



The
**United
Reformed
Church**



Walking towards Easter together

URC Lent resource Guide for churches



Walking towards Easter together

This is a pack containing a 'map' of Lent, 250 stickers, a diary with space to journal and lots of prayers, challenges and activities, and a recipe booklet, beautifully presented in a recycled padded envelope. It is designed to be given or posted by a local church to students, seniors, families and households as a gift to help sustain and inspire them through Lent at this challenging time. The key focus is building connections with God and others.

You can order them here: www.bit.ly/towardseaster

Distribution

- The envelopes will be delivered to you at the start of February.
- They will be unsealed so that you can add any further items you wish to, such as a card indicating who the gift is from and details of services, groups and other support you are offering through Lent and at Easter.
- You could invite people to collect them, arrange a team to deliver in person to homes (with a doorstep chat) or post them.
- Encourage recipients to pass on or share any parts of the pack that they won't use (eg stickers and map, recipe booklet or some of the activities).

Families

- The pack reflects the season of Lent, and is much less colourful than the Advent box. To help families with young children, and those with additional needs, find instant ways to engage, there is a special family supplement produced by the FOFA@home team, which you can print off and add (two sheets of A4 double-sided, folded to make an A5 booklet). This would particularly support families from Messy Church, toddler groups, holiday clubs etc.
- If you know the family, you may wish to include an extra copy of the map, (there are plenty of stickers in the pack) which you can download, and small notebooks for journaling, so it is easier for all the children and adults to engage in some way.

- You could use some of the prayer and craft ideas in your family services or Sunday school groups – the weekly FOFA@home resource, published each Monday for the forthcoming Sunday, will use the same readings (see www.urc.org.uk/families-on-faith-adventures).
- Encourage families to share what they are doing on social media, to encourage each other.

Students

- You may have young adults who are away at college or university. You could send a pack to them, as a way to keep connected.
- You may have a college local to your church, and could offer this pack as part of your student ministry.
- You could offer a 'buddy' for Lent – a member of your congregation who will connect with them each week for a chat and an opportunity to reflect together – remember safer recruitment for buddies working with students under the age of 18.

Seniors

- The material does require reasonable eyesight for reading – but you could have a team record material if there is access to technology, or buddy up with a partner for a daily ten minute phone call to share the diary prompts for reflection.
- You could offer a weekly (online) coffee morning, and invite everyone to eat what they have baked, or show what they are making.

All-ages

- Different ages will engage with the materials in different ways – so this is a great opportunity to share that with some intergenerational gatherings, or connecting seniors with families, or through inviting a wide range of people to share things in your services (perhaps pre-recorded if not live).

- Different ages bring different skills, talents and perspectives to the materials – so why not share them through shared knitting / cooking / crafting sessions, or all-age small groups to pray and wonder together across Lent.

Encouraging engagement

You know your local context well – here are some ways churches helped people engage with the Advent pack which might work for you:

- Resources for journaling – pencils / pens / glue stick / craft paper.
- Craft packs to enable particular items to be made – providing the materials (perhaps weekly).
- Baking packs to enable recipes to be tried – providing the ingredients (perhaps weekly).

Please consider the current circumstances, and needs of those you are sending the Lent resource to. It can be disappointing and distressing to receive lovely ideas for things you cannot afford to do.

What could you do outside the church to help – put up a large MAP, build an Easter Garden?

Connecting to Holy Habits / linking to your worship

Holy Habits have a new book for Lent 2021:

“Holy Habits following Jesus” by Andrew Roberts, published by BRF.

We have used the same readings for all the Sundays as the book:

First Sunday of Lent – 21 February

Biblical teaching – Jesus in the wilderness. Luke 4:1-13

Second Sunday of Lent – 28 February

Serving and gladness and generosity – Jesus and the scroll.
Luke 4:16-19

Third Sunday of Lent – 7 March

Breaking bread, sharing resources and eating together – feeding of the 5000. Luke 9:12-17

Fourth Sunday of Lent – 14 March – Mothering Sunday

Prayer, fellowship, worship – Lord’s Prayer. Luke 11:1-4

Fifth Sunday of Lent – 21 March

Making more disciples and eating together – Zacchaeus. Luke 19:1-10

Sixth Sunday of Lent – 28 March – Palm Sunday

Gladness and generosity and worship – Entering Jerusalem. Luke 19:28-39

Easter Sunday – 4 April

Worship – resurrection Luke 24:36-53

Walking the Way have more resources to help congregations explore the Holy Habits:

- Short video to introduce each one – URC Holy Habits Playlist: www.bit.ly/holyhabitsplaylist
- Downloadable posters: www.urc.org.uk/holy-habits
- www.urc.org.uk/wtw

Easter Day

Encourage everyone to bring to church (or share online) what they have made / discovered through keeping the journal etc.

Draw it all together within your worship.

After Easter

What could you carry on after Easter to keep building connections with each other and with God?

We would love your feedback on the URC Lent resource and how you plan to use it in your local setting. Please email philippa.linton@urc.org.uk and share through Facebook with the [@theUnitedReformedChurch](https://www.facebook.com/theUnitedReformedChurch) or [@URCchildren.and.youth](https://www.facebook.com/URCchildren.and.youth)



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