

As we approach Easter, we stuff baskets with chocolate and bunnies to celebrate the coming of Spring.  
**But how can we prepare to celebrate Jesus who is at the heart of the season?**



**Maybe with simple words  
full of meaning and promise.  
Maybe by simply laying our ribbons and hearts,  
BENEATH THE CROSS of Jesus.**



*Lord, help us be silent for a few moments each day  
so we can turn our minds from preparing for springtime, to preparing for your Son, Jesus. Amen.*

Dear Families,

The 40 days and 6 Sundays during Lent provide us with an extended time to SIMPLY PREPARE for the celebration of God's act of salvation offered through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This devotion guide was written to provide a simple way to reflect on the scripture in a worshipful way. May your family time be meaningful and memorable as you gather **BENEATH THE CROSS** of Jesus in worship and prayer.

**Instructions:**

1. Secure a simple **wooden cross** to serve as the centerpiece of your worship area. You may purchase a cross from any craft store, use one from your own family collection, or make a cross by lashing two twigs together with twine and "planting" it in a small pot of dirt.
2. Create your **Lent Devotion Cards**. Print the cover and inside pages. Cut apart and arrange the pages in date order. Punch a hole in each card and tie the pages together.
3. **Cut ribbon** to use with your daily devotion. Cut **40 pieces of purple** ribbon in 9" lengths to use on the weekdays. Cut **6 pieces of white** ribbon in 9" lengths to use on Sundays.
4. **Each day during Lent:**
  - ⇒ Read one of the cards, talk together about the words and offer a family prayer. *Families with older children may want to read and discuss further the story referenced on each card as an extended Bible study.*
  - ⇒ Lay a ribbon at the foot of your cross as a symbolic way to mark the days of Lent in preparation for the celebration of Jesus' resurrection. Use a purple ribbon to mark each weekday and a white ribbon to mark the Sundays.
  - ⇒ To enhance your worship time, download the Taize worship song, *O Lord, Hear My Prayer* from Amazon.com (MP3 downloads) and use it as your opening or closing prayer.
5. **Set aside a daily offering.** Use the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering box, a small dish or a basket to collect your daily offerings. This offering will be received in worship on April 24th.
6. As you add ribbons to the cross and remember Jesus, may your hearts be filled with gratitude for God's gift of grace and love.

*Cut on the dotted lines and punch a hole where shown to create a front and back cover for your devotion cards.*

# Beneath the Cross

Daily readings for Lent



May your family worship be blessed with simplicity  
during this season of Lent  
as you take time from your busy schedules  
to quiet your hearts in reverence before God.

*Your friends in Children's Ministry  
at First Presbyterian Church, Nashville, TN*



Wednesday – March 9

***“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.” Psalm 51:10***

David knew he had done wrong and knew he needed to confess his sin in order to be right with God. (2 Samuel 12)

What do you need to confess to God in order to be clean and right?

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Thursday - March 10

***“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.” Matthew 4:4***

Jesus was tempted to disobey God by worshiping the devil in exchange for food and fame. But Jesus said, “NO!” and remained true to God, his father. (Matthew 4:1-11)

How do you say “no” when you are tempted?

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Friday - March 11

***“Your life is now hidden with Christ in God.” Colossians 3:3***

No matter how hard they tried, Adam and Eve could not hide their sin from God. Although their sin made God very sad, God provided a way to save them. (Genesis 3:1-21) When we say we are sorry, God forgives us through Christ.

How do you tell God you are sorry when you do something wrong?

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Saturday - March 12

***“And the Word was made flesh and lived among us.” John 1:14***

Simeon had waited a lifetime to see the Messiah. When he took baby Jesus into his arms, he gave thanks to God and proclaimed that salvation had come to all. (Luke 2:25-35)

How do you proclaim God’s salvation?

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Monday - March 14

***“I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live.” John 11:25***

Mary and Martha were sad when their brother died, but Jesus gave them words of hope for a new life given through faith. (John 11:17-27)

How do you share Christ’s hope with others?

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Tuesday - March 15

***“For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.” I Corinthians 5:7***

The lives of Moses and the Israelites were saved when they spread the blood of a lamb around the doors of their houses in Egypt as the angel of death “passed over”. (Exodus 12:1-13) When Jesus died on the cross, his blood was shed so that we could be saved. How do you say thank you to Christ for his sacrifice?

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Wednesday – March 16

*“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

*Romans 6:23*

Moses used a hyssop branch to spread the blood on the doorposts of the Israelite homes in Egypt (Exodus 12:21-27). As Jesus hung on the cross, a hyssop branch was used to help quench His thirst. (John 19:28-30) A common weed was a part of a most uncommon gift—God’s salvation of all humankind. How do you honor God in common things?

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Thursday - March 17

*“Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.” Hebrews 9:22*

The tabernacle was constructed by Moses as a holy place of worship (Hebrews 9:1-22) and a place to keep the rituals of God’s covenant. When Jesus came, God’s covenant was renewed once and for all for everyone who believes.

How do you worship and show your belief in Christ?

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Friday - March 18

*“Let everyone who is thirsty come. Let anyone who wishes take the water of life as a gift.”*

*Revelation 22:17*

The children of Israel were thirsty in the desert and God provided them with water (Exodus 15:22-27). Jesus was thirsty too, when he asked the Samaritan woman to give Him a drink of water. Jesus offers the gift of eternal water when we believe in Him (John 4:6-14). How do you show the joy of receiving God’s gift of living water?

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Saturday - March 19

*“I am the Bread of Life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry.” John 6:35*

The children of Israel were hungry in the desert and God provided for them with manna from heaven (Exodus 16:1-31). Jesus told his disciples to pray “Give us our daily bread.” (Matthew 6:11) When we trust in God, we rely fully on God’s promises given through Jesus Christ. How do you show your trust in God?

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Monday - March 21

*“And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.” John 3:14-15*

The people were sick and dying in the wilderness when God provided a way for them to live. (Numbers 21:4-9) When we sin against God, we get a sick feeling that flows throughout our entire body. All we need to do is tell God that we are sorry and then look to Jesus to forgive us and take away that sick feeling. How do you live as a child of God who has been forgiven?

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Tuesday - March 22

*“We have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body.” Hebrews 10:19-20*

A beautiful curtain hung in the Tabernacle and later the Temple to separate the people from God (Exodus 26:31-34). Only the High Priest could enter the Most Holy Place until Jesus died on the cross and the curtain was torn in two (Matthew 27:50-51). There is nothing that can ever separate you from God! What would you like to say to God today?

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Wednesday – March 23

*“Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me.” Revelations 3:20*

The tabernacle was a beautiful place full of precious things given by the people of God to show honor and praise to God. (Exodus 25:1, 8-9) God had the tabernacle built in a certain way to show how Christ would work in our lives one day. Now, you are the place where God lives. Your prayers and praises are the daily gifts you can give to God. How do you let Christ live through you?

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Thursday - March 24

*“The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer.” Psalm 18:2*

Jesus wants us to depend on Him to be strong, just like a rock. When He told the story of the two men who built their houses, Jesus was talking about how we should be building our lives on Jesus—the rock. (Matthew 7:24-27)

How are you building your life on Jesus the rock?

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Friday - March 25

*“Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” Hebrews 4:16*

God taught the Israelites how to worship and gave a charge to priests on how they would represent the people before God. (Exodus 28: 1-5) When Jesus came to earth and died for us, He became our priest who would show us as clean before God. (Hebrews 4:14-5:19)

What would you like to say to Jesus today?

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Saturday - March 26

*“In my distress I called to the LORD, and God answered me.” Jonah 2:2*

Jonah was a man who tried to run from God because he was afraid to do what God had told him to do. But God was with Jonah...in the boat...in the water...and even in the belly of the fish! Just as God saved Jonah from death, we, too, are saved from death through Jesus Christ. God is in control of everything. I wonder what God has planned for your life?

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Monday - March 28

*“He himself bore our sin, so that we might die to sin and live for righteousness.” 1 Peter 2:24*

On the Day of Atonement, the High Priest Aaron would take an innocent goat and make it a representative of all the sin of the people. This goat (now known as a *scapegoat* or *escape goat*) would be sent out into the wilderness alone to show how God would forgive the people and *remember their sin no more*. (Leviticus 16:1-34) Jesus took our sin upon Himself so that when we tell God we are sorry, God will remember our sin no more. How do you tell God you are sorry?

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Tuesday - March 29

*“God will give you another Advocate to be with you forever.” John 14:16*

There is only one true God, and yet, there are three Persons of God. When Jesus went down into the Jordan River to be baptized by John, God appeared in three Persons—Father (the voice from heaven), Son (standing in the river) and Holy Spirit (like a dove descending). (Luke 3:21-22) When Jesus left earth, He promised to send the Holy Spirit who would help the disciples carry on God’s work. They would never be alone. How do you feel the presence of God in your life?

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Wednesday – March 30

*“Don’t be afraid, from now on you will be catching people....they left everything and followed Jesus.”  
Luke 5:10-11*

Peter, Andrew, James and John were fishermen by trade until Jesus called them to leave everything behind and follow him. (Luke 5:1-11) When they left their boats behind, they became “fishers of people!” Jesus wants us to be like these fishermen disciples, casting out nets of love so that everyone will know God. How do you follow Jesus and share God’s love with others?

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Thursday - March 31

*“Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”  
1 Thessalonians 5:17*

Jesus and His family were at a wedding in Cana celebrating God’s blessings when Jesus performed His first miracle! (John 2:1-11) Jesus showed that He can do anything because Jesus is God who came down to save us and give us many blessings. When we believe in Jesus and obey him, miracles will happen in our lives. How do you celebrate God’s many blessings and miracles in your life?

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Friday - April 1

*“They were filled with great awe and said, ‘Who is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?’”  
Luke 4: 41*

The disciples were afraid. They were out in a small boat when a storm came up. The winds were fierce and the waves probably sloshed in over the sides of the boat. They feared for their lives but Jesus was there to save them with three simple words. (Luke 4:35-41) Remember a time when you were afraid. What did you do? How did God calm your heart?

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Saturday - April 2

*“I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.” John 15:5*

God is the gardener of our lives and Jesus is the vine. (John 15:1-11) From Jesus, God wants us to grow and produce beautiful fruit. If we trust Christ and stay in Him, everyone will know we belong to God! How do you show others the beautiful fruit that God has given you?

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Monday - April 4

*“Be prepared, for you don’t know what day your Lord is coming.” Matthew 24:42*

Jesus told a parable of a wedding party where some of the bridesmaids were ready and some were not. (Matthew 25:1-13) Jesus was talking about the end of the world and wanted His disciples to always be ready to meet God in heaven. What would you do if today was your last day on earth? How would you get ready to meet God?

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Tuesday - April 5

*“Friend, your sins are forgiven.” Luke 5:20*

Jesus was a healer—not only of physical hurts, but also of spiritual hurts as well. (Luke 5:17-26) When we sin against God, we are left with a hurt that goes deep inside. Only God can heal that kind of hurt. When we tell God we are sorry for our sin, God will forgive us and heal the deep hurt inside us. How do you feel when you’ve done something wrong? How do you tell God you are sorry?

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Wednesday – April 6

*“Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow...even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.” Matthew 6:28*

Jesus sat on the hillside talking about God’s love and care for all of creation. He pointed to the birds and lilies and told the people to stop worry about the little things. (Matthew 6:25-34) Sometimes we spend so much time worrying about things that we forget to share God’s love with others. How do you trust God to provide for your needs?

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Thursday - April 7

*“We love because God first loved us.” 1 John 4:19*

A woman came to Jesus and pour very expensive perfume on his feet. She wanted Jesus to know how much she loved him. (John 12:1-7) Some of the disciples were angry, but Jesus welcomed the woman’s actions as a gift to God. She knew that Jesus was her Savior and wanted to worship God in a very special way. What do you do to show God how much you love Jesus?

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Friday - April 8

*“Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.” Luke 22:42*

Jesus loved to talk to His Father. In the garden, Jesus knew his time on earth was almost over. He also knew that some men would come and take Him away to die on the cross. (Luke 22:39-48) He prayed for God to make him strong. He wanted to do what God wanted and not what He wanted. What do you pray for to God?

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Saturday - April 9

*“I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith.” Romans 1:16*

On the night when Jesus was arrested, Peter was afraid. He denied knowing Jesus three times. Almost instantly, Peter was ashamed for what he had done and he cried. (Luke 22:54-62) How do you stand up for Jesus and tell others about God?

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Monday - April 11

*“Jesus said, ‘Follow me.’” Mark 2:14*

Judas was one of Jesus’ disciples. He followed Jesus but at the end of Jesus’ life, Judas became unfaithful to God for 30 pieces of silver. (Matthew 26:47-56) Lent is a time to take a look back at the way you have behaved and say you are sorry for the times you have let other things take the place of God. It is a time to look ahead and promise to be a faithful disciple. How can you promise to change in your future and how will you ask God to help you be a more faithful disciple?

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Tuesday - April 12

*“By his wounds you have been healed.” 1 Peter 2:24*

The Roman soldiers were cruel to Jesus. They beat Him with whips and mocked Him in front of the crowds of people. (John 19:1) Yet Jesus did not resist. He took all the punishment they did without a word of complaint. He took that punishment for our sin. Lent is a time to remember how Jesus gave his own life so that we can have eternal life with God. How do you remember Jesus?

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Wednesday – April 13

*“He was wounded for our sins, crushed for our iniquities; upon Him was the punishment that made us whole .” Isaiah 53:7*

The soldiers mocked Jesus when they put a crown of thorns on his head and wrapped a purple robe (like one a king would wear) around his shoulders. (Matthew 27:27-31) This hurt Jesus very much but He never said a word. He was willing to be hit and laughed at so He could be king of our hearts. How will you say thank you to Jesus for the pain He suffered?

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Thursday - April 14

*“My kingdom is not from this world.” John 18:36*

Jesus was God’s only Son who came to earth as our Messiah, our Savior, our King of Kings and Lord of Lords! The people who put Jesus to death did not understand that Jesus’ kingdom was never meant to be on earth. (John 18:28-40) Jesus’ kingdom is in heaven with God His Father! When we sing praise to Jesus our King, we acknowledge that God has a future plan for us that is wonderful and marvelous! How do you honor and sing praise to Jesus your King?

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Friday - April 15

*“See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey.” Matthew 21:5*

It was almost time for Jesus to enter Jerusalem for the last time. He told two of his disciples to go into the city and find a donkey that had never been ridden to fulfill the scriptures. (Mark 11:1-7; Zechariah 9:9) Just as Jesus Christ entered Jerusalem, He can enter our hearts as king if we let Him. How will you let Jesus live in your heart?

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Saturday - April 16

*“The crowds that went ahead of Him and those that followed shouted, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!’” Matthew 21:9*

Tomorrow we celebrate the day when Jesus rode into Jerusalem as a king! The palm branches were waving (that’s why we call it Palm Sunday) and the people were shouting with joy to welcome their king! It was a joyous day! (Mark 11:1-10) How do you celebrate Jesus?

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Monday - April 18

*“He took this list of sins and destroyed it by nailing it to Christ’s cross.” Colossians 2:14*

This is the last week of Lent called “Holy Week”. It is the week when we remember how Christ died for us on the cross as a payment for our sin. (John 16:19:16-30) It is the week when we get ready to celebrate God’s wonderful love that was shown for us through Jesus. It is a sad week that will lead us to the most happy day of our entire year! How will you remember Jesus this week?

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Tuesday - April 19

*“God looks down from heaven on humankind to see if there are any who are wise, who seek after God.” Psalm 53:2*

This hymn says it all. “Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim. Till all the world adore His sacred name. Come, Christians, follow where our Savior trod. The Lamb victorious, Christ, the Son of God.” How will you proclaim Christ this week as you prepare for the celebration of Easter?

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Wednesday – April 20

***“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.”***

***John 13:34***

Jesus wanted to do something to show His disciples how not to be selfish. During their last meal together, Jesus took a bowl of water and a towel to wash the feet of each of His disciples. They were shocked! (John 13:1-20) Then Jesus told His disciples to serve others by putting them first. An easy way to remember this is using the word JOY: Jesus first, others second, and you last! How will you serve others this week with joy?

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Maundy Thursday - April 21

***“Do this in remembrance of me.” Luke 22:19***

Jesus and His disciples gathered to eat the Passover meal. At the end of the meal, Jesus gave His disciples a special way to remember Him when He was gone. He took the bread and the juice and said, “Whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, remember me.” (Luke 22:7-23) Today we remember Jesus each time we share in the Lord’s Supper (also called Communion). How does communion help you remember Jesus?

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Good Friday - April 22

***“God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8***

Today is Good Friday. It is a very sad day because this was the day Jesus died. (Luke 23:44-49) Why do we call this sad day Good Friday? It was “good” because Jesus died so you and I could have all our sins forgiven, and we could go to heaven to be with God forever! How will you say thank you to Jesus today?

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Saturday - April 23

***“Because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.” 2 Corinthians 4:18***

Today we wait just like the women waited when Jesus died and was buried. (Luke 23:50-56) What the women did not know was that something miraculous was happening inside the tomb. Jesus’ human body was dead but God was bringing Jesus back to life! Tomorrow we will celebrate the resurrection of Jesus! How will you and your family celebrate Jesus tomorrow?

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1st Sunday in Lent - March 13

Each Sunday in the Christian year is a “little Easter” to be celebrated!  
*Christ is alive! Let Christians sing. The cross stands empty to the sky.  
Let streets and homes with praises ring. Love, drowned in death, shall never die.*  
(Hymn #108 from *The Presbyterian Hymnal*)

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2nd Sunday in Lent - March 20

Each Sunday in the Christian year is a “little Easter” to be celebrated!  
*Celebrate with joy and singing, Alleluia be our song. Jesus Christ has risen to save us. Praises to our Christ belong. Through great love has come the victory; Life, not death, can be our claim. Let us now declare Christ’s greatness, Spread good news, proclaim Christ’s name.*  
(Hymn #107 from *The Presbyterian Hymnal*)

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3rd Sunday in Lent - March 27

Each Sunday in the Christian year is a “little Easter” to be celebrated!  
*The day of resurrection! Earth, tell is out abroad; The Passover of gladness, The Passover of God. From death to life eternal, From this world to the sky, Our Christ hath brought us over With hymns of victory.*  
(Hymn #118 from *The Presbyterian Hymnal*)

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4th Sunday in Lent - April 3

Each Sunday in the Christian year is a “little Easter” to be celebrated!  
*That Easter day with joy was bright, The sun shone out with fairer light. When, to their longing eyes restored. The apostles saw their risen Lord.*  
(Hymn #121 from *The Presbyterian Hymnal*)

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5th Sunday in Lent - April 10

Each Sunday in the Christian year is a “little Easter” to be celebrated!  
*Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia! Our triumphant holy day, Alleluia! Who did once upon the cross, Alleluia! Suffer to redeem our loss. Alleluia!*  
(Hymn #123 from *The Presbyterian Hymnal*)

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6th Sunday in Lent - April 17

Each Sunday in the Christian year is a “little Easter” to be celebrated!  
*Christ the Lord is risen today! Alleluia! All creation join to say: Alleluia! Raise your joys and triumphs high; Alleluia! Sing, O heavens, and earth reply, Alleluia!*  
(Hymn #1013 from *The Presbyterian Hymnal*)

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