

THE PROPHET

LENT 2013

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PARISH OF CHRIST CHURCH

Interim Rector's Lenten Reflections

As you walk into the sanctuary this Lent, I believe you will notice something a bit different. For Lent we have moved furniture, stripped down the area around the altar and made deliberate changes to simplify the wonderful "flexible space". Such simplifying is a visual reflection of the season of Lent, a season that invites us to "strip away" the "fat" and "excess" in our lives that we might focus more clearly on our relationship with God.

There was a time when the "excesses" we were to give up were prescribed by the church hierarchy. One of my favorite history professors in seminary loved to tell the story of folks in the middle ages who would take the 40 days of Lent very seriously and forego (as prescribed) all alcohol, sugar, meat and frivolity six days a week. But because Sundays were "in" Lent and not "of" Lent (the 40 days do not include the Sundays!), they would party like crazy on Sundays waking up Monday mornings barely surviving the drunken debauchery of the night before.

Of course not all people did this, but it goes to show that the law can always be used in the literal sense rather than in its intent. When that happens we often lose track of the intention and become absorbed in the law itself, making customs and traditions over it, rather than delving more deeply into the intent.

My experience of Jesus is that when he was among us he was always trying to get folks to think about and live into the intent of the law rather than becoming judicially savvy, overly "religious" constables of judgment about who is following the law or laws and who is not. He didn't care much about who ate what when. But he cared passionately about who cared for those who had nothing, or were in prison or who were sick or who had no hope. He was not impressed with those who could make a real show of how they followed the letter of the law. He was far more tolerant of missteps that supported God's intention than he was of those who piously kept the letter of the law as they stepped over the crippled or widowed or

Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday - March 24

8 & 10 a.m. Blessing of the Palms,
Passion Reading and Holy Eucharist

Wednesday in Holy Week - March 27

7:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist with Healing
in the North Chapel

7:30 p.m. Service of Tenebrae

Maundy Thursday - March 28

6:00 p.m. Agape Supper in Parish Hall

7:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist
with foot washing & stripping of the altar

Good Friday - March 29

8:30 a.m. Ecumenical Walk starting at
St. Augustine's, Andover

10:00 a.m. Child-Friendly

Good Friday Service

12:00 & 6:00 p.m. Good Friday Liturgy
with Holy Communion from the

Reserved Sacrament

7:00 p.m. *The Crucifixion* by John Stainer,
sung by combined local choirs at

South Church, 41 Central St., Andover

Holy Saturday - March 30

9:00 a.m. Liturgy for Holy Saturday

Easter Eve - March 30

8:00 p.m. The Great Vigil of Easter
with Baptism

Easter Day - March 31

9:00 a.m. Festal Holy Eucharist with
Parish Choir, Schola, Angel Choir,
St. Cecilia Choristers & Brass

10:00 a.m. Easter Brunch

11:00 a.m. Festal Holy Eucharist with
Parish Choir & Brass

hungry on their way to doing the prescribed religious obligation.

If we take the work of Lent deeply and piously into our beings, it won't matter much what we give up, or even what we take on, unless we use that discipline as a way of training ourselves to be more faithful permanently. The trick is not so much to give something up for a time as it is to start a new way of being for ourselves permanently. It is a chance to learn how to free our minds and souls from the "have to's" we live with day to day.

It is a time to focus on the things Jesus taught us about being faithful. It is a time to do more deliberately what we should be doing in response to our Baptismal Covenant anyway. It is a time to give, fast and pray to be sure. All of these are actions that should be part of our regular way of life. Not because it is the law and not because it is prescribed to be done in a certain way or at certain times. We do these things because we have agreed to as a part of living a Christian life. Each of us will do them differently. We will give to different people in trouble. We will retreat into prayer at different times and in different ways. We will fast from different things for different lengths of time. It is not prescribed that we all must do one thing or another. There are no "laws" about how to insure that one has lived up to the letter of "keeping a Holy Lent." How we do our individual "learning to live more faithfully" during Lent is not important. That we do, is.

Each of us knows in our hearts the "excesses" and "fat" that we need to strip away -- not for a season but for always. Each of us is invited to use Lent as a time when we deliberately name those personal excesses or obstacles that prevent us from following Christ and skewing up the courage to remove them from our lives permanently. I wish you a deep and holy Lent. May you be stripped of that which is unhealthy for your soul and instead be filled with the peace and knowledge of God's abiding love for you as God's own. Gale+

Easter Memorial Flowers & Music

Our talented and hard-working Flower Guild, Minister of Music, and choirs are making plans and preparations for Palm Sunday and Easter at Christ Church. If you would like to give memorial decorations or music for Easter, please send the names with your donations to the Glebe House, 25 Central St., Andover, MA 01810. Mark your check payable to Christ Church with a memo notation on the envelope marked "Easter memorials." The deadline to have names printed in the Easter order of worship is Wednesday, March 20th.

How Do I Keep Lent With Children?

When I asked the children in the 4th/5th grade this past Sunday in Church School what Lent means to them, they answered that we are preparing for Easter and that the liturgical color would be purple. Yeah for Church School! When I asked them, "What does keeping Lent mean to them?" One of them answered, "You are supposed to give up something." I asked them, "Why?" and they weren't quite sure. So this is where I am asking parents for help at home during Lent.

Lent began on Ash Wednesday and ends on Easter Sunday, and it lasts for forty days, not including Sundays. It is a time to reflect on what has kept us from being who God created us to be and to make changes in our life which will put us back on the path. This inner work prepares us for Easter. Parents can help children participate in this season of reflection.

Carolyn C. Brown in her book "Sharing the Easter Faith with Children" says that, "The goal in keeping Lent with children is to find ways to 'engage them with God' at a new level. It is a time to encourage them to stretch their spiritual wings, to try out new ways of praying, and to serve others in Jesus' name." The goal as a parent is to help not only your children but also yourself focus on your relationship with God and to practice making it deeper during this Lent season.

One way to do this is to commit to bringing a daily discipline or ritual into your home during Lent. Just choose one ritual that will help your children focus on something beyond their busy schedules and help them 'engage with God'. This Lenten discipline will be different for each family. For one family, this might mean removing anything that may be taking time away from their relationship with God, and this might just mean giving up candy or video games or texting! For another family, this might mean practicing prayer together at the dinner table which they may not ever have done before. For another family this might mean committing to reading the Bible every day or choosing to do some sort of outreach.

There are many ways you can bring a Lent ritual into your home, and hopefully it will become part of your family ritual year round! Older children might be able to take on a Lenten discipline of their own with the help of a parent. Here is a short list of suggestions to bring prayer, Scripture reading and outreach into your family rituals during Lent:

Prayer:

Choose one prayer practice and try it for the six weeks of Lent. Dinnertime and bedtime are good times. Light candles at the dinner table!

~ For younger children, your family might learn a prayer together during Lent such as the Lord's Prayer or Psalm 23. You could memorize a little bit each day and say it each night. Any nightly prayer at the dinner table would be wonderful, just cultivate a sense of thankfulness and gratitude. Hymns also make good prayers!

~ For older children, you might want to memorize the Nicene Creed or another Psalm. There is a good five-fingered prayer based on the different types of prayer defined in the Book of Common Prayer p. 856-857. The 4th/5th grade class has been given this. They were asked to place this next to their bed and use it to help them pray at night. Contact me if you would like a copy!

Scripture:

~ For younger children, read a short bible passage to your child before bedtime each night. There are many good children's bible storybooks out there. I would recommend "Book of Bible Stories" by Tommie dePaola, "The Easter Story" and anything else by Brian Wildsmith, and "DK Children's Illustrated Bible" by Selina Hastings.

~ For older children, have them read a short Scripture passage from the Bible before bedtime and discuss the passage with them. The "NIRV Adventure Bible for Young Readers" is a good one to read from as is the "Contemporary English Version Holy Bible" for children. You and your child could commit to reading through one Gospel during Lent (Matthew or Luke are good to start).

Outreach and Mission:

~ Our parish is holding a Diaper and Underwear Drive collection during Lent. The collection box is in the Narthex, the right hand entrance to the church.

~ Neighbors in Need is another outreach program that is part of our Parish. We collect food all year long in the red wagons. The wagons are in both outside entrances to the church. Tuna fish, peanut butter and spaghetti sauce with meat and Parmalot are especially needed.

~ There are also United Thank Offering boxes at the back of our church.

~ Look around your neighborhood; is there a neighbor who might need their walkway shoveled when it snows?

~ Go through your toys, old clothes and donate them.

If you slip up and miss a day, it is not a big deal; this is not something that should make you feel guilty. The goal is to grow in your faith as a family. Check out the link in the *eProphet* to a longer version of this article with links to some wonderful resources to use with your family.

Please contact me if you have any questions, need any information or have some other suggestions. I would love to hear what you are doing to keep Lent in your home!

Carolyn Hughes Cuzzo

16th Annual Diaper and Underwear Drive during Lent

Most needed items: diapers and pull-ups of all sizes and NEW children's underwear in small sizes. Please bring your in-kind donations to church each Sunday in Lent. There will be a collection box in the Narthex. As always, the collection will be distributed by Communities Together (formerly the Greater Lawrence Council of Churches) to approximately 10 social service agencies that serve needy families locally. Thank you.

The Rich and the Rest of Us Lenten Book Study

Last summer, Jorge Fuentes, 19, who had been active at St. Stephen's Boston and in the diocese, was shot and killed. He was known by Bishop Shaw and many others in the diocese, and his death had a great impact on many. In response to Jorge's death and the swirling questions and assumptions around poverty and the root causes of violence that seem to be more and more in the forefront of all our minds, Bishop Shaw has asked the whole diocese to read the book "The Rich and the Rest of Us" by Tavis Smiley and Cornel West. The Diocesan offices have published a study guide we will use here at Christ Church. We will meet Tuesday evenings in Lent beginning on February 19 at 6:30 for a simple soup supper, the study and conversation, and end with prayers at 8:15. There is still room in the class, so please let Gale know if you are interested.

Good Friday Prayer Walk

Join others on this annual event praying for our town, its churches and other institutions. Coffee is available beginning at 8:15 a.m. at St. Augustine's Church on Good Friday, March 29. The walk begins at St. Augustine's Church, continues to West Middle School along Stevens St., and travels back through the center of town stopping at several locations for prayer and reflections. Prayers will be led by the local clergy.

From the Assistant Rector

When you sit in the same place every Sunday, you get used to the view. You notice the same marks on the pew cushion, the arrangement of the BCPs and Hymnals; you notice all the regulars around you, seated in their own 'regular' spot. And, it's not that different for your clergy.

Seated at the altar, I can tell when the altar rug is turned around; when the pew we sit in has been moved; when my prayer books have been moved. I am used to the space. But one of the things which I am getting used to is the new altar. It is a marvel to look at, and it is one of the things I never tire of gazing at, as a sort of meditation point, during services. Allen Townsend did an incredible job of creating a piece which not only pleases the senses, but pleases the Spirit - the imagination. As I was looking at the sweeping pieces of wood framing the base of the altar, it reminded me of the scene on Golgotha - when Jesus had died and the curtain of the Temple ripped into two pieces. It was the moment when the divide between the sacred and the profane - which had always been symbolized by the curtain, by the restricted access into the Holy of Holies to only the priests and those who were clean - was shred. The tearing of the curtain was the signal that there no longer remained a chasm between those who were able to attend the divine and those who were simply at His mercy. God was made open to all, the panels of the curtain rent, the holiness of God exposed and expanded. I imagine that curtain parting as did the Red Sea, opening its doors for us to dive in.

That is what I see when I look at the various grains of wood at the base of the altar. I am always reminded that our goal is not to reinforce barriers between us and the Holy - but to bring them down; to enter into those sacred spaces where we may worship.

Lent is the time in our collective worship experience where we intentionally take on the discipline of breaking through that chasm between us and the divine. It is not about shame for the sake of being bad or sorry for our sinfulness - it is an invitation for true repentance, undoing the separation between us and our creator, our God. Jesus' forty days and forty nights in the wilderness invites us into a wilderness of our own spiritual life, where we painstakingly and intentionally draw closer to the divine, drawing back that curtain of separation so that we too may see God face to face. I invite you to

reflect on what that journey might look and feel like in the coming weeks of Lent - how do you - your loved ones - we - become closer to the divine?

All blessings,
Kit+

Easter Brunch

Join us for an Easter Brunch of pastries, appetizers, fruit and light sandwich platters. The Easter Brunch is on Sunday, March 31st after the 9 a.m. service or come early for the 11 a.m. service and celebrate the Risen Lord. If you can contribute to our table with food preparation, set up before the service or clean up after, please contact Connie Molinaro at molinaroconnie@gmail.com or 978-441-2270 or Debbie Moskal at dmoskal@christchurchandover.org. See you at the Brunch!

Engaging the Word**Lenten Lectionary-based Bible Study on Sunday mornings**

Don't have time on the weekdays? Join us on Sundays during Lent (starting on February 17th through Palm Sunday) from 9 - 9:45 a.m. in the Parish Hall for a reading and exploration of the collect and gospel reading for the following week. What is the Word saying to you, week after week? How are you hearing the gospel stories of wilderness, repentance and forgiveness in your own life? Join us as we move from 'reading' the gospel, to 'praying' and 'living' the gospel! No sign up necessary— please let us know if you require childcare during that time!

Agape Supper**Maundy Thursday March 28 at 6 p.m.**

The Agape supper begins at 6:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall, followed by the Maundy Thursday service with foot washing and the stripping of the altar. The Agape supper, open to all ages, offers a reflective time for those who would like to share in a simple and symbolic meal to begin the three days leading to Easter. You do not need to sign up, but we will post a list on the bulletin board by the Parish Hall as a reminder of what to bring. There is no charge for this supper. We look forward to seeing all of you there.

Please bring the following "in the spirit" of Agape. No meats. Wine and Juices provided.
Last Names

A – L Pita Bread, Hummus, Taboule, and related condiments

M – R Fruit (all types), including raisins and dried fruit

S – Z Nuts, sunflower seeds, cheese, crackers, etc.

Special Music Offerings During Lent**Sunday, February 17 at 4:30 p.m.**

Organ Recital by Dr. Carol Doran
Works by J. S. Bach, Samuel Barber & Healey Willan

Sunday, February 17 at 5:00 p.m.**Choral Evensong**

sung by the Parish Choir
The Rev. Philbert Kalisa, guest preacher
John Skelton, organist
Barbara Bruns, director
Magnificat and Nunc dimittis
by Thomas Morley
Anthems by Samuel Sebastian Wesley

Sunday, March 3 at 4:00 p.m.**Three Choirs Festival at All Saints Church, Chelmsford "Lessons & Music for the Church Year"**

(Rescheduled from February 10th)

The combined youth choirs of Christ Church, Andover, All Saints Church, Chelmsford & Grace Church, Salem sing nine anthems including a newly commissioned setting of Psalm 23 by Louise Munding.

Music under the direction of Maggie Marshall, Mark Nelson & Barbara Bruns.

Sunday, March 24**Palm Sunday Liturgy****Special music at 8 & 10 a.m. services**

Sung by the Parish Choir,
St. Cecilia Choristers, Schola & soloists

Wednesday, March 27 at 7:30 p.m.**Service of Tenebrae**

Psalms and antiphons chanted
by the choir and congregation

Thursday, March 28 at 7:30 p.m.**Maundy Thursday Service**

Anthems by Nicholas White & Maurice Duruflé
Sung by the Parish Choir

Friday, March 29 at noon**Good Friday Liturgy**

Vittoria Reproaches

Sung by the Parish Choir

Friday, March 29 at 7:00 p.m.**The Crucifixion by John Stainer**

A musical reflection on the crucifixion of Jesus will be sung at South Church, Andover by the combined local church choirs of South Church, West Parish and Christ Church. The well-known anthem "God So Loved the World" is part of this cantata, which includes tenor and baritone solos, chorales, and anthems. Laura Weiss, conductor, Barbara Bruns, organist.

The Prophet
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25 Central Street
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The Parish of Christ Church

www.christchurchandover.org

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Andover Thrift Shop 978-475-0957
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Christ Church - 25 Central Street, Andover, MA 01810
Website Address - www.christchurchandover.org

Dates to Remember

Sunday, February 17, 4:30 PM

Organ Recital, Dr. Carol Doran
5:00 PM Choral Evensong
Rev. Philbert Kalisa speaking

*****Sunday, March 10*****

Daylight Savings Time Begins Move Clocks Forward 1 Hour

Monday, March 11

Women's Group - 7:30 PM

Sunday, March 17

Come As You Are service - 5:00 PM

Palm Sunday, March 24

8 & 10 AM services

Wednesday, March 27

Service of Tenebrae - 7:30 PM

Maundy Thursday March 28

6:30 PM - Agape Supper

7:30 PM - Holy Eucharist with foot-washing, stripping of the altar

Good Friday - March 29

8:30 AM Ecumenical Walk

10 AM Child-Friendly Good Friday Service

12 & 6 PM Holy Eucharist with reserved Sacrament

7:00 PM *The Crucifixion* by John Stainer at South Church

Holy Saturday, March 30

Liturgy for Holy Saturday

8:00 PM Easter Vigil with baptism

Easter, March 31

9 AM & 11 AM Festal Holy Eucharist

10 AM Easter Brunch (Between 2 services)