

LEARNING TO STAY

How This Season Works
What to Expect in Worship During Lent



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This Lent, our worship will feel different on purpose.

The theme of the season is Learning to Stay. That means we are practicing presence rather than productivity. We are not trying to move quickly toward answers, resolution, or Easter. We are learning how to remain attentive with God and with one another, even when things feel unfinished.

Here is what that means for worship:

What You May Notice

- More silence than usual
- Fewer explanations and less commentary
- Slower pacing
- Less emotional buildup
- Services that feel unresolved

These choices are intentional. Silence is not emptiness. Slowness is not unpreparedness. Uncertainty is not failure.

What We Are Practicing Together

- Staying present instead of rushing to fix things
- Listening without immediately responding
- Allowing discomfort without needing to resolve it
- Trusting that God is at work even when outcomes are unclear

Participation does not require speaking, certainty, or strong feelings. Listening counts. Waiting counts. Showing up counts.

What This Season Is Not

- This is not a self-improvement program
- This is not a performance season
- This is not a test of faith or endurance
- This is not about having the “right” response

If you feel unsure, restless, bored, or unsettled at times, that does not mean you are doing Lent wrong. Those reactions are part of what this season is helping us notice.

How to Participate If You’re Unsure

- You are free to sit quietly
- You are free to assume a comfortable posture of prayer
- You are free to listen without speaking
- You are free to leave questions unanswered
- You are free to engage at your own pace

No one is expected to feel the same thing or to have the same experience.

A Word of Reassurance

Not every service will feel complete or satisfying. That does not mean something is missing. This season trusts that faithfulness often looks like remaining present rather than moving on.

If you stay attentive, patient, and open—alone or together—then the season is doing its work.

Notes for Leaders

1. Distribution matters. Print this for worship bulletins and post it digitally (website, email, PDF).
2. Timing matters. Share this *before* Lent begins and keep it accessible throughout the season. Not everyone will be present week one.
3. Repetition helps. Consider re-sharing or briefly referencing this document mid-Lent, especially if silence or restraint begins to feel difficult.
4. Do not over-explain in worship. This document carries the explanation so worship itself does not have to.
5. During worship, leaders and quietly and calmly check-in, guide, and encourage their people. How you carry yourself—who you are—is more helpful to your people than over-explaining.

These Lenten Resources are made by Rev. Matthew J. Skolnik.

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