

# Words of welcome

**Welcome to this six-session Lenten journey as we walk with Jesus toward Easter.**

Allow around an hour for each session if you are working through this material yourself, and take time to pause and reflect as you work through.

Some sessions may stir strong emotions. Please don't be afraid of this; allow God to meet you where you are and if you would like to talk things through, please contact either myself or one of the worship team for support.

We hope these six sessions will be a blessing to you, and that through them you will draw closer to Jesus.

**Rev Pam Smith**  
**Lent: 2026**

Session 1: The Invitation to Walk

Session 2: Walking in the Wilderness

Session 3: Walking with the Outcast

Session 4: Walking Toward Jerusalem

Session 5: Walking Through The Shadows

Session 6: Walking Into The Dawn

YouTube Playlist: [Lent 2026](#)

# Session 1 — The Invitation to Walk

## Scripture

### Mark 1:14–20

A clear, simple moment of invitation, decision, and trust.

## Opening Worship (music)

- *Be Thou My Vision* (Audrey Assad)  
*Be Thou My Vision* (Traditional Version)  
or
- *Come, Now Is the Time to Worship*

## Opening Prayer

God of invitation,  
you call us to walk with Jesus,  
to begin again,  
to turn toward life and hope.  
Open our hearts to your voice,  
our minds to your wisdom,  
and our feet to your path.  
Amen.

## Questions About the Text

- What do you notice about the way Jesus calls the disciples?
- What do the disciples leave behind, and what might that tell us about the cost of following?
- How quickly do they respond — and what strikes you about that?
- What does Jesus actually *promise* them? What does he not promise?

- How does this passage portray Jesus' authority?

## Reflection Questions

- What does "following Jesus" look like in your life right now?
- What helps you respond to God's invitation, and what holds you back?
- How might a *generosity of spirit* shape the way we walk with Jesus this Lent?
- What do you sense Jesus inviting you to begin, change, or release?

## Prayer Time

Prayers are invited about one thing you want to bring with you on this journey, and one thing you want to leave behind.

## Closing Music

- [Take My Life and Let It Be](#) (*contemporary version*)  
[Take My Life and Let It Be](#) (*traditional version*)  
or
- [The Summons](#) (*quiet version*)

Your notes:

# Session 2 — Walking in the Wilderness

## Scripture

**Matthew 4:1–11 — Jesus in the wilderness.**

Identity, temptation, resilience, and trust.

## Opening Worship (music)

- [O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go](#) (*traditional version*)  
[O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go](#) (*contemporary version*)  
or
- [Abide With Me](#) (*Audrey Assad*)

## Opening Prayer

Holy One,  
you meet us in the wilderness —  
in our questions, our struggles, our searching.  
Give us courage to be honest,  
strength to endure,  
and companions to walk beside us.  
Amen.

## Questions About the Text

- Who leads Jesus into the wilderness, and what does that suggest?
- What do the temptations reveal about Jesus' identity and mission?
- How does Jesus use Scripture — and what does that teach us?
- What do you notice about the progression of the temptations?
- How does the presence of angels at the end shape your understanding of the story?

## Reflection Questions

- What “wilderness” experiences have shaped you?
- Where do you feel tempted to take shortcuts or avoid discomfort?
- How do you discern God’s voice amid competing voices?
- Where have you experienced communal grace in your own wilderness?

## Prayer Time

Imagine Jesus is beside you in your own wilderness.

## Closing Music

- [\*Be Still for the Presence of the Lord\*](#)  
or
- [\*You Raise Me Up\*](#) (Josh Groban)

Your notes:

# Session 3 — Walking With the Outcast

## Scripture

### Luke 19:1–10 — Zacchaeus.

A story of welcome, transformation, and seeing the unseen.

## Opening Worship (music)

- *Brother, Sister, Let Me Serve You*  
or
- *Make Me a Channel of Your Peace*

## Opening Prayer

God of welcome,  
you see each person fully  
and call us to widen our embrace.  
Open our eyes to those we overlook,  
our hearts to those we fear,  
and our hands to those who need friendship.  
Amen.

## Questions About the Text

- What details in the story show Zacchaeus' determination?
- How does Jesus initiate the encounter — and why might that matter?
- What changes in Zacchaeus, and what triggers that change?
- How does the crowd respond, and what does that reveal about them?
- What does Jesus mean by “salvation has come to this house”?

## Reflection Questions

- Who are the “Zacchaeuses” in our communities today?
- What does Jesus’ welcome teach us about humility and responsibility?
- How do we widen our welcome without losing ourselves?
- What practical steps could our church take this Lent to embody this story?

## Prayer Time

Pray for those who feel unseen, unwelcome, or on the margins — locally and globally.

## Closing Music

- [\*The Servant King\*](#)  
or
- [\*The King of Love My Shepherd Is\*](#)

Your notes:

# Session 4 — Walking Toward Jerusalem

## Scripture

**Luke 9:51–56 — Jesus “sets his face” toward Jerusalem.**

A moment of courage, clarity, and costly love.

## Opening Worship (music)

- [\*My Song Is Love Unknown\*](#)  
or
- [\*When I Survey the Wondrous Cross\*](#)

## Opening Prayer

Christ of courage,  
as you turned toward Jerusalem  
you chose the way of love,  
even when it was costly.  
Give us strength to walk your path  
with honesty, humility, and hope.  
Amen.

## Questions About the Text

- What does it mean that Jesus “sets his face” toward Jerusalem?
- How do the disciples react to rejection, and what does that reveal about them?
- How does Jesus respond to their anger?
- What does this passage show about the nature of Jesus’ mission?
- Why might this moment be a turning point in the Gospel narrative?



## Reflection Questions

- What does it mean to “set your face” toward something difficult?
- Where do you experience conflicted loyalties in your own life?
- How do we choose the way of peace when conflict feels easier?
- Where might God be calling you to a courageous, costly love?

## Prayer Time

Hold in prayer a situation where courage or costly love is needed.

## Closing Music

- [Stay With Me](#) (Taizé)  
or
- [O Sacred Head, Now Wounded](#)

Your notes:

# Session 5 — Walking Through the Shadows

## Scripture

**Mark 14:32–42 — Gethsemane.**

Fear, loneliness, vulnerability, and the call to stay awake.

## Opening Worship (music)

- *Wait for the Lord* (Taizé)  
or
- *Nearer, My God, to Thee*

## Opening Prayer

God who meets us in the shadows,  
you know our fears and our weariness.  
Stay with us in the dark places,  
and teach us to stay awake with others  
who are struggling or afraid.  
Amen.

## Questions About the Text

- What emotions do you see in Jesus in this passage?
- What does Jesus ask of his disciples, and how do they respond?
- What does “stay awake” mean in this context?
- How does Jesus’ prayer reveal both vulnerability and trust?
- What do you notice about the repetition in the passage?

## Reflection Questions

- What part of this passage resonates most with you?
- When have you felt “asleep” to someone else’s need?
- How do communities hold one another in times of suffering?
- What does faithful presence look like when we can’t fix anything?

## Prayer Time

Sit in silence and name those who need companionship in their shadows.

## Closing Music

- [The Lord’s My Shepherd](#) (Townend)  
[The Lord’s My Shepherd](#) (traditional)  
or
- [Pie Jesu](#) or [Pie Jesu](#)

Your notes:

# Session 6 — Walking Into the Dawn

## Scripture

**John 20:1–18 — Mary Magdalene at the tomb.**

Recognition, renewal, and the beginning of resurrection life.

## Opening Worship (music)

- *Morning Has Broken*  
or
- *Christ Be Our Light*

## Opening Prayer

God of resurrection,  
you call us by name  
and invite us into new life.  
Fill us with Easter hope,  
and send us out as people of the dawn.  
Amen.

## Questions About the Text

- What details emphasise Mary's grief and confusion?
- What do you notice about the different reactions of Peter, John, and Mary?
- Why is it significant that Jesus calls Mary by name?
- What changes for Mary once she recognises Jesus?
- What does Jesus commission her to do?

## Reflection Questions

- What does resurrection hope look like in everyday life?
- What changes because of Easter?
- How do we continue walking as Easter people beyond this study?
- What has this Lenten journey stirred in you?

## Prayer Time

Give thanks for the journey.

Pray for courage to live resurrection hope in the world.

## Closing Music

- [\*Thine Be the Glory\*](#)  
or
- [\*You Say\*](#) (Lauren Daigle - a modern, gentle expression of identity and hope)

Your notes: