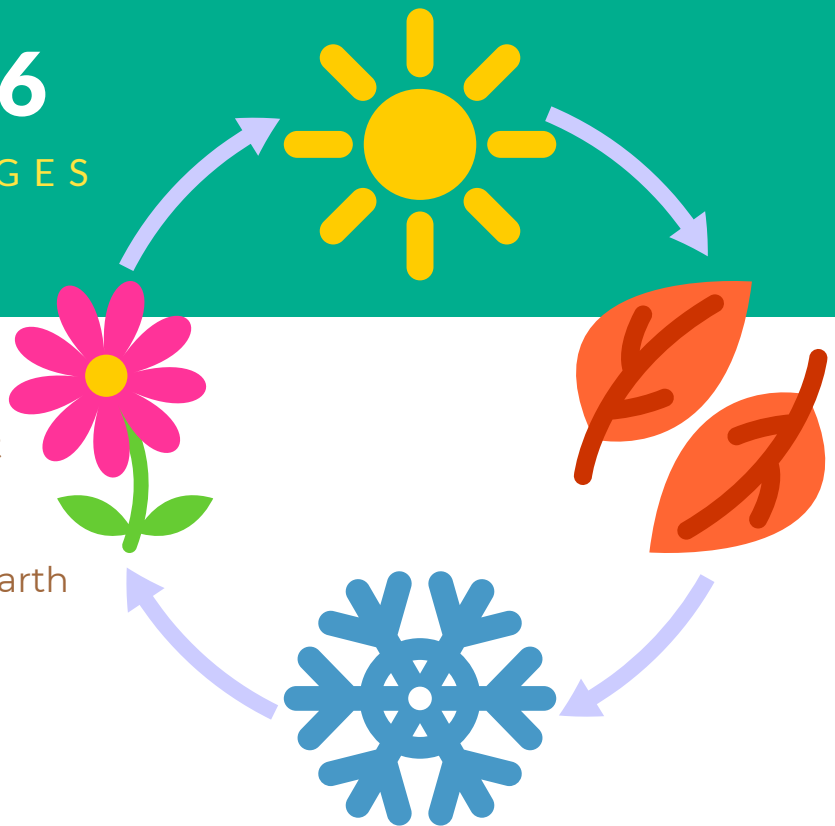


# APRIL 2026

## SEASONAL CHANGES



### Spiritual Practice:

Celebration and Lament



### Bible Story:

New Heaven and New Earth



### Memory Verse:

Ecclesiastes 3:1, 4, 11a



## INTRO TO THIS MONTH'S THEME

*from Laura Hunter, GF Program Director*

This month, our theme is about changing seasons. Just as gardens grow differently through the seasons, so do our families. We are constantly changing, and sometimes what looks like death is merely a dormant season waiting for new life. During the seasons of Lent and Easter, we experience Lament and Celebration, and those are the Spiritual Practices for April.

Lament shows us how to bring our sorrows to the Lord, while celebration reminds us to rejoice and praise God in our good times. Whether we enjoy his gifts of peace and joy or experience sorrow in difficult times, God is still the center of our family.

Look for your purple Holy Week Liturgy and purple felt in your resource bag. We want your family to use these items during Holy Week, March 29<sup>th</sup> through April 5<sup>th</sup>. Pause and reflect on this story with your family.

Also, this month in God's Story, you will learn about the New Heaven and New Earth! We hope your family will use your imagination and consider what life will be like in eternity for those who have called upon the name of Jesus!

# FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PLAN: WEEK 1

Gentle reminder that this is not a to-do list. Feel free to pick and choose what works for your family. The goal is connection over perfection.

## FORMATION

- Open your Resource Bag and read the curriculum for April. Choose one day a week to engage in Growing Families activities together.
- Watch the Introduction video with Laura Hunter to find out the highlights of this month. (6:30 minutes)
- Start your Holy Week Liturgy right away. Palm Sunday is March 29th. Use your purple felt and the Holy Week liturgy.
- Young children will receive a small box with instructions to tell the story of Holy Week.



## TELLING GOD'S STORY

- Watch God's Story video with your children ( 9 minutes). Use this QR code here →
- View the Bible Project video: (5 minutes) (QR code) It tells the story of God renewing Heaven and Earth through Jesus, Because of his death and resurrection, we can live with him forever.



## MARRIAGE & FAMILY

- Watch Dr. Hall's last parenting video, "Parenting is a Sanctification Process." (12 minutes)
- Mark your calendar on April 16<sup>th</sup>, for Dr. Hall's last lunch with Growing Families. Don't miss this one. It is so important. He will recap all five sessions.



# FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PLAN: WEEK 2

Gentle reminder that this is not a to-do list. Feel free to pick and choose what works for your family. The goal is connection over perfection.

## FORMATION

- The Church is now in the season of Eastertide, so enjoy your cupcake snacks and the spiritual practice of Celebration with your family.
- Discuss why Easter is our most important celebration of the year.
- Begin reading *The Biggest Story*, one chapter at a time. This will give your family time to wonder and discuss the book.

## TELLING GOD'S STORY

- You may want to retell the story of the New Heaven and New Earth this week.
- You may want to review the story by looking through all your story pieces.

## MARRIAGE & FAMILY

- Parents, if you haven't watched Dr. Hall's video, use the QR code from week 1.
- Discuss the review page of Dr. Hall's 5 videos, found in your curriculum.

# FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PLAN: WEEK 3

Gentle reminder that this is not a to-do list. Feel free to pick and choose what works for your family. The goal is connection over perfection.

## FORMATION

- Read the curriculum page for Lament. Write a short Psalm about Lament together with your family. Next week, you can do the second activity, “Tears in a Bottle.”
- Parents review the curriculum page, “New Heaven and New Earth: A Family Conversation” after telling the April story. Share with your children ways to respond to God’s Big Story. This may be the first time they have heard the full story from beginning to end.

## TELLING GOD’S STORY

- Teens and families, watch Steph Peterson’s video for your art activity and enjoy your time together creating a masterpiece.
- Toddlers and families can tell God’s Story using the Rhyme Cards. Watch Steph Peterson’s video here →



## MARRIAGE & FAMILY

- Write down some questions you would like to ask Dr. Hall before his lunch talk.
- Attend the lunch talk on April 16<sup>th</sup> at noon, and don’t forget to register your children for childcare.
- If you haven’t watched the video yet, go back to page 1 and use the QR code.

# FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PLAN: WEEK 4

Gentle reminder that this is not a to-do list. Feel free to pick and choose what works for your family. The goal is connection over perfection.

## FORMATION

- If you haven't already done so, practice Lament as a family. Read the instructions for the Lament activity, "Tears in a Bottle." This can be a wonderful time to talk about sadness and God's presence in difficult times. You will need the small blue bag in your Resource Bag.

## TELLING GOD'S STORY

- Ask your children questions about God's Story. What is your favorite part? Where do you find yourself in the story? What do you think God's purpose is for our family? Talk about what part of God's story they love and wonder together.
- If you haven't used the discussion guide for the New Heaven and New Earth found in your curriculum, use it this week. You won't want to miss this opportunity with your children.

## MARRIAGE & FAMILY

- Parents: What are some of the most important things you have learned from the videos or Lunch talks with the professors? Pray together for your marriage and your family.

# BONUS SECTION: DIGGING DEEPER

Browse these activities after you've completed your family engagement plan.



Scan this code to visit this month's Recommended Materials page on the Growing Families website. All of these links and more can be found there.

## READ

- Article: [Teaching Our Children the Language of Lament and Praise](#)
- Article: [Lament as a Spiritual Practice](#)
- Article: [Celebration as a Spiritual Practice](#)
- Article: [Lament is for Little Ones, Too](#)

## WATCH/LISTEN

- VIDEO: [What is Lament?](#) (for elementary kids!)
- VIDEO: [The Gift of Lament](#) (a very short 1:56 minutes)
- Song of Lament: [Lord From Sorrows Deep I Call](#)
- Song of Celebration: [Praise](#)

## ENGAGE

- [Celebration Prayer Activity](#)
- [Celebration Coloring Page](#) (children and adults!)
- [Lament Activity for Teens/Adults](#)
- [Lament Activity for Kids](#) (or the whole family!)