



lift up your voice
SINGING THROUGH LENT AND EASTER

first sunday of lent

light

Light seven of the eight candles

read

LUKE 4:1-13

Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone.'" + Luke 4:4

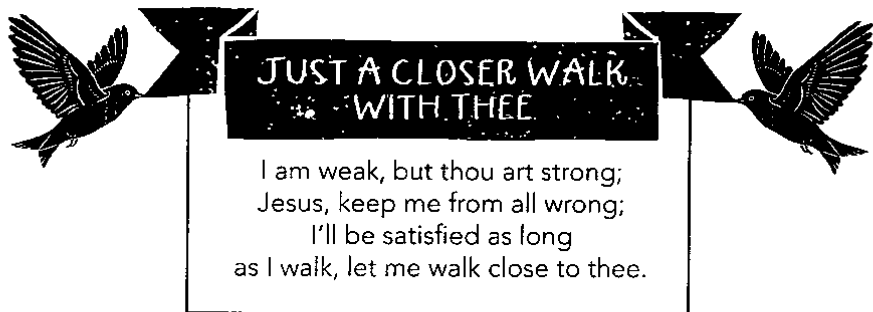


sing

"Just a Closer Walk with Thee"

"Spirit of the Living God"

"My Life Flows On"



reflect

In this story from Luke, Jesus is given three tests, each tempting him to turn away from trusting God and toward trusting himself alone. Jesus refuses by repeatedly quoting the story of the Israelites wandering in the wilderness, fed by God with daily provisions of manna – quotes that underscore his humble commitment to relying on God for nourishment, strength, and security, just as the Israelites were called to do (see Deuteronomy 8:3). As the Child of Humanity, Jesus humbly trusts God, as if singing, "as I walk, let me walk, close to thee."

An African American gospel song, "Just a Closer Walk with Thee" also became a jazz standard, and in particular, a classic within the New Orleans jazz tradition. Its roots may go back to the nineteenth century, but it wasn't published until 1940, and since then, hundreds of artists have recorded it. It's become an iconic musical expression of intimate trust and companionship with God, even and especially in a world full of "toil and snares."



pray

Extinguish another candle.

In this world of toil and snares, God of wisdom, deepen our trust in you. Help us to walk with you through the tumult and the strife. Teach us, nurture us, mold us into the people you created us to be, walking closely and humbly with you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

activities

- Continue to build your Lenten list of songs. "Spirit of the Living God" – written in 1926 by a Presbyterian pastor, Daniel Iverson – is a simple, memorable exploration of the idea with which Luke begins this famous story: "Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit..." Likewise, "My Life Flows On" – with lyrics from an 1868 poem by "Pauline T." – provides a sense of what it's like to remain poised "through all the tumult and the strife."
- If you've chosen to fast from something during Lent, sing one of this week's songs whenever you feel tempted to break the fast.
- Conversation Starter: When does your trust in God feel most "tested"? When do you feel most anxious, or most tempted to trust in your own efforts alone? Jesus responded to these feelings by remembering the story of the Israelites' 40 years in the wilderness, reframing his experience as an opportunity to learn how to more deeply, humbly trust in God. Might our 40 days of Lent serve a similar purpose?
- Take a "closer walk" this week, through your neighborhood or along a favorite trail, meditating on God's nearness and companionship. Sing, hum, or contemplate this week's songs as you go.

notes



Check out our Spotify playlist (QR code below) that includes many of these songs, plus a few more for the season.



SPOTIFY
PLAYLIST

Check out our "Lyrics and Links" doc (QR code below) for song lyrics and links to performances



LYRICS AND
LINKS DOC