Lent Outside
A 40 HOUR ADVENTURE

Connecting our mind, body, and spirit to the beauty of God's creation
#stlfm40

In God's hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all humankind. - Job 12:10
During the season of Lent, let’s connect our mind, body, and spirit with the outdoors. Lent is the 40 days (not including Sundays) that lead us into Easter. It starts with Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. The 40 days symbolize the time Jesus spent in the wilderness.

Lent is a time of waiting and reflection. This is a time for us to focus on our relationship with God, connection with the Earth, and growing as Disciples of Christ.

2021 has continued to prove challenging in terms of gathering. However, being outside is always an option! Therefore, our challenge to you during this season is to get outside and use the 40 hour Lenten adventure to connect with nature. In this activity packet you will find a list of St. Louis parks, a scavenger hunt, devotions/prayers, family friendly outside activities, and mission opportunities.

Anytime you find yourself outside and immersed in God’s creation, take time to reflect and be thankful for all that we do have. Soak up the sunshine (even on chilly days), and connect physically, mentally, and spiritually to your surroundings. Find joy in all things great and small.

Don’t forget to fill-in your Lenten butterfly as you spend hours outside AND post pictures using #stlfm40 so we can share in this special time together. This Lent let’s not just focus on our family, but connecting with other families (interdenominational), as we are ALL beautiful children of God.

Peace be with you,

STL Family Ministry Partnership

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Lent Outside
A 40 Hour Adventure

Mind
Body
Spirit

Color one box for every hour outside!
Share your pictures - #stlfm40
Babler State Park
Carondelet Park
Castlewood State Park
Creve Coeur Park
Faust Park
Forest Park
Fort Belle Fontaine Park
Gateway Mall Plaza
Great Rivers Greenway
Greensfelder County Park
Laumeier Sculpture Park
Lone Elk Park
Mastodon State Park
Onondaga Cave State Park
Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center
Rockwoods Reservation
Route 66 State Park
Spanish Lake Park
Tower Grove Park

Explore
ST. LOUIS
Scavenger Hunt!

During your time outside, keep an eye out for the following items! You may want to do this all at once or maybe you can spot a few items at a time during your outdoor adventure! If you share your selfies, be sure to use our hashtag so we can follow along together - #stlfm40

Find these things:

- Green leaf
- Tree stump
- A seed/pod
- Tree Hole
- Make a cross with items you find in nature
- Home of an animal
- A bird
- An insect
- A cloud that looks like something fun
- Budding flower
- Animal tracks
- A good skipping stone
- Something to eat
- Something you should NOT eat

Take a Selfie:

- Hugging a tree
- Reading a book outside
- Near a street sign
- Smelling a flower
- Dipping a single finger in the water
- In front of something red
- Wearing sunglasses
- With your water bottle
Prayers and Meditations

Job 12: 7-10 (NRSV)
“But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish in the sea inform you. Which of all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In [God’s] hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all [humankind].”

Psalm 98:7-9a (CEB)
“Let the sea and everything in it roar; the world and all its inhabitants too. Let all the rivers clap their hands; let the mountains rejoice out loud altogether before the Lord because [God] is coming to establish justice on the earth!”

Matthew 6:26-30 (CEB)
“Look at the birds in the sky. They don’t sow seed or harvest grain or gather crops into barns. Yet your heavenly [Parent] feeds them. Aren’t you worth much more than they are? Who among you by worrying can add a single moment to your life? And why do you worry about clothes? Notice how the lilies in the field grow. They don’t wear themselves out with work, and they don’t spin cloth. But I say to you that even Solomon in all of his splendor wasn’t dressed like one of these. If God dresses grass in the field so beautifully, even though it’s alive today and tomorrow it’s thrown into the furnace, won’t God do much more for you, you people of weak faith?”

Meditation by Henri Nouwen
“In this way we are indeed brothers and sisters not only of all other men and women in the world but also of all that surrounds us. Yes, we have to love the fields full of wheat, the snowcapped mountains, the roaring seas, the wild and tame animals, the huge redwoods, and the little daisies. Everything in creation belongs, with us, to the large family of God.”

Creation Prayer
Jesus Christ, teach us to feel what the Earth feels. Make our spirits sensitive to the hurt of creation, asking for justice for the land, the seas, and the skies. Jesus, make our faith sensitive to the groans of the Spirit in creation, groans wanting a better world. Jesus Christ, make us hear the songs of our family, songs of celebration from the sea, the forest, and the air. Christ, teach us to care. Amen

The Creation by James Weldon Johnson
"Then God raised [God’s] arm and [God] waved [God’s] hand Over the sea and over the land, And [God] said: Bring forth! Bring forth! And quicker than God could drop [God’s] hand, Fishes and fowls And beasts and birds Swam the rivers and the seas, Roamed the forests and the woods, And split the air with their wings. And God said: That’s good!..."
Yoga - for the mind, body, and spirit

Find a peaceful place outside to do some yoga!!

Bee pose

Crescent Moon pose

Bird pose

Star pose
Yoga - for the mind, body, and spirit
Find a peaceful place outside to do some yoga!!

Cow pose

Dog pose

Tree pose 1

Tree pose 2
Yoga - for the mind, body, and spirit

Find a peaceful place outside to do some yoga!!

Flower pose

Prayer pose

“Yoga is not a work-out it is a work-in, and this is the point of spiritual practice; to make us teachable, to open up our hearts, and focus our awareness so that we can know what we already know and be who we already are.”
Family Fun Activities for Lent

Be a Nature Spy
Take a pair of binoculars (or make your own using 2 toilet paper or paper towel tubes, staple/tape them together, and tie a piece of yarn to hang them around your neck) and go for a walk. See what you can see on your journey! What do the leaves look like? Do you see any animals? Are any flowers blooming? What is the most interesting thing in nature you found today? God created a beautiful world! Enjoy exploring it!

Blow Gratitude Bubbles
God gives us so many things to love and be grateful for! Blow some bubbles and name something you are grateful as you pop each bubble. You could also blow bubbles and name someone or something you love as you pop each bubble. You’ll be amazed at all of the blessings you have in your life!

Hug a Tree
Trees give us shade, oxygen and are a home to many birds, mammals, and insects. Put your arms around a tree and give it a big hug! How many people did it take to reach around the tree? Find the biggest tree you can and see how many people it takes to give it a hug!

Insect Hunt
Let’s look for insects! What do you see? Do the insects walk, hop, fly or crawl? What colors are the insects? Do you notice if any color of insect is easier to see than others? What colors are hardest to find? If you were an insect, what would you be and why?

Listening Walk
Go for a walk and LISTEN to see what you can hear. Are the sounds made by people, insects, animals or birds? Which sounds are loud? Which sounds are quiet? You’ll be amazed at how many things you can hear when you REALLY listen!

Make a Bird Feeder
Wash a milk carton and cut out one side. Fill it with bird seed (if possible try to find birdseed from a local St. Louis farmer/distributor) and hang it from a tree. Watch it to see what kinds of birds come to feast! God wants us to take care of the earth and the critters who live here.

Mini Hike
Put a piece of yarn or string on the ground and pretend you are an ant walking along the string. Using a magnifying glass (if you have one), take a closer look at what the world would look like if you were tiny like an ant! You will be amazed at what you see!
Paper Airplanes
Make paper airplanes and take them outside to fly. Which airplane flies the farthest? Do any of the airplanes do loops? Imagine what it would feel like to float on the wind.

Plant Seeds
Once it is warm enough outside, plant some flower or vegetable seeds. Water and take care of them. See how they grow!

Play “Camouflage” Tag
Have the person who is “it” close their eyes and count to 25 while everyone else hides. The hiders have to be able to see the person who is “it” from their hiding places. Then the seeker/”it” person opens their eyes, yells, “camouflage” and holds up between 1-5 fingers. Staying where they are, the person who is “it” calls the names of people they see. The last person they see wins, as long as that person can tell how many fingers the person who is “it” is holding up. The last person to be found, and can tell how many fingers the person who is “it” is holding up is the next person to be the seeker.

Play Frisbee or Catch with a Ball
You can name something you are grateful for with each throw.

Play Tag
You know how this one works 😊.

Sidewalk Chalk Messages
Write messages like “God loves you,” “Smile,” or “Have a great day,” to share kindness and love with others.

Squirrel Highway
Squirrels usually live in a one-acre area their whole lives! They learn where every branch and fence are so they can move quickly! Sit quietly and spy on the squirrels...watch how they climb, crawl and jump. They are pretty amazing!

Starry Night Walk
Take a walk in a safe place (away from cars) once it gets dark outside with your family. Look up at the stars. Do you see any constellations? Could you connect the stars and make a picture? Are some stars brighter or bigger than the rest? Make a wish on a star and see if it comes true!

Watch an Ant Hill
Find an ant hill and watch the ants. What are they doing? Do they work together or alone? Do you think it would be fun to be an ant?
Nature Mission Projects for Lent

Help Keep Nature Clean
Spend some of your outside time during Lent picking up trash to help keep our environment safe and clean. Recycle any items you gather that can be recycled.

Kindness Rocks
Find some flat river rocks, decorate them with paint or a paint pen, and add a scripture to the back of the rock. Then place them outside in your community to spread kindness to all that find your rocks.

Homemade Bird Feeder
Make a bird feeder to help feed the birds. First, take a toilet paper roll and make a hole on each end using a whole punch (or pair of scissors). Second, cover the toilet paper roll with Crisco. Third, roll your tube in the birdseed (if possible try to find birdseed from a local St. Louis farmer/distributor). Then you will want to run a string through the holes and tie a knot. Finally hang your bird feeder in the trees for the birds to enjoy.

Grow Food to Share
Plant vegetable seeds in small paper cups. Keep them inside for now and when the weather gets warmer, transplant them outside. When you harvest your vegetables shae some with your neighbors or take them to a food pantry.