

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

MARCH 2017



SERVICES

9:00 A.M. - Sunday School
10:00 - Worship Services

MARCH 1 - ASH WEDNESDAY

HOLY EUCHARIST

The Rev. Tom Punzo

Lay Reader: Don Kiefer

MARCH 5 - LENT 1

HOLY EUCHARIST

The Rev. Eric Anderson

Lay Reader: John Tarver

MARCH 12 - LENT 2

Daylight Savings Time Begins

SPRING AHEAD!!!!

MORNING PRAYER

Lay Reader: Don Kiefer

MARCH 19 - LENT 3

BISHOP'S COMMITTEE &

MORNING PRAYER

HOLY EUCHARIST

The Rev. Eric Anderson

Lay Reader: Sam French

MARCH 26 - LENT 4

HOLY EUCHARIST

The Rev. Canon Bill Fasel

Lay Reader: Kate French

A Word from the Bishop's Warden

I write this, having forgotten I was supposed to until Sheryl reminded me, we are entering into the church season of Lent. It is bad that I forgot because it is a reminder that I am too preoccupied to be pursuing the introspection of this season. After all, it is in the quiet times we spend praying that we are most receptive to Jesus' call to us. It may be that His love is beyond understanding, but it can be experienced.

It looks like we may have an early spring. If so, as the world comes alive again, let us remember those on our prayer list who, for whatever reason, do not get the renewal of spirit that it brings. Pray that our shut-ins, those who are sick or troubled may also get to enjoy the majesty that is God's creation.

Anyone who is interested is invited to join the us on Sunday mornings at 9 :00 A.M. during Lent for Lenten themed discussions on how we see and experience Lent.

Wishing God's Peace for All,

John

**FOUR-PAGE NEWSLETTER
BE SURE TO SCROLL TO END**

CHURCH INFORMATION

Mailing Address: P. O. Box 453 Clinton, MO 64735

GPS Address: 181 East Division Clinton, MO 64735

Priest in Charge: The Rev. Bill Fasel; fbillnerm@hotmail.com, 816-803-4010

Bishop Martin Field, Diocese of West Missouri

Bishop's Warden: John Tarver tarverjohn1@gmail.com

NERM WEBSITE

St. Paul's Website: <http://stpaulsepiscopal.diowestmo.org/>

<http://www.nermwestmo.org/home0.aspx>

A Lenten Message from Father Anderson

The Season of Lent

I want to share a memory of one of the first Ash Wednesday Services I led as a newly ordained priest years ago. I was serving a church in Washington DC. The Ash Wednesday service had around 75 people in attendance. After the sermon was preached and the people were invited to the observance of a Holy Lent, the congregation was asked to come forward to the altar rail to be imposed with ashes. I placed anointing oil on my finger tip and mixed it in the ashes made from the burnt palms from the previous Palm Sunday. I began making the sign of the cross on their forehead, the same place where the sign of the cross is made at one's baptism. Then I came to a four year old girl. She looked at me with her innocent and fully trusting blue eyes. I said these words, "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return." As I imposed her with ashes, the gravity of these words had a profound impact on me. I was preparing her for death. These words and ashes mark the beginning of a journey into the death of Jesus Christ crucified on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins. As one is imposed with ashes made in the sign of the cross we acknowledge that we are fully mortal and we die. However, we also have faith to believe that if we are buried with Christ in his death through baptism then by it we share in his resurrection.

The Season of Lent is forty days. It begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. Sundays are not counted in these forty days as each Sunday represents a little Easter. Lent can be a powerful season for Christian's to transform our soul and lives as we journeying together to the cross on Good Friday to completely surrender our will and ego to Christ. It is Jesus's agony, suffering, betrayal, and brokenness that we comprehend his full humanity and his perfect sacrifice made for us. Without Jesus Christ's death on the cross there is no resurrection, no forgiveness of sin, no eternal life; there would only be death and emptiness.

As you know, the Church year is divided into six seasons. We have journeyed through the first three and are just about to begin the fourth. The Episcopal Church Common Lectionary uses Scriptures to deepen our understanding of Christ's

life and to strengthen our life both inwardly and outwardly. The first season of the church is Advent which focuses on anticipation and preparation for Christ's second coming. As the congregation responds in Eucharist Prayer A," Christ has died, Christ is risen, and Christ will come again". Christmas is the second season and focuses on the incarnation of Christ. The Gospel of John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. The third season is Epiphany which focuses on Christ's manifestation to the Gentiles. In Peter's sermon in the Book of Acts 9:34, he says, "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts all peoples from every nation who fear him and does what is right. Lent is the fourth season of the Church year. This season is a somber and penitential season. The Scripture readings throughout Lent guides all Christians on a journey to hopefully recognize and acknowledge our own spiritual brokenness, and gives us strength and courage to seek Jesus, and like Him, proclaim the Kingdom of God, heal the sick, feed the hungry and free the oppressed daily. Our Lenten journey ends at Holy Week where we will gather physically together to remember spiritually God's purpose of Christ death on the cross, for Jesus, for us, and for our neighbors. This is not Christian theater or drama. Christ's death on the cross is for all. Jesus told us that if we are to follow Him and be His disciples then we must pick up our own Cross and do for others what Jesus did for us.

As we enter into the season of Lent the Church has established 40 days of daily observances. The number forty occurs in the Bible numerous times. It generally symbolizes a period of testing and trial. For example, Moses was on the mountain with God for forty days. The Israelites wander in the wilderness for forty years. After Noah had built the ark it rained forty days and forty nights. Immediately after John the Baptist baptized Jesus in the Jordan River, Jesus was led into the wilderness for forty days and nights.

The observances listed below are to be done not only on our own but together as we live out our spiritual life together. The Season of Lent sets this time aside for us to prepare our soul to receive Christ's grace of forgiveness and salvation and to love others as Christ loves us.

The observances of Lent are found in the Book of Common Prayer, page 265.

1. **Self-examination and repentance** - The second petition of the Baptismal Covenant found on page 304 of the Book of Common Prayer reads as follows. Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord? One needs to self-examine one's own words and actions daily to know if they have been either ego-centric or Theocentric. Have we loved God with all our heart, soul, and mind, and loved our neighbor as our self. If the answer is no we must amend our words and action seeking forgiveness from the persons to whom we sinned against and did not love as our self. Also, we need to ask God for forgiveness with a repentant heart and change our ways.
2. **Prayer** - Prayer is one of the ways one communicates with God and strengthens our relationship with God. Both the Old Testament and New Testament have many examples of prayer. After Jesus had feed the hungry or healed the sick he would go to a lonely place and pray. Jesus says, "Whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it." When the disciples ask Jesus how to pray he teaches them the Lord's Prayer. Prayer is something Christians are called to do constantly without ceasing.
3. **Fasting** - After Jesus was baptized he was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. After fasting for forty days and forty nights he was hungry. Fasting is abstaining from foods while focusing on prayer. It provides unique spiritual benefits to the believer such as directing our hunger towards God and clearing our mind and body of our physical needs and directs our spirit to grow close to God and to hear and see God with our spiritual ears and eyes.
4. **Self-denial** - Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and

follow me for whoever wants to save his life will lose his life, but whoever loses his life for me will find it." Matthew 16:24-25. Self-denial is the way one lives into the Great Commandment of love and into our Baptismal Covenant. Self-denial removes us from being the center of this physical life and believing we control things, others and self. Self-denial teaches us only God has ultimate control. Through self-denial we show compassion towards others which is love in action.

5. **Reading and meditating on God's Holy Word** - One of the tenets of our faith is Scriptures reveals and holds everything we need for salvation. It is in reading and meditating on Scripture that God's Holy mysteries are revealed. Praying the Psalms can be very personal as they are written in the first person. For example, "The Lord is my shepherd I shall not be in want." Psalm 23:1. I often encourage people to read one verse or a word and meditate on it as a mantra until it reveals its truth to your soul. Every Sunday in church a sermon is given on the weekly lectionary. To read these Scriptures throughout the week and meditate on them and reflect on the sermon is another way we can grow in one's spiritual life. I have discovered that meditation is best accomplished by setting aside the same time and place every day. One should be aware of one's posture and breathing and it is best done in a quiet place and non-hurried setting.

It is my prayer for you that this article will bring you to a meaningful understanding of Ash Wednesday, and the Churches daily observances for the Season of Lent, and will awaken your spirit and those whom you meet into God's Spiritual love revealed through Christ's death on the Cross, forgiveness of our sin, through Jesus's sacrifice and obedience to the Father's Will, and the promise of new and unending life in Christ our Lord.

The Reverend Eric Anderson
The Episcopal Diocese of West Missouri

CROSSLY GREAT-GRANDCHILD ARRIVES!

We just received this wonderful news from Barbara: "My 20th Great Grandchild was born about a month early on Feb 23rd. His name is Walden Blake Green & he weighed 5lb 7oz 19in long. He is welcomed by his 3 yr old sister, Lydia Lou, his parents, Blake & Melissa Crossley Green, & his grandparents, Jeff & Dorie Crossley. All are doing well. " Congratulations to all!!

CARE NOTES

Keep these people in your daily prayers:
Nancy Gaines at Clinton Healthcare and Rehabilitation; Louise Crouch who has moved to Illinois; Kate French who is nearing the end of chemotherapy.

BIRTHDAYS FOR MARCH

6-Mark Gladfelter
17-Xander Hills
18-Annette Nelson
20-Carlene Sersey

ANNIVERSARIES - none

During Lent....



On Saturday Night March 11, set your clock ahead one hour!

Daylight Savings Time Begins March 12, 2017!!

**ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
P. O. BOX 453
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