



Trinity Topics

March 2017

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**“My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord:
my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.” —*Psalm 84:2***

In some ways, there is something almost theatrical about Lent. Back in the day, fasting meant more than giving up chocolate—for seven weeks you got one small evening meal a day with no meat, dairy or eggs, with two small snacks throughout the day just to keep you going. After 40 days of that, you are quite literally starving, and you go to the Easter Vigil feeling desperate and wretched. Then, halfway through the Vigil, the organ suddenly booms forth in the darkness, the bells ring, and Easter Day has arrived. You are so weak you feel dizzy at that moment, as if the grace of God is overwhelming you. You go home and feast on ham, buttered bread, hardboiled eggs, and whatever else, and the refreshment of a body so long deprived of protein becomes the refreshment of God’s Gospel to our souls so desperate for salvation.

It is an extreme example of one of the purposes of self-denial—a principle theologians give the fancy word *anamnesis*. This Greek word literally means “to recall,” but is more than merely remembering. *Anamnesis* is making the events of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection present in the here and now. These old fasting rules use hunger and feasting as tools for making you feel with your body, right down to your bones, the history of our salvation, from a sinner yearning for God’s salvation to a redeemed Christian rejoicing in Jesus’ resurrection. The fasting makes you hungry; are we not supposed to hunger for righteousness? On Easter Day you can finally feast, and is not the Resurrection the wedding feast of the Lamb? My own experience is that there is a point where your body just can’t tell the difference between these spiritual truths and your physical sensations.

The happy reality of today is that we live in a state of perpetual feasting. For a Medieval peasant, the day to day diet of bread, porridge, and soup was barely different from the Lenten Fast, while our day to day diets rich in meat and fat are barely different from the Easter Feast. Therefore, I commend to you the discipline of self-denial for Lent as a symbol, however small a symbol, of what our lives lack without the grace of God. You don’t have to starve yourself to make this point, but what you deny yourself of should be something you want, and even on some level need. Is it hard to get through your day without caffeine? Then that is a perfect thing to give up for Lent, and as your body craves a cup of coffee you will hear throughout the season how your soul craves the grace of God. As you count down the Sundays of Lent you will count down the days not only to the dawn of new life in Jesus, but also to the day when you can, finally, in the Kingdom of God, drink an ice-cold Coke. After all, if a glass of iced Coke on a warm day isn’t Heaven, I don’t know what is.

Father Zachary Brooks +

LENT

Invitation to a Holy Lent

Dear People of God: The first Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church to prepare for them by a season of penitence and fasting. This season of Lent provided a time in which converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism. It was also a time when those who, because of notorious sins, had been separated from the body of the faithful were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to the fellowship of the Church. Thereby, the whole congregation was put in mind of the message of pardon and absolution set forth in the Gospel of our Savior, and of the need which all Christians continually have to renew their repentance and faith.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word. And, to make a right beginning of repentance, and as a mark of our mortal nature, let us now kneel before the Lord, our maker and redeemer.

Almighty God, you have created us out of the dust of the earth: Grant that these ashes may be to us a sign of our mortality and penitence, that we may remember that it is only by your gracious gift that we are given everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior. *Amen.*

(taken from *The Proper Liturgy for Ash Wednesday, BCP, pages 264-5*)

A note on Confession:

"Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective." *James 5:16*

Lent is an ideal time to consider undergoing the sacrament of Confession and Reconciliation. The ritual of confessing one's sins to a priest dates back to the earliest days of the Church, and it remained a popular part of the pious life in Anglicanism long after the Reformation. It is difficult and uncomfortable to actually speak of one's mistakes with another person—but that is precisely why it is such a spiritually fulfilling practice. You become more accountable for what you have done before the listening and loving heart of a fellow Christian, and even more importantly you become more accountable for what you will do after you hear the comforting words "The Lord has put away all your sins, go in peace." As difficult as this can be, one comes away from confession feeling the greatest sense of relief and a new sense of resolve in one's mission to live a Christian life. What can be more refreshing than turning over a blank page where a whole new chapter of life can be written?

The sacrament of Confession is available to all who ask for it in the Episcopal Church. Feel free to contact me to schedule a time to undergo this ritual, or simply drop by during office hours. It consists of reading the service on page 447 of the *Book of Common Prayer*, a short conversation about where you think you could have done better, and finally absolution of your sins. Of course, the seal of the confessional is absolute, and I am forbidden from speaking a word of anything confessed under any circumstances—priests have gone to prison refusing to break the seal of the confessional! It can help to fast the day before your confession, something about being hungry makes you more honest about yourself, or at least spend some quiet time in reflection. Finally, the spirit of this ritual is not only contrition—it is more importantly an act of joyful gratitude for God's mercy. We confess not to earn God's mercy—we confess because God is merciful.

Fr. Zach+

Easter Baptisms:

Easter is one of the occasions the Church considers especially appropriate to receive the sacrament of baptism. If you would like to be baptized, or have a child you would like to be baptized, please contact the parish office or Fr. Zach to schedule baptismal preparation. Persons who are able to make their own profession of faith are expected to undergo instruction in the Christian faith before baptism, while parents of younger children will have at least one meeting to discuss the meaning of the ceremony. Contact: info@trinitychurchjax.org

News & Announcements

Jacksonville Area Conference of Churches

Jo Ann Nelson attended the last meeting of the JACC. Over twelve churches were represented. It was interesting to hear the reports of the various congregations as they recounted their current activities. The JACC is sponsoring some type of outreach project every two months. In the fall, we helped with the collection of supplies for New Directions. The one that is ending at the end of February is the collection of shoes. The next one will involve helping inmates record stories for their children. Faith Lutheran has been involved in this before and receives funding from their Synod.

Is there any member of Trinity Church who would like to be our official representative? The group meets every other month for only an hour. It's a great opportunity for us to keep in contact with other area churches.

Mothering Sunday

March 26, The Fourth Sunday in Lent, is also referred to as Mothering Sunday. This was a day when all the workers in England would return home to honor their mothers. Here at Trinity Church, the Men and Boys will prepare and serve a breakfast for all the Women and Girls. Sign-up sheets are on the table in the lobby. **Men and Boys, please sign up if you can help. Women and Girls, please sign up to say that you will attend. This will help them in purchasing food items.**

The Heifer Project International

Through the years, Parish Members have joined the Church School Children in supporting this worthy Lenten project. Last year Trinity Church donated \$2251 to *The Heifer Project International*. March 19 is the annual Trivia Lunch, and the Bake Sale will be on April 2.

Congratulations!



Jude Thomas Brooks, son of Father Zach & Leah and brother of Abraham, was born on February 14, 2017.
Welcome to the world, Jude!

****If you have news you wish to share, please contact the Parish Office.***

**Distribution of the Mite Boxes
Sunday, March 5**

(to support the Church School's Lenten Project
– *Heifer Project International*)

**Trinity Fellowship
Tuesday, March 7, 7 pm**

We will be discussing Chapter 6
("Called to be Faithful") of Adam Hamilton's
book,
*The Call: The Life and Message
of The Apostle Paul*

ECW

Build your own salad. Bring a salad ingredient.
Lettuce and beverages are provided.

**Monday, March 13
5:30 – 7:00 pm**

**Sunday, March 19
Lunch & Trivia**

After the 10 o'clock service

(to support the Church School's Lenten Project
– *Heifer Project International*)

Vestry Meeting

**Tuesday, March 21
7:00 pm**

Mothering Sunday

**Sunday, March 26
UTO Spring Ingathering**
The Men will serve the Women & Girls
breakfast from **9:00 to 9:45.**

SERVICES IN MARCH 2017



**Wednesday, March 1:
ASH WEDNESDAY**

10:00 am = Ashes & Eucharist
6:00 pm = Ashes & Eucharist

**Sunday, March 5:
FIRST SUNDAY in LENT**

8:00 am = Holy Eucharist
10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, March 8:

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

**Sunday, March 12:
SECOND SUNDAY in LENT**

8:00 am = Holy Eucharist
10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, March 15:

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

**Sunday, March 19:
THIRD SUNDAY in LENT**

8:00 am = Holy Eucharist
10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, March 22:

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

**Sunday, March 26:
FOURTH SUNDAY in LENT**

8:00 am = Holy Eucharist
10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, March 29:

10:00 am = Holy Eucharist

*Morning Prayer is said at 10 o'clock
on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays.*