do this so that you may fear the Lord your God all the days of your life by keeping all his statutes and commands I am giving you, your son, and your grandson,... Listen, Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. These words that I am giving you today are to be in your heart. Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Bind them as a sign on your hand and let them be a symbol on your forehead. Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your city gates.

Mark 10:13–16

People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, “Let the little children come to me. Don’t stop them, because the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” After taking them in his arms, he laid his hands on them and blessed them.

Romans 8:14–17

For all those led by God’s Spirit are God’s sons. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear. Instead, you received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father!” The Spirit himself testifies together with our spirit that we are God’s children, and if children, also heirs—heirs of God and coheirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

Matt 28:19–20

“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

