

Lenten Devotions **for Families**



Lectionary
Year C

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Created by: Ariel Williams

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For additional information contact Ariel Williams at:

- Email: vivajavaluia@gmail.com
- www.javaluia.com

Additional information regarding Praying in Color can be found at:

- <http://prayingincolor.com/>
- Or by purchasing *Praying in Color*; *Praying in Color Kids Edition*; or *Praying in Black and White* by Sybil MacBeth

Opening Prayers:

- Lenten Sunday Prayers of the Day – found on ELCA Worship Page. <http://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Congregations-and-Synods/Worship/Lectionary/YearB#Lent>

LENT- WHAT DOES IT MEAN?:

As early as the mid-fourth century, Christians have observed a time of preparation before the Easter celebration. The Lenten season begins on Ash Wednesday and lasts for 40 days. The forty days of Lent recall the 40 day fast of Jesus in the wilderness after his baptism (Matthew 4:2, Luke 4:1-2) and Moses' 40 day fast on Mount Sinai (Exodus 34:28). It is a time of simplicity and preparation.

The Principal Themes of Lent include penitence; baptismal renewal; preparation for baptism at the Easter Vigil; prayer, fasting, and service; confession of sin rooted in the promise of God that comes through the cross of Christ.

Purple is the seasonal color which suggests somberness & solemnity as well as royalty.

(Taken from www.elca.org)

LENT AT HOME:

Life is busy! Work, school, athletic events, extra-curricular activities, travel, church, civic organizations, friends, family, etc. occupy much if not all of our time. We often choose to “give-up” something for Lent that won’t really be an inconvenience for us. It rarely brings us closer to God.

This Lent I encourage you all to spend time as a family reflecting, praying, and preparing. This devotional resource is intended to give you tools to have family devotions. It is built around the prayer practices of Lectio Divina & Praying in Color as well as the physical exercise practices of yoga and walking. The weekly lesson is intended to be repeated each night so that you can continue to learn, reflect, and expand. Your prayers will inevitably shift based on your days experiences. There are also lessons for Ash Wednesday and Holy Week.

LECTIO DIVINA:

In Christianity, **Lectio Divina** (Latin for *divine reading*) is a traditional Benedictine practice of scriptural reading, meditation and prayer intended to promote communion with God and to increase the knowledge of God's Word. It does not treat Scripture as texts to be studied, but as the Living Word.

Traditionally Lectio Divina has 4 separate steps: *read, meditate, pray* and *contemplate*. First a passage of Scripture is read, then its meaning is reflected upon. This is followed by prayer and contemplation on the Word of God. For use with children I have simplified the steps down to *read, think, pray, and rest*. See Appendix A for a visual graphic explaining Lectio Divina.

PRAYING IN COLOR:

Praying in Color is a concept developed by Sybil MacBeth for the times when we have no words but want to communicate with God. It is particularly wonderful for children as they often have short attention spans, don't know how or what to pray, view prayer time as a chore, etc. Praying in color incorporates doodling, coloring, & prayer all together. No words are necessary. Think of a person, place, organization, that you would like to pray for. Write down their name and begin to doodle and color on the page while thinking about them. When your picture feels complete, your prayer is also. To incorporate in with Lectio Divina, write down a word or phrase that struck you from the passage you read and then doodle and color the page during the “Pray/Oratio” step.

(For more information get *Praying in Color* or *Praying in Color Kid's Edition* by Sybil MacBeth)

ASH WEDNESDAY

Opening Prayer:

Gracious God, out of your love and mercy you breathed into dust the breath of life, creating us to serve you and our neighbors. Call forth our prayers and acts of kindness, and strengthen us to face our mortality with confidence in the mercy of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

High's & Low's:

Share the best and worst parts of your day.

Yoga or Calming Breaths:

Consider lighting a scented candle to help with calming & relaxation. If your family needs to burn off a little energy to focus before beginning, consider performing the yoga stretches in Appendix B. If your family is relatively focused, then sit for a minute or so and breathe deeply and quietly.

Read (Lectio):

Matthew 6: 5-6; 19-21 **OR** The Widow's Offering (Pg. 342 Spark Story Bible)

Think (Meditatio):

Think about what you just heard... take a silent walk, sit quietly, or choose one of the relaxation yoga poses and reflect on the words... **NOT THE MESSAGE!**

Pray (Oratio):

Pray in Color – Write down a word or phrase that struck you. Doodle & Color on the page until you feel it is complete. A template to help get you started is available in Appendix C.

Rest (Contemplatio):

Again, take a walk, sit quietly, or choose one of the relaxation yoga poses and reflect on the words and your prayer.

Share: As a family, share your pictures and what words struck you. If you choose to use the seasonal template, fill in one day at a time & share what you selected to pray for that day, and why.

Bless: Child of God – You came from dust and to dust you will return.

FIRST WEEK IN LENT:

Opening Prayer:

O Lord God, you led your people through the wilderness and brought them to the promised land. Guide us now, so that, following your Son, we may walk safely through the wilderness of this world toward the life you alone can give, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

High's & Low's:

Share the best and worst parts of your day.

Yoga or Calming Breaths:

Consider lighting a scented candle to help with calming & relaxation. If your family needs to burn off a little energy to focus before beginning, consider performing the yoga stretches in Appendix B. If your family is relatively focused, then sit for a minute or so and breathe deeply and quietly.

Read (Lectio):

Luke 4: 1-13 **OR** Tempted (Pg. 248 Spark Story Bible)

Think (Meditatio):

Think about what you just heard... take a silent walk, sit quietly, or choose one of the relaxation yoga poses and reflect on the words... NOT THE MESSAGE!

Pray (Oratio):

Pray in Color – Write down a word or phrase that struck you. Doodle & Color on the page until you feel it is complete. A template to help get you started is available in Appendix C.

Rest (Contemplatio):

Again, take a walk, sit quietly, or choose one of the relaxation yoga poses and reflect on the words and your prayer.

Share: As a family, share your pictures and what words struck you. If you choose to use the seasonal template, fill in one day at a time & share what you selected to pray for that day, and why.

Bless: Child of God – Christ is with you in the wilderness.

SECOND WEEK IN LENT:

Opening Prayer:

God of the covenant, in the mystery of the cross you promise everlasting life to the world. Gather all peoples into your arms, and shelter us with your mercy, that we may rejoice in the life we share in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

High's & Low's:

Share the best and worst parts of your day.

Yoga or Calming Breaths:

Consider lighting a scented candle to help with calming & relaxation. If your family needs to burn off a little energy to focus before beginning, consider performing the yoga stretches in Appendix B. If your family is relatively focused, then sit for a minute or so and breathe deeply and quietly.

Read (Lectio):

Luke 13: 31-35 **OR** Be Ready (Pg. 346 Spark Story Bible)

Think (Meditatio):

Think about what you just heard... take a silent walk, sit quietly, or choose one of the relaxation yoga poses and reflect on the words... **NOT THE MESSAGE!**

Pray (Oratio):

Pray in Color – Write down a word or phrase that struck you. Doodle & Color on the page until you feel it is complete. A template to help get you started is available in Appendix C.

Rest (Contemplatio):

Again, take a walk, sit quietly, or choose one of the relaxation yoga poses and reflect on the words and your prayer.

Share: As a family, share your pictures and what words struck you. If you choose to use the seasonal template, fill it in one day at a time & share what you selected to pray for that day, and why.

Bless: Child of God – Christ protects and shelters you.

THIRD WEEK IN LENT:

Opening Prayer:

Eternal God, your kingdom has broken into our troubled world through the life, death, and resurrection of your Son. Help us to hear your word and obey it, and bring your saving love to fruition in our lives, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

High's & Low's:

Share the best and worst parts of your day.

Yoga or Calming Breaths:

Consider lighting a scented candle to help with calming & relaxation. If your family needs to burn off a little energy to focus before beginning, consider performing the yoga stretches in Appendix B. If your family is relatively focused, then sit for a minute or so and breathe deeply and quietly.

Read (Lectio):

Matthew Luke 13: 1-9 **OR** Parable of the Fig Tree (Pg. 372 Spark Story Bible)

Think (Meditatio):

Think about what you just heard... take a silent walk, sit quietly, or choose one of the relaxation yoga poses and reflect on the words... **NOT THE MESSAGE!**

Pray (Oratio):

Pray in Color – Write down a word or phrase that struck you. Doodle & Color on the page until you feel it is complete. A template to help get you started is available in Appendix C.

Rest (Contemplatio):

Again, take a walk, sit quietly, or choose one of the relaxation yoga poses and reflect on the words and your prayer.

Share: As a family, share your pictures and what words struck you. If you choose to use the seasonal template, fill in one day at a time & share what you selected to pray for that day, and why.

Bless: Child of God – Jesus Christ is the Word of God. Listen to him.

FOURTH WEEK IN LENT:

Opening Prayer:

God of compassion, you welcome the wayward, and you embrace us all with your mercy. By our baptism clothe us with garments of your grace, and feed us at the table of your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

High's & Low's:

Share the best and worst parts of your day.

Yoga or Calming Breaths:

Consider lighting a scented candle to help with calming & relaxation. If your family needs to burn off a little energy to focus before beginning, consider performing the yoga stretches in Appendix B. If your family is relatively focused, then sit for a minute or so and breathe deeply and quietly.

Read (Lectio):

Luke 15: 11b-32 **OR** The Prodigal Son (Pg. 378 Spark Story Bible)

Think (Meditatio):

Think about what you just heard... take a silent walk, sit quietly, or choose one of the relaxation yoga poses and reflect on the words... **NOT THE MESSAGE!**

Pray (Oratio):

Pray in Color – Write down a word or phrase that struck you. Doodle & Color on the page until you feel it is complete. A template to help get you started is available in Appendix C.

Rest (Contemplatio):

Again, take a walk, sit quietly, or choose one of the relaxation yoga poses and reflect on the words and your prayer.

Share: As a family, share your pictures and what words struck you. If you choose to use the seasonal template, fill in one day at a time & share what you selected to pray for that day, and why.

Bless: Child of God – Baptized and freed. Christ provides and cares for you.

FIFTH WEEK IN LENT:

Opening Prayer:

Creator God, you prepare a new way in the wilderness, and your grace waters our desert. Open our hearts to be transformed by the new thing you are doing, that our lives may proclaim the extravagance of your love given to all through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

High's & Low's:

Share the best and worst parts of your day.

Yoga or Calming Breaths:

Consider lighting a scented candle to help with calming & relaxation. If your family needs to burn off a little energy to focus before beginning, consider performing the yoga stretches in Appendix B. If your family is relatively focused, then sit for a minute or so and breathe deeply and quietly.

Read (Lectio):

John 12: 1-8 **OR** Mary Anoints Jesus (Pg. 444 Spark Story Bible)

Think (Meditatio):

Think about what you just heard... take a silent walk, sit quietly, or choose one of the relaxation yoga poses and reflect on the words... **NOT THE MESSAGE!**

Pray (Oratio):

Pray in Color – Write down a word or phrase that struck you. Doodle & Color on the page until you feel it is complete. A template to help get you started is available in Appendix C.

Rest (Contemplatio):

Again, take a walk, sit quietly, or choose one of the relaxation yoga poses and reflect on the words and your prayer.

Share: As a family, share your pictures and what words struck you. If you choose to use the seasonal template, fill in one day at a time & share what you selected to pray for that day, and why.

Bless: Child of God – Christ loves you deeply. Open your heart and accept his love.

PALM SUNDAY:

Opening Prayer:

O God of mercy and might, in the mystery of the passion of your Son you offer your infinite life to the world. Gather us around the cross of Christ, and preserve us until the resurrection, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

High's & Low's:

Share the best and worst parts of your day.

Yoga or Calming Breaths:

Consider lighting a scented candle to help with calming & relaxation. If your family needs to burn off a little energy to focus before beginning, consider performing the yoga stretches in Appendix B. If your family is relatively focused, then sit for a minute or so and breathe deeply and quietly.

Read (Lectio):

Luke 22: 14-23 **OR** Palm Sunday (Pg. 454 Spark Story Bible)

Think (Meditatio):

Think about what you just heard... take a silent walk, sit quietly, or choose one of the relaxation yoga poses and reflect on the words... **NOT THE MESSAGE!**

Pray (Oratio):

Pray in Color – Write down a word or phrase that struck you. Doodle & Color on the page until you feel it is complete. A template to help get you started is available in Appendix C.

Rest (Contemplatio):

Again, take a walk, sit quietly, or choose one of the relaxation yoga poses and reflect on the words and your prayer.

Share: As a family, share your pictures and what words struck you. If you choose to use the seasonal template, fill in one day at a time & share what you selected to pray for that day, and why.

Bless: Child of God – Jesus Christ is the Messiah... proclaim his glory.

MAUNDY THURSDAY:

Opening Prayer:

Eternal God, in the sharing of a meal your Son established a new covenant for all people, and in the washing of feet he showed us the dignity of service. Grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit these signs of our life in faith may speak again to our hearts, feed our spirits, and refresh our bodies, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

High's & Low's:

Share the best and worst parts of your day.

Yoga or Calming Breaths:

Consider lighting a scented candle to help with calming & relaxation. If your family needs to burn off a little energy to focus before beginning, consider performing the yoga stretches in Appendix B. If your family is relatively focused, then sit for a minute or so and breathe deeply and quietly.

Read (Lectio):

John 13: 1-17, 31b-35 **OR** The Last Supper (Pg. 362 Spark Story Bible)

Think (Meditatio):

Think about what you just heard... take a silent walk, sit quietly, or choose one of the relaxation yoga poses and reflect on the words... **NOT THE MESSAGE!**

Pray (Oratio):

Pray in Color – Write down a word or phrase that struck you. Doodle & Color on the page until you feel it is complete. A template to help get you started is available in Appendix C.

Rest (Contemplatio):

Again, take a walk, sit quietly, or choose one of the relaxation yoga poses and reflect on the words and your prayer.

Share: As a family, share your pictures and what words struck you. If you choose to use the seasonal template, fill in one day at a time & share what you selected to pray for that day, and why.

Bless: Child of God – Jesus Christ is servant to all. Go forth and serve others.

GOOD FRIDAY:

Opening Prayer:

Almighty God, look with loving mercy on your family, for whom our Lord Jesus Christ was willing to be betrayed, to be given over to the hands of sinners, and to suffer death on the cross; who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

High's & Low's:

Share the best and worst parts of your day.

Yoga or Calming Breaths:

Consider lighting a scented candle to help with calming & relaxation. If your family needs to burn off a little energy to focus before beginning, consider performing the yoga stretches in Appendix B. If your family is relatively focused, then sit for a minute or so and breathe deeply and quietly.

Read (Lectio):

John 18:1-19 **OR** Jesus is Betrayed (Pg. 468 Spark Story Bible)

AND

John 19: 16b – 35 **OR** The Day Jesus Died (Pg. 476 Spark Story Bible)

Think (Meditatio):

Think about what you just heard... take a silent walk, sit quietly, or choose one of the relaxation yoga poses and reflect on the words... NOT THE MESSAGE!

Pray (Oratio):

Pray in Color – Write down a word or phrase that struck you. Doodle & Color on the page until you feel it is complete. A template to help get you started is available in Appendix C.

Rest (Contemplatio):

Again, take a walk, sit quietly, or choose one of the relaxation yoga poses and reflect on the words and your prayer.

Share: As a family, share your pictures and what words struck you. If you choose to use the seasonal template, fill in one day at a time & share what you selected to pray for that day, and why.

Bless: Child of God – Jesus died for you.

EASTER VIGIL:

Opening Prayer:

O God, you are the creator of the world, the liberator of your people, and the wisdom of the earth. By the resurrection of your Son free us from our fears, restore us in your image, and ignite us with your light, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

High's & Low's:

Share the best and worst parts of your day.

Yoga or Calming Breaths:

Consider lighting a scented candle to help with calming & relaxation. If your family needs to burn off a little energy to focus before beginning, consider performing the yoga stretches in Appendix B. If your family is relatively focused, then sit for a minute or so and breathe deeply and quietly.

Read (Lectio):

John 20: 1-18 **OR** The Empty Tomb (Pg. 482 Spark Story Bible)

Think (Meditatio):

Think about what you just heard... take a silent walk, sit quietly, or choose one of the relaxation yoga poses and reflect on the words... **NOT THE MESSAGE!**

Pray (Oratio):

Pray in Color – Write down a word or phrase that struck you. Doodle & Color on the page until you feel it is complete. A template to help get you started is available in Appendix C.

Rest (Contemplatio):

Again, take a walk, sit quietly, or choose one of the relaxation yoga poses and reflect on the words and your prayer.

Share: As a family, share your pictures and what words struck you. If you choose to use the seasonal template, fill in one day at a time & share what you selected to pray for that day, and why.

Bless: Child of God – Jesus Christ defeated death and opened the way to eternal life.

EASTER SUNDAY:

Opening Prayer:

God of mercy, we no longer look for Jesus among the dead, for he is alive and has become the Lord of life. Increase in our minds and hearts the risen life we share with Christ, and help us to grow as your people toward the fullness of eternal life with you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Alleluia! **Amen.**

High's & Low's:

Share the best and worst parts of your day.

Yoga or Calming Breaths:

Consider lighting a scented candle to help with calming & relaxation. If your family needs to burn off a little energy to focus before beginning, consider performing the yoga stretches in Appendix B. If your family is relatively focused, then sit for a minute or so and breathe deeply and quietly.

Read (Lectio):

Luke 24: 1-12 **OR** The Empty Tomb (Pg. 482 Spark Story Bible)

Think (Meditatio):

Think about what you just heard... take a silent walk, sit quietly, or choose one of the relaxation yoga poses and reflect on the words... **NOT THE MESSAGE!**

Pray (Oratio):

Pray in Color – Write down a word or phrase that struck you. Doodle & Color on the page until you feel it is complete. A template to help get you started is available in Appendix C.

Rest (Contemplatio):

Again, take a walk, sit quietly, or choose one of the relaxation yoga poses and reflect on the words and your prayer.

Share: As a family, share your pictures and what words struck you. If you choose to use the seasonal template, fill in one day at a time & share what you selected to pray for that day, and why.

Bless: Child of God – Jesus Christ is Risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

APPENDIX A:
LECTIO DIVINA



APPENDIX B: **YOGA POSES**

Poses to Help Work Out Excess Energy:



Sun Pose – Stand with your feet shoulder width apart and reach toward the sky.



Earth Pose – Stand with your feet shoulder width apart and reach toward the ground.



Friend Pose – Reach out your arms like you are reaching out to hug a friend.



Warrior 1 – Back leg straight, front leg bend, hands together extended above your head.

APPENDIX B CONTINUED: **YOGA POSES**

Poses to Help Work Out Excess Energy:



Warrior 2 – Back leg straight, front leg slightly bend, arms held out in front and back of you.



Mountain Pose – Legs shoulder width apart, arms held over your head, hands pressed together.

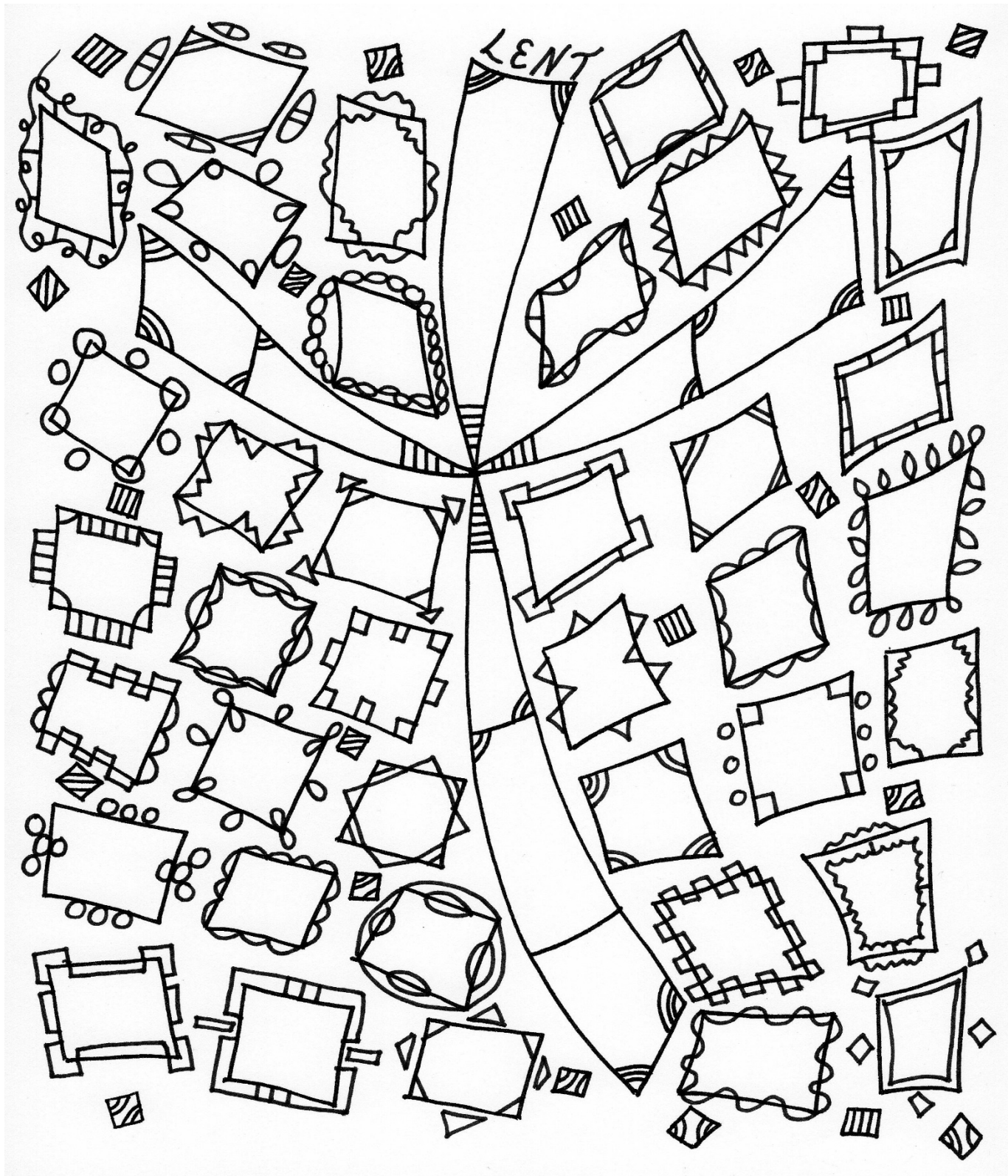
Prayer Poses (Can be used while listening to the reading):



Standing Prayer Pose – Balanced on one leg, the other is bent and foot is placed beside your knee. Hands placed together against your chest.

Seated Prayer Pose – Legs crossed, hands placed together against your chest.

APPENDIX C: **PRAYING IN COLOR TEMPLATE**



This and other templates can be downloaded from:
<http://prayingincolor.com/handouts>