

**Arana Hills  
Uniting Church**



# *Lent Devotions*



**2023**



February 22

View



## READ

### Joel 2:12-14, CEB

Yet even now, says the Lord,  
return to me with all your hearts,  
with fasting, with weeping, and with sorrow;  
tear your hearts  
and not your clothing.  
Return to the Lord your God,  
for he is merciful and compassionate,  
very patient, full of faithful love,  
and ready to forgive.

Who knows whether he will have a change of heart  
and leave a blessing behind him,  
a grain offering and a drink offering  
for the Lord your God?

## WONDER

- I wonder how you are preparing for Lent this year?
- I wonder which image speaks to you and why?
- I wonder how do you turn to God?
- I wonder How God is speaking to you through this scripture?

## PRAY

God of Love,  
thank you for these words in scripture. Thank you for being patient, gracious,  
merciful, and loving. Help us to turn to you every day. During this Lenten season,  
draw us closer to you. In your name we pray.  
Amen.

February 23

View





## READ

### Psalm 90:1-2

A prayer of Moses, the man of God.

Lord, you have been our help,  
generation after generation.

Before the mountains were born,  
before you birthed the earth and the inhabited world—  
from forever in the past  
to forever in the future, you are God.

## WONDER

- Look at the wide-open spaces in these photographs. How do these images shape how you hear and feel the words, “before the mountains were born?”
- How do these pictures show a shift in technology – from the picture with only a fence to a picture with an older and smaller windmill to an image with bullet holes in the speed limit sign and gigantic, modern windmills? How is God at work in this evolution?
- As the Season of Lent begins, for what do you give God thanks in your life?
- What does your “forever in the future” look like for you? How is the Holy Spirit shaping that vision?

## PRAY

As we stand near the beginning of this road to Easter – as we ready ourselves for the awful yet amazing Holy Week that is to come – we know your hand is in it all, and we ask that you help us see where you have intervened on our behalf. Gracious God, you have been our help; you have guided our families – present and past – and you will continue your blessings upon our families well into the future. Throughout all the generations, you have shown us all the very best way to travel our faith journey, and that is with your hope, with your grace, and with your peace. In the name of your son, our Jesus, we pray.

Amen.

February 24

View



## READ

### 1 Corinthians 15:45-49, CEB

So it is also written, The first human, Adam, became a living person, and the last Adam became a spirit that gives life. But the physical body comes first, not the spiritual one—the spiritual body comes afterward. The first human was from the earth made from dust; the second human is from heaven. The nature of the person made of dust is shared by people who are made of dust, and the nature of the heavenly person is shared by heavenly people. We will look like the heavenly person in the same way as we have looked like the person made from dust.

## WONDER

- What could be the difference between being alive and being filled with the living spirit?
- Who is the last Adam and why is He the last?
- In what way might we begin to transform from our physical body to a spiritual one during this life?
- Have you ever had a moment when you were able to see the spiritual idea in something physical? For instance, a car has many parts working together, as does the body of Christ. Or in nature?

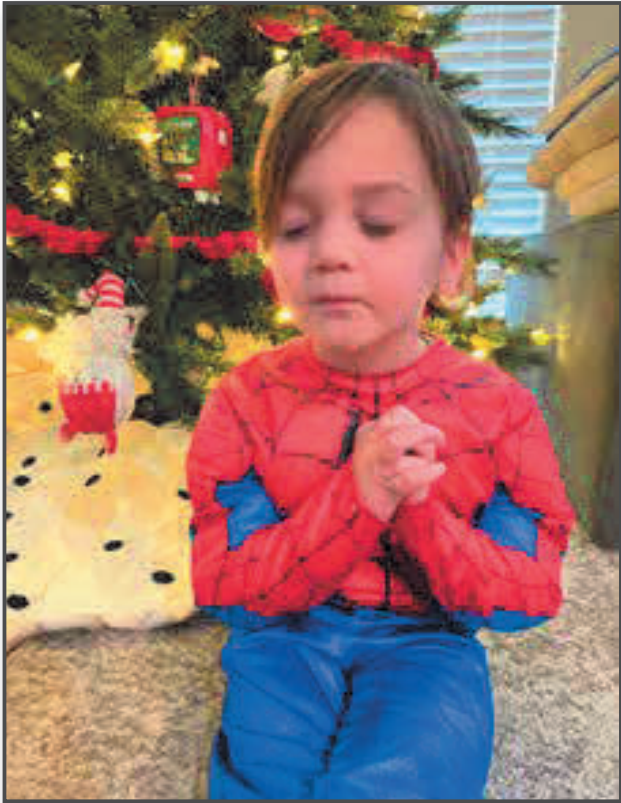
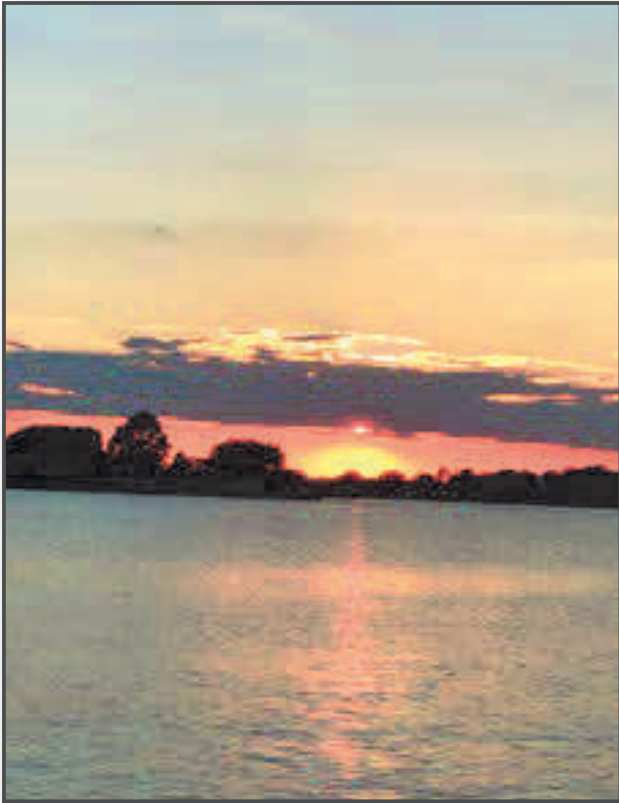
## PRAY

Gracious God, thank you for this day. Thank you for helping us to raise ourselves from something higher than just physical dust. As we live our busy lives, help us to remember to always turn to You, the source of all that is heavenly, that we may have the strength to model our lives after the most heavenly of lives, Jesus Christ. Amen.



February 25

View



## READ

### Matthew 6:1-4, CEB

“Be careful that you don’t practice your religion in front of people to draw their attention. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. “Whenever you give to the poor, don’t blow your trumpet as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets so that they may get praise from people. I assure you, that’s the only reward they’ll get. But when you give to the poor, don’t let your left hand know what your right hand is doing so that you may give to the poor in secret. Your Father who sees what you do in secret will reward you.

## WONDER

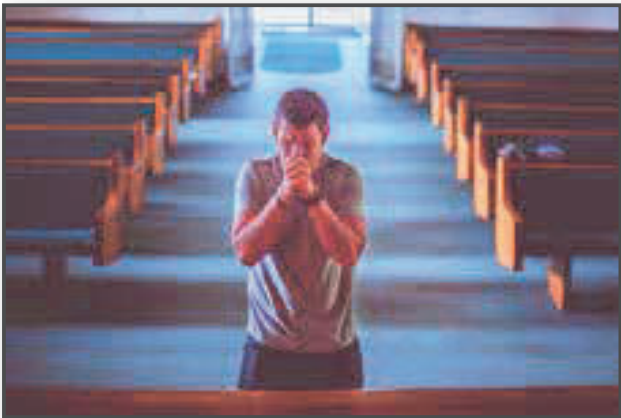
- I wonder how helping others fits into your daily routine?
- I wonder if helping or serving others comes naturally to you or do you have to work at it?
- I wonder: do you like to pray out loud? If so, when do you pray so that others hear you?

## PRAY

Dear God, help my thoughts and actions be pleasing to you. Help me to see through your eyes and to respond in ways that bring honour and glory to you. Guide me through this Lenten journey to be more like you. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

February 26

View



## READ

### Matthew 6:5-6, CEB

#### Showy prayer

“When you pray, don’t be like hypocrites. They love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners so that people will see them. I assure you, that’s the only reward they’ll get. But when you pray, go to your room, shut the door, and pray to your Father who is present in that secret place. Your Father who sees what you do in secret will reward you”

## WONDER

- Where do you like to pray?
- Where/how did Jesus pray to God according to the Gospels?
- What kind(s) of reward(s) do you think God might give us when we pray in the way outlined in this Scripture passage?
- I wonder how God feels when we make the focus of our prayers honest words and thoughts, instead of trying to impress one another.

## PRAY

Wonderful and watching God, we know that we can always come to you in prayer and that you will hear us. Whether we pray together aloud in worship or silently alone in our rooms, help us to always lift sincere prayers with the sole intention of communicating with you. Send your Holy Spirit into our hearts and minds to help us to remain humble and honest in our prayers, that we might continue to grow authentically in our relationship with you. Amen.