

LENT RESOUC: OPEN EYES, BURNING HEARTS

SUNDAY'S LECTIONARY READINGS INTERFACE

THE REV. ERIC M. MILETTI

TOPIC 1

(FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT)

Luke 24: 13-16	Jesus walks with us even if we don't recognize him.
Liturgical Calendar	(Lk.4:1-13) The temptation of Jesus.
Bridge-Concept	God's relationship with us is not built on our "abilities" to recognize him (human intellect) or good deeds (human will), and despite our own sin, God's presence and love is always unconditional towards all of us
Core Values	Authenticity / Acceptance / Gratitude
Biblical Text	<i>"We love Him because He first loved us."</i> 1 John 4:19 (NKJV)
Suggested Topics	Daily Temptations / The Hidden God (Deus Absconditus)

TOPIC 2

(SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT)

Luke 24: 17-19	Questions that offer deeper possibilities of conversation.
Liturgical Calendar	(Lk. 13:31-35) Jesus' sorrow for Jerusalem
Bridge-Concept	Christians are called to follow God's will for the sake of the Gospel despite our own desires or circumstances.
Core Values	Growth / Serenity / Integrity / Maturity /
Biblical Texts	<i>"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."</i> Gal. 2:20 (NKJV)
Suggested Topics	Human suffering / Church as a place for deeper and significant conversations.

TOPIC 3

(THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT)

Luke 24: 21-22	How perception (“hopes and dreams”) can get in the way of what God is already doing.
Liturgical Calendar	(Luke 13:1-9) Repent or Perish
Bridge-Concept	Repenting is not just to feel sorrow about our sin, but to recognize our limitations as human and embrace what God’s is already doing around us.
Core Values	Loyalty / Inner Harmony /
Biblical Texts	<i>“That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’⁸ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”</i> John 3:6-8 (NKJV)
Suggested Topics	Our decisions and perceptions and keep us from recognizing God’s actions /Personal hopes and dreams vs. alignment with the kingdom of God’s hopes and dreams.

TOPIC 4

(FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT)

Luke 24: 22-24	When the men find out that things are just as the women have said... Power listening to the margins.
Liturgical Calendar	(Lk. 15:1-3, 11b-32) Lost and Found
Bridge-Concept	Preaching, teaching and living the gospel is to announce the good news of salvation (lost and found), but also the act of calling out sin: personal, cultural and systemic. Speaking the liberating truth of the gospel to institutional and cultural sin.
Core Values	Fairness / Equity / Social Accountability / Power
Biblical Text	<i>“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”</i> Luke 4:18-19 (NKJV)
Suggested Topics	Gender Injustices / Structural sin / Social injustices / Discrimination

TOPIC 5

(FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT)

Luke 24:33-35	What happened in the graveyard, the road and the breaking of the bread... Amazing God's stories.
Liturgical Calendar	(John 12:1-8) Jesus anointed at Bethany
Bridge-Concept	As Christians we take joy in telling others our own God's stories; we have died with Christ in order to be resurrected with him.
Core Values	Awareness / Purpose / Passion
Biblical Text	<i>"Now the man from whom the demons had departed begged Him that he might be with Him. But Jesus sent him away, saying, "Return to your own house, and tell what great things God has done for you." And he went his way and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him."</i> Luke 8:38-39 (NKJV)
Suggested Topics	Own stories of faith / Make new in Christ / How to share God's stories

Topic 6

(PALM SUNDAY)

Luke 24:29	Stay with us. Prayer, and how hospitality is centered on the invitee, not the interest of the inviter.
Liturgical Calendar	(Lk. 19:28-40) The Triumphal Entry
Bridge-Concept	The act of inviting others (maybe for the first time) to be part of us, as one of us, in the communion table, as leaders, readers, teachers, host or just supportive staff always fulfills the purpose of the kingdom where everyone (regarding age, gender, race, language, social preference, social status or past personal history), belongs. This is the Triumphal Entry of the Son of God brings with it the fullness of the kingdom of heaven. As we invite, we are changed by the one we invite.
Core Values	Openness / Understanding / Acceptance / Harmony / Unity
Biblical Text	<i>"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."</i> Gal.3:38 (NKJV)
Suggested Topics	Radical Hospitality / Celebration / Church Invitations

TOPIC 7

(MAUNDY THURSDAY)

Luke 24:30-31	Maundy Thursday connections on recognizing Christ in broken bread, can also connect to God's story in Lk24:35.
Liturgical Calendar	(John 13:1-17, 31b-35) Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet / Love One Another
Bridge-Concept	Breaking the bread in the faith community is a way to recognize that Christ has given himself for us, so we can give ourselves for others.
Core Values	Community / Selfless service / Kindness /
Biblical Text	<i>"So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved". Acts 2:46-47 (NKJV)</i>
Suggested Topics	Church connections to the community in selfless service / Embracing our bothers and sisters' needs in the faith community / Spiritual connections at the Lord's Supper.

TOPIC 8

(GOOD FRIDAY)

Luke 24:31	Vanished from their sight... Good Friday, the absent God, the loss of the divine.
Liturgical Calendar	(John 18:1---19:42) Jesus' Trial, Crucifixion, Death and Burial
Bridge-Concept	Being a Christian does not shield us against suffering and tribulations, or feeling abandoned by God, but God's peace and consolation does prevail.
Core Values	Resilience / Confidence / Trust / Fidelity
Biblical Text	<i>How long, O Lord? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, Having sorrow in my heart daily? How long will my enemy be exalted over me? Psalm 13:1-2 (NKJV)</i>
Suggested Topics	Theology of the Cross / Human Despair / Abandonment

TOPIC 9

(EASTER SUNDAY)

Luke 24:32-33	Open eyes, burning hearts. What is it to become profoundly aware of the presence of God or of how God's story impacts our lives and changes us.
Liturgical Calendar	(Lk. 24:1-12) The Resurrection
Bridge-Concept	The resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ is God's final defeat of the power of sin and death. The resurrection truly changes everything. God's Reign is real. Grounded in this new reality our eyes are open and our hearts are burning with the power of the Holy Spirit of God. Alleluia!
Core Values	Devotion / Endurance / Truth / Liberty
Biblical Text	<i>"O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?" The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord".</i> 1 Corinthians 15:55-58
Suggested Topics	Hope / Passion for Christ / The promises of the Lord / Life after death