



Williams Chapel Church
Chief Apostle Kimberly Nixon, Pastor



FROM NOISE TO

"NEARNESS"

A 40-Day Lenten Journey

Psalms 16:11

James 4:8

Romans 12:1-2

“THIS IS A FAST FROM INNER NOISE AND OUTER AGITATION”.

Week 1: Return & Awareness

Theme: What Is Coming Out of My Mouth?

Day 1 – Ash Wednesday

Scripture: Joel: 2:12

“Return to Me with all your heart.”

Lent does not begin with striving; it begins with returning. Ashes are not symbols of shame but of soberness. They remind us that we are fragile, finite, and fully dependent. Somewhere in the noise of opinions, outrage, scrolling, managing outcomes, and rehearsing fears, we drift. We do not always rebel loudly; sometimes we simply become distracted quietly. The call of Ash Wednesday is not condemnation — it is invitation. Return.

To return means to notice how far your heart has wandered into agitation. It means recognizing how complaint has become casual and worry has become normalized. Today we do not fix anything; we simply become aware. Awareness is the doorway to transformation. Before God corrects our words, He softens our hearts.

Practice: Notice how often you complain today without correcting it yet. Just observe.

Day 2 – The Power of Words

Scripture: Proverbs: 18:21

The tongue is small, but it carries weight. Words do not disappear after they leave our lips; they plant something. When we rehearse complaint, we plant irritation. When we rehearse agitation, we plant division. When we rehearse gratitude, we plant peace. Many believers underestimate how spiritual complaining actually is. It is not merely venting — it is agreement.

Political agitation, cultural frustration, and relational irritations can feel justified. But justification does not equal edification. Today consider: Are my words building something holy, or are they reinforcing inner unrest? The shift begins not by silencing your voice entirely but by redirecting it intentionally.

Practice: Replace one complaint today with intentional gratitude spoken out loud.

Day 3 – Political Agitation & the Soul

Scripture: Philippians 4:8

We are living in an age where outrage is currency. The louder the reaction, the more attention it receives. But attention does not equal peace. The human nervous system was not designed to absorb constant political tension, global crisis updates, and cultural conflict. Overexposure leads to agitation; agitation eventually leads to numbness. Lent invites us to step out of the outrage cycle.

This does not mean disengagement from responsibility. It means discernment about consumption. When we fast from political agitation, we are not surrendering conviction — we are surrendering reactivity. The Kingdom of God advances through peace, not panic. Today, let your mind dwell where heaven dwells.

Practice: Refrain from political commentary and debate today — online and offline.

Day 4 – Murmuring in the Wilderness

Scripture: Exodus 16:8

The wilderness was not Israel's greatest threat; murmuring was. They had provision, guidance, and divine presence — yet complaint became their reflex. Murmuring delayed promise because it distorted perspective. Complaint narrows vision until all we can see is what is missing rather than what is provided.

We must ask ourselves: Has murmuring become our modern wilderness? In homes, churches, and leadership spaces, complaining can quietly shape atmosphere. It creates climates of suspicion and scarcity. Today consider what atmosphere your words create in the rooms you enter. Do people feel lifted or lowered after interacting with you?

Practice: Before speaking frustration today, pause and ask: "Is this constructive or corrosive?"

Day 5 – From Complaint to Intercession

Scripture: I Timothy 2:1

There is a holy alternative to complaining: intercession. Complaining talks about the problem; intercession talks to God about the problem. Complaining amplifies frustration; intercession transfers

burden. The energy required to complain is the same energy required to pray — but the outcomes are vastly different.

If something agitates you today — leadership decisions, national events, family tensions — convert it immediately into prayer. This is not denial; it is discipline. The mature believer does not suppress emotion but sanctifies expression. Intercession quiets the soul because it reminds us that God remains sovereign.

Practice: Every time you feel irritation rise, whisper a prayer instead of a critique.

Day 6 – Silence as Discipline

Scripture: Psalm 46:10

“Be still” is not passive; it is intentional restraint. Silence reveals what noise conceals. When we stop talking, we hear ourselves. When we stop reacting, we feel what we have been avoiding. Silence can be uncomfortable because it exposes inner turbulence. Yet it is in stillness that God recalibrates the soul.

Today practice quiet pauses. Not scrolling. Not processing aloud. Not defending. Just breathing. You may notice how often your impulse is to fill space with commentary. Lent is retraining the reflex. Nearness grows where noise decreases.

Practice: Take five intentional pauses today. One minute each. No speaking. No scrolling. Just presence.

WEEK 2: WORRY & ANXIOUS ANXIETY

Theme: Trading Agitation for Trust

Day 7 – Do Not Be Anxious

Scripture: Philippians 4:6

Worry feels responsible. It feels like preparation. It masquerades as care. But anxious anxiety is not stewardship — it is rehearsing fear. Paul does not say we will not face pressure; he says we are not to be governed by it. Anxiety multiplies scenarios that have not happened and may never happen. It keeps the nervous system on alert long after the threat has passed.

When we fast from chronic worrying, we are not pretending life is simple. We are choosing trust over tension. Prayer is not the denial of concern; it is the relocation of concern. Today, every anxious thought is an invitation to pray instead of predict catastrophe.

Practice: When a “what if” arises, answer it with “God is.”

Day 8 – Tomorrow Is Not Yours

Scripture: Matthew 6:34

Much of our anxiety is future-focused. We attempt to live tomorrow before it arrives. Jesus gently reminds us that grace is distributed daily, not in advance. When we borrow tomorrow’s burden, we operate outside today’s grace.

Chronic worrying exhausts the soul because it demands control over time. Lent is retraining us to stay present. The present moment is where God’s strength is supplied. You cannot steward what has not yet arrived. Stay here. Stay now. Trust that tomorrow will carry its own mercy.

Practice: Speak aloud: “Today has enough grace for today.”

Day 9 – Casting Care

Scripture: I Peter 5:7

Casting is an active verb. It is not gentle placement; it is deliberate release. Some of us pray but still clutch the burden. We speak words of faith while gripping fear internally. Lent challenges the grip.

Imagine physically handing God the concern that keeps replaying in your mind. Whether it is family tension, health uncertainty, leadership decisions, or national unrest — release it fully. Trust grows when control loosens.

Practice: Write your top worry on paper. Pray. Tear the paper as a symbol of release.

Day 10 – Stayed Mind, Steady Soul

Scripture: Isaiah 26:3

Peace is not accidental; it is the result of a stayed mind. What we allow to linger in thought eventually shapes emotional climate. Anxious anxiety often comes from mental overexposure — too much information, too much speculation, too many voices.

To stay the mind is to anchor it intentionally. When you feel your thoughts racing, slow them. Redirect them. Anchor them in truth. Peace is not the absence of issue; it is the presence of alignment.

Practice: When your mind spirals, repeat one grounding scripture slowly.

Day 11 – Fear vs. Discernment

Scripture: II Timothy 1:7

Fear disguises itself as wisdom. It calls itself caution, foresight, protection. But discernment is calm; fear is frantic. Discernment listens; fear shouts. Discernment consults God; fear consults imagination.

Today ask yourself: Is this concern coming from discernment or dread? The Spirit produces power, love, and a sound mind — not frantic agitation. When anxiety rises, do not shame yourself. Simply identify its source and return to soundness.

Practice: Before reacting, ask: “Is this fear or discernment?”

Day 12 – Trust Is a Discipline

Scripture: Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust is not a feeling; it is a decision repeated. Chronic worriers often believe that if they stop worrying, something will fall apart. But worry is not glue — God is. When we lean on our own understanding, we magnify uncertainty. When we acknowledge Him, He directs.

Trust feels vulnerable because it releases illusion. But it also restores peace. Today release one specific “what if” scenario. God does not need your anxiety to manage your future.

Practice: Name one area where you will intentionally stop rehearsing fear.

WEEK 3: CONTROL & SURRENDER

Theme: The Need to Manage Outcomes

Day 13 – The Illusion of Control

Scripture: James 4:13-15

Control promises security. It convinces us that if we plan enough, monitor enough, and manage enough, outcomes will obey. But life continually reminds us that we are not sovereign. The need to control often hides deeper fear — fear of loss, fear of chaos, fear of disappointment.

James reminds us to hold plans with humility. “If the Lord wills.” That phrase shifts authority back where it belongs. Surrender is not irresponsibility; it is realism. God is God — and we are not.

Practice: Add “Lord willing” to one plan today as a posture of humility.

Day 14 – Not My Will

Scripture: Luke 22:42

Gethsemane reveals that surrender is not easy, even for Jesus. He felt the weight. He desired another way. Yet He submitted His will to the Father’s. Control resists pain; surrender trusts purpose.

When we fast from control, we are not becoming passive. We are aligning with divine wisdom over personal preference. Sometimes the breakthrough we seek lies on the other side of “Nevertheless.”

Practice: Pray, “Nevertheless, not my will.”

Day 15 – If the Lord Does Not Build

Scripture: Psalm 127:1

There is exhaustion that comes from overbuilding. When we attempt to carry what God has not assigned, fatigue follows. Leaders, parents, and caregivers often fall into control because they feel responsible for everyone’s outcome.

Psalm 127 confronts that strain. If God is not the builder, our labor is restless. Lent invites you to examine what you have taken on that belongs to God. Release the false burden.

Practice: Identify one outcome you are trying to force. Release it in prayer.

Day 16 – Control in Relationships

Scripture: Ephesians 4:2

Control often hides in relationships under the language of help. We try to manage how others respond, grow, decide, or change. But love cannot thrive in coercion. Gentleness and patience require trust in God’s timing for others.

You are not the Holy Spirit in someone else’s life. When we attempt to control others, we create resistance. When we surrender them to God, we create space for grace.

Practice: Release one person to God today without commentary or correction.

Day 17 – Control Disguised as Care

Scripture: Galatians 6:5

We are called to bear one another's burdens — but not carry their responsibilities. Control often over functions. It steps in too quickly. It fixes prematurely. It rescues before growth can occur.

Healthy boundaries are not rejection; they are wisdom. When you allow others to carry what is theirs, you honor God's work in them. Lent teaches restraint as maturity.

Practice: Ask before stepping in: "Is this mine to carry?"

Day 18 – Rest Instead of Managing

Scripture: Hebrews 4:9-11

Rest is an act of defiance against control. It declares that God governs while we sleep. The need to constantly manage outcomes produces internal noise. Rest quiets it.

Today practice trusting God with unfinished tasks, unresolved conversations, and incomplete clarity. Nearness grows when we stop striving to be indispensable. God does not need your overextension to fulfill His will.

Practice: End the day without trying to "fix" anything. Trust God overnight.

WEEK 4: SOCIAL MEDIA & GUARDING THE GATES

Theme: Reducing External Noise

Day 19 – Guard Your Heart

Scripture: Proverbs 4:23

The heart is not only emotional — it is directional. What enters your eye gate and ear gate eventually shapes your internal climate. Social media is not inherently evil, but it is rarely neutral. It amplifies outrage, comparison, urgency, and reaction. Without boundaries, it trains the soul to live in constant response mode.

The 9 AM–9 PM boundary is not restriction; it is stewardship. When you guard your heart, you guard your peace. Today honor the boundary as an act of devotion. Discipline protects intimacy.

Practice: Do not open social media before prayer.

Day 20 – Comparison Is a Thief

Scripture: II Corinthians 10:12

Scrolling often leads to silent measuring. Someone else’s success, platform, family moment, or opinion becomes a ruler against your own life. Comparison erodes gratitude and fuels insecurity. It whispers that you are behind, less, or missing out.

God has not called you to compete; He has called you to obedience. When comparison rises, pause. Your assignment is unique. Social media shows highlight reels, not whole stories.

Practice: When comparison surfaces, speak gratitude for your current season.

Day 21 – Outrage Culture

Scripture: James 1:20

Human anger does not produce the righteousness of God. Outrage feels powerful but rarely produces transformation. It spikes emotion but drains peace. Constant exposure to controversy trains the soul to react instead of reflect.

Lent invites us to disengage from performative anger. You do not have to respond to everything. Silence can be strength. Wisdom chooses when to speak and when to abstain.

Practice: Scroll without reacting. Observe without commenting.

Day 22 – Before You Post

Scripture: Colossians 4:6

Before you post, pause. Ask: Is this seasoned with grace? Does it edify? Does it reflect Christ? Social platforms reward speed; the Spirit cultivates restraint.

Your digital presence is an extension of your witness. Even truth must be delivered with wisdom. Today practice holy hesitation before publishing any thought.

Practice: Wait five minutes before posting anything.

Day 23 – Digital Sabbath Evenings

Evenings are sacred. The hours after 9 PM prepare the nervous system for rest. Endless scrolling before sleep feeds anxiety and comparison. Reducing evening exposure allows the mind to settle.

Reclaim your night. Let your last input be prayer, scripture, or silence — not headlines or commentary. Protect your peace before you close your eyes.

Practice: No social media after 9 PM. Replace with quiet reflection.

Day 24 – Reclaiming the Morning

Mornings shape momentum. If the first voice you hear is the world's noise, your soul begins reactive. If the first voice you hear is God's, your soul begins anchored.

Give God the first portion. Before notifications, before commentary, before opinions — presence. Nearness grows when God receives priority.

Practice: Spend 10 uninterrupted minutes with God before engaging online.

WEEK 5: NEARNESS RESTORED

Theme: What Replaces the Noise

Day 25 – Abide

Scripture: John 15:4

Abiding is not striving; it is remaining. After weeks of surrendering complaint, worry, control, and overexposure, space has opened. Now fill that space with presence. Nearness is cultivated consistency.

Fruit does not grow from agitation. It grows from connection. Remain in Him — not occasionally, but intentionally.

Practice: Sit quietly and imagine resting in God's presence.

Day 26 – Gratitude as Warfare

Scripture: I Thessalonians 5:18

Gratitude shifts atmosphere. Where complaint once lived, thanksgiving now stands guard. Gratitude is not denial of hardship; it is recognition of grace within hardship.

Today intentionally speak thanks for ordinary blessings. The discipline of gratitude retrains the tongue and recalibrates perspective.

Practice: Speak three specific gratitudes aloud.

Day 27 – Peace That Guards

Scripture: Philippians 4:7

Peace is described as a guard — it protects thought and emotion. When worry decreases and control loosens, peace occupies the space. But peace must be maintained.

Guard your inner climate. Protect what God is restoring. Do not reintroduce what you have buried.

Practice: Notice moments of peace and thank God for them.

Day 28 – A Gentle Spirit

Scripture: I Peter 3:4

Gentleness is strength under control. It is evidence that agitation no longer governs you. A gentle spirit reflects internal alignment.

As complaint quiets and worry decreases, gentleness becomes visible. This is resurrection forming before Easter arrives.

Practice: Respond softly in one tense moment today.

Day 29 – Speaking Life

Where complaining once lived, life can now flow. Words carry spiritual weight. Speak hope. Speak blessing. Speak possibility.

Your tongue is being retrained this Lent. Continue the discipline beyond Easter. Language shapes legacy.

Practice: Intentionally affirm someone today.

Day 30 – Corporate Unity

There is power in a shared fast. As a community, you are shifting atmosphere together. Complaining decreases. Peace increases. Control loosens. Trust strengthens.

Unity grows when collective surrender occurs. Celebrate what God is doing among you.

Practice: Pray for your church community today.

WEEK 6: THE CROSS & RESURRECTION

Day 31 – Take Up Your Cross

Scripture: Luke 9:23

Taking up the cross includes dying to habits of speech, thought, and control. The cross confronts self-rule. It invites surrender.

Daily dying produces lasting freedom.

Day 32 – Crucifying Complaint

Complaint loses power when nailed to the cross. What once felt automatic now feels interruptible. That is growth.

Resist returning to old speech patterns.

Day 33 – Burying Anxiety

Anxiety often tries to resurrect itself. Even after prayer, even after surrender, it revisits the mind with familiar arguments. But what is buried with Christ is not meant to be exhumed by fear. When we say we are burying anxiety, we are making a decisive spiritual statement: this pattern no longer governs me.

To bury anxiety means we stop rehearsing it. We stop feeding it with constant mental replay. We stop introducing it into every conversation. The grave is a place of finality. Today, visualize placing your anxious patterns into the tomb with Christ. Refuse to roll the stone back with repetitive worry.

Practice: When anxious thoughts return, say firmly, “That was buried.”

Day 34 – Releasing Control

Scripture: Luke 22:42

Control is one of the last things we surrender because it feels like protection. If we manage tightly enough, anticipate thoroughly enough, and monitor closely enough, we believe we can prevent pain. But control is not sovereignty — it is strain. Jesus in Gethsemane modeled surrender not because the cross was easy, but because obedience was greater than avoidance.

Releasing control does not mean disengaging from responsibility. It means we stop attempting to determine outcomes that belong to God. Resurrection power flows through surrendered hands, not clenched fists. Today loosen your grip. What you entrust to God is safer than what you attempt to force.

Practice: Open your hands physically in prayer as a sign of surrender.

Day 35 – It Is Finished

Scripture: John 19:30

When Jesus declared, “It is finished,” He was not announcing defeat — He was proclaiming completion. The work of redemption did not depend on human management, political alignment, or public approval. It was accomplished through obedience and surrender. Those words dismantle the illusion that everything depends on us.

Many of our control patterns and anxious habits are rooted in the belief that if we stop striving, everything will collapse. But the cross declares otherwise. What God ordains, He sustains. Resting in finished work means trusting that Christ’s authority exceeds your anxiety and surpasses your management. You are invited to rest — not because nothing matters, but because He has already secured what matters most.

Practice: Sit quietly and repeat, “It is finished,” allowing your body to settle into that truth.

HOLY WEEK

Day 36 – Palm Sunday

Palm Sunday is filled with sound. Crowds shouted “Hosanna,” laid down garments, and waved branches in celebration. Yet within days, the atmosphere shifted. Praise can be loud and still be shallow. The same voices that celebrate can later fall silent when expectations are not met.

This day invites us to examine the consistency of our devotion. Do we praise only when outcomes align with our preferences? Or does our surrender remain steady when the path turns toward discomfort? Palm Sunday reminds us that emotional enthusiasm is not the same as enduring faithfulness. As we have fasted from noise these past weeks, let our praise now rise from depth, not impulse.

Practice: Offer God intentional praise today that is rooted in trust, not circumstance.

Day 37 – Cleansing the Temple

When Jesus entered the temple and overturned the tables, He was not reacting in rage; He was restoring order. The temple had been filled with activity that distracted from its sacred purpose. What was meant for prayer had become crowded with commerce and commotion.

Holy Week invites us to allow Christ to examine our inner temple. What tables need overturning? Where has agitation replaced adoration? Where has control replaced communion? Cleansing is not punishment; it is preparation. God removes what interferes with intimacy. As we approach resurrection, we allow Him to clear the clutter that competes with His presence.

Practice: Ask the Lord to reveal one internal table that needs to be overturned.

Day 38 – The Table

At the Last Supper, Jesus gathered His disciples not in triumph but in tenderness. He broke bread knowing betrayal was near. He poured wine knowing suffering was imminent. The table reminds us that intimacy with Christ does not depend on perfect circumstances.

Communion centers us. We are sustained not by control, not by political outcomes, not by flawless leadership, but by Christ Himself. His body broken. His blood poured out. The fast we have walked these 40 days has created space at the table. Today receive again the sustaining grace of Jesus. Nearness is not earned; it is received.

Practice: If possible, take communion privately or reflect deeply on its meaning today.

Day 39 – Good Friday

Good Friday is the day when silence felt heavy. The sky darkened. Hope appeared crucified. From a human perspective, it looked like loss. Control was gone. Expectations collapsed. The One they trusted hung between heaven and earth.

Yet even in apparent defeat, redemption was unfolding. Good Friday teaches us that God's greatest work often happens beneath what looks like failure. When outcomes do not align with your expectations, trust that unseen purposes may be forming. The cross reminds us that surrender is never wasted. It is often the doorway to resurrection.

Practice: Sit quietly for several minutes in silence, reflecting on the cost of surrender.

Day 40 – Holy Saturday

Holy Saturday is the quiet between promise and fulfillment. There is no recorded miracle, no public declaration, no visible movement. Only waiting. The disciples did not yet see resurrection; they only felt uncertainty. This day represents every season where God seems silent.

But silence does not mean absence. Beneath the surface, power was preparing to rise. The stone would not remain sealed. As we conclude these 40 days, remember that transformation often occurs in hidden places. You may not yet see the full evidence of change, but trust that resurrection is forming within you. The noise has been reduced. Nearness has been cultivated. Now prepare for what refuses to stay dead.

Practice: End this journey in quiet expectancy. Whisper, “Resurrection is rising in me.”

EASTER DECLARATION

We surrendered complaint.

We buried anxiety.

We released control.

We guarded our gates.

We moved from noise to nearness.

And resurrection now rises in us.”