

Children & Family Ministry Ideas for Lent

Lent is the season in the church when we get our hearts ready for the mystery of Easter. The season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, February 14th. This season continues for six weeks and ends with Holy Week. Holy week is the time when we celebrate and remember Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, and Easter. Lent is an important time in our individual and family faith journeys. There are many ways to connect with God during this holy time. As you consider how you and your family will participate Lent, we invite you to review the suggestions, activities, and resources below. This list reflects a conversation and ideas shared by children's ministry leaders in the Rio Texas Conference. Thanks to all for your contributions! We hope these suggestions help you and your families as you look toward the mystery of Easter together.

Intergenerational Activities:

- [#picturelent](#) a lenten photo challenge with daily devotional and other ministry resources.

Families at Home

- [#picturelent](#)- a lenten photo challenge with daily devotional and other ministry resources.
- [Lenten Family Calendar](#) (inviting families to do something together every day before Easter)
- [Lenten Family Study](#)
- [Coins for lent](#)

Lenten Gatherings:

- Host a Fat Tuesday/Shrove Tuesday Pancake supper or Pre-Lenten meal. Decorate with place mats that display the calendar of Lenten events for your community.
- [Pretzel Sunday](#): Bake pretzels before lent starts, talk about how the pretzel was designed as a way to teach children how to pray.
- Easter egg hunt
 - include a worship service- focus on palm sunday, getting ready for holy week
 - hide special eggs- when a child finds the specially marked egg- have them return it to the church leader, answer a question about Lent, and then receive a special prize
- Host a "Christ has risen" celebration on Easter morning
 - include different stations families can move through together
 - hand out confetti eggs- celebrate the resurrection of Christ with confetti
- Go dark during Holy week: invite your families and congregations to hold Holy week as a special time to be together, to focus on God, to rest, and to breath. Consider eliminating all activities during the week of Lent giving everyone a sabbath from being "busy." Invite families to attend worship services as a way to support this focused time with God and each other.
- Host a weekly time for children/families that includes Lenten scripture, story, song, and other activities. Serve a simple meal and provide one question for the table to discuss together.

Have something you want to add or share? E-mail: tcampen@riotexas.org

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Worship

- Maundy Thursday:
 - Plan a family friendly service where you incorporate washing of feet or washing of hands
 - Participate in a Seder
- Good Friday: Plan an interactive, family friendly journey through the Stations of the Cross
- Easter: Invite your community to decorate a cross with individual flowers
- [Illustrated Children's Ministry Resources](#)
- [Take out hallelujahs](#)- by making small changes in worship and through our explanation of these changes- we invite persons of all ages to understand that Lent is a different time- a time of inward reflection as we turn to and focus on God.
<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/burying-the-alleluia-during-lent>
- Use the children's message to teach about lent as a time for getting ready and growing closer to God
- [Godly Play: Volume 4](#) offers a 7 week story, [Faces of Jesus](#), that walks students through Jesus' life journey from birth to death to the resurrection. This is a great way to engage persons of all ages in the narrative that shapes this Holy season.

Other Lenten Resources:

- [Lent and United Methodism](#)
- [United Methodist Lent and Easter resources for Families](#)
- [Cokesbury book store: Books, activities, gifts, and more](#)
- [Come Worship With Me](#)
- [Seasons of Faith](#)