

# THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

AGAIN & AGAIN, GOD MEETS US

MARK 1:9-15 | GENESIS 9:8-17

**Engage:** *Begin with a story about something new you've started doing recently that's had some challenges, such as training for a 5K, learning to knit, planting a garden, or starting a new job. You might bring some objects that correspond to your story. Alternatively, you might tell the children what practices you plan to start or give up for Lent. Ask, "Have you ever tried something new that was hard at first? ... Did anyone help you as you were learning? ... Did they expect you to be perfect from the beginning?"*

**Explain:** Today is the first Sunday in Lent. Lent is a season when we think about what we can do to be better people and follow Jesus. Sometimes we even give something up or start doing something new that will help us to follow Jesus more closely. Starting something new can be scary or hard, but we don't do it alone. God is with us! God doesn't wait for us to be perfect and get it all right, but meets us right where we are. When Jesus started telling the good news that heaven was near, God was there from the beginning. God was there when Jesus was baptized, God was there when Jesus was in the wilderness, and God was there when Jesus started his ministry. And God is with us too, no matter where we are in our lives.

**Pray:** Dear God, thank you for meeting me exactly where I am. I know that you are always with me no matter where I go. In Jesus' name, Amen.

**Play:** Write a poem together. Start each line with, "God is with me..." and take turns finishing the sentence. While poems don't have to have a meter or rhyme, this is a good opportunity to practice counting syllables, chanting rhythms, and rhyming. (*Example: "God is with me in my home, God is with me on my own. God is with me in the car, God is with me near or far. God is with me here or there, God is with me everywhere."*) You might also write the poem down together.

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<https://sanctifiedart.org/blog/again-and-again-childrens-lessons>