

Minister's Update

Dear Church:

We have entered the Holy season of Lent. Lent is a period of forty days of prayer and fasting in preparation for Good Friday and Easter. In the days of the early church, Lent was a period of preparation for Baptism for new converts and penitence and reconciliation for those who committed major sins. Lent is a season of spiritual renewal, the themes of Lent focus on wilderness, confession, repentance, and change. This Lenten season, I invite you to open your heart anew to the message of the gospel. Theologian N.T. Wright writes,

“...We find Jesus, on the way to the cross, drawing together upon himself the great evils of the world, the imperial systems with their financial demands, and the great hopes of the world, hopes for God to release the slaves, to raise the dead, to set the world to rights. The scriptures give us the grounding for this hope: the power of God assures us that it will come. That message provides both the deeply personal meaning of Holy Week for each one of us and the deeply political meaning for today in a world that still groans under the slavery of the empire's financial demands. But the way to the Resurrection is precisely through death, the death which Caesar demands as the price for declaring a different empire, the death through which Jesus offers to God that which is God's, his own life, his own obedience, his own Image.”

(from *The Scriptures, the Cross, and the Power of God*—Westminster John Knox, 2006)

There are many ways to keep a Holy Lent. I invite you to ponder the ways in which God is calling you into a renewed relationship with God.

1. Consider fasting from meat one day a week, or turn off the news at a certain time and instead pray for the needs of the world, fast from negativity and speak encouragement to yourself and others.
2. Participate in the Lenten Institute as we study “A World Worth Saving” on Thursday evenings at 6:30pm in the Fellowship Hall. Dinner is served beforehand beginning at 5:45pm.
3. Attend the Saturday Alternative Worship Jazz Services from 4-5pm in the Chapel.
4. If you've never been baptized, get baptized on Easter Vigil, Saturday April 11 at 4pm or renew your baptismal vows with the marking of Holy Water also at the Easter Vigil.
5. Finally, here is a Lenten Blessing from Saint Ambrose.

This Lent-

Let your door stand open to receive Christ,
Unlock your soul to Him
Offer Him a welcome in your mind
And then you will see the riches of simplicity,
The treasure of peace
And the joy of grace

In Christ,
Rev. Harris

March 2020

