

St. Peter's Episcopal Church

The mission of St. Peter's is to be a supportive congregation for all seeking and wanting to share Christ's love in a welcoming and inclusive community where the Bible, human reason and the historical traditions of the Church are celebrated.

Lent 2010



On Ash Wednesday, February 17 the Church will once again invite us "to the observance of a holy Lent." What is a "holy Lent?" And what has been your experience of Lenten discipline?

In reflecting on my own experience, I find that I have sometimes viewed Lent through the lens of contemporary culture. I have been tempted at times to follow popular "wisdom" in selecting

and observing Lenten discipline. Seen through the lens of contemporary culture, Lent appears to be a religiously sanctioned and spiritually energized time of personal change. And Lenten discipline comes to resemble self-help programs in which I choose what I want to change and the promise is made that my goal will be achieved if I try hard enough.

However, as I explore scripture, tradition and the experience of the Christian community over time, I find these sources run counter to contemporary culture. From these three sources I learn that it is God who initiates the process of metanoia (change, turning, conversion) and not we ourselves. It was God who sent Jonah to cry out against the city of Nineveh. (If you aren't familiar with the story of Jonah, take a few minutes and read it - - it's a two-page book in the Old Testament.) It was God who sent Jesus to preach repentance to the people on the road to Jerusalem. And, it is God who, through the church, invites us to the observance of Lent.

The Rt. Rev. Alan Scarfe
Bishop of Iowa

The Rev. Dr. Lynne Carver
Rector

Carolyn Tapscott
Administrative Assistant

Worship Schedule

Sundays
8 & 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist
Wednesdays
5:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist

Christian Education

Sundays (Sept. – May)
9:00 a.m.

Vestry

Shelley Chambers
Nancy Czubara
Jane Hoffman
Sonita Oldfield-Carlson
Anne Petrie
John Swarney
Duane Timm
Keith Wilson
Marty Yeast

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In the story of Jonah, the Ninevites covered themselves in sackcloth and sat in ashes to signify their repentance. If we are to participate on more than a superficial level in having our foreheads marked with ashes on February 17, we will need to spend time in self-examination. (Several different options for self-examination can be found below.) Self-examination needs to be done prayerfully and is often assisted by conversation with a trusted spiritual friend. For, as human beings, we are often blind to what in us needs to change. It is only out of our experience of God's love that we know the desire and find the courage to honestly face ourselves. And, it is through the forth-telling, the honesty of the "prophets" around us that we come to see ourselves clearly.

In response to self-examination, we yearn for change and we begin to turn. However, our experience of undergoing significant personal change is often like that of Jonah in the belly of the fish. Jonah cries to God, "You cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas and the floods surround me; all your waves and all your billows passed over me . . . the waters closed in." We begin to experience and we become frightened. We resist, we pull back, we retreat, we run for our old ways of being and doing. For, in-depth change occurs only when I allow some of my most cherished beliefs, feelings and ways of behaving and relating to be challenged and let go. Such change involves dying. It is no wonder that our well-intentioned and carefully constructed plans for growth frequently turn out to be designs for clinging to old ways than they masquerade under the guise of newness. And, our most disciplined efforts to bring about lasting personal change result in failure, not because we're bad people, but simply because we are fearful, limited and weak human beings.

Perhaps, it is from our failure to change ourselves that comes our greatest opportunity. For, it is possible that only in our fear and our weakness do we initially become willing to receive God's help and healing. Maybe, it is in the midst of our despair of ever becoming who we would like to be; that, we are most open to accepting God's invitation to change us. And, maybe, it is in dying to the illusion that new life can be secured by the self that resurrection becomes a real possibility. *Lynne+*

Options for Self-Examination

In preparation for Lent, all of us are invited to reflect on "where we are" in our lives as Christians. Prayerfully ask God to help you see yourself clearly and then look at your life through the lens of one or more of the following:

The Greatest Commandment

Jesus said, "The first commandment is this: Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is the only Lord. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these." *Mark 12:29-31*

The Ten Commandments

From the Ten Commandments we learn our duty to God, and our duty to our neighbors. (Below are the 10 Commandments expressed as Christians "duties")

Our duty is to believe and trust in God;

I To love and obey God and to bring others to know him;

II To put nothing in the place of God;

III To show God respect in thought, word, and deed;

IV And to set aside regular times for worship, prayer, and the study of God's ways.

Our duty to our neighbors is to love them as ourselves, and to do to other people as we wish them to do to us;

V To love, honor, and help our parents and family; to honor those in authority, and to meet their just demands;

VI To show respect for the life God has given us; to work and pray for peace; to bear no malice, prejudice, or hatred in our hearts; and to be kind to all the creatures of God;

VII To use all our bodily desires as God intended;

VIII To be honest and fair in our dealings; to seek justice, freedom, and the necessities of life for all people; and to use our talents and possessions as ones who must answer for them to God;

IX To speak the truth, and not to mislead others by our silence;

X To resist temptations to envy, greed, and jealousy; to rejoice in other people's gifts and graces; and to do our duty for the love of God, who has called us into fellowship with him. (BCP 847)

The Baptismal Covenant

Continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers

Persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord

Proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ

Seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself

Strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being? (BCP 304-305)

Other Lenten Opportunities at St. Peter's

Rite of Reconciliation (private confession and absolution – with Lynne+)

Coffee & Spirituality (meet individually with Lynne+ to talk about your own spiritual journey including spiritual disciplines)

St. Peter's Annual Retreat at St. Mary Monastery - Encountering God: An Introduction to the Christian Mystical Tradition:
February 18 – 20

Continuing Education for Adult Christians will focus on the history of the Early Christian Church

Book Discussion Group: *The World's Religions (50th Anniversary Edition)* by Huston Smith: Tuesdays at 1 p.m. (A second group will be offered on an evening or weekend time if there is sufficient interest.)

Wednesday Evening Soup Suppers and Program on Religions of the World: 6 – 8 p.m.

Lenten Wednesday Evenings

On Wednesday evenings during Lent we will celebrate Holy Eucharist in the Chapel at 5:30. A simple soup supper will follow at 6 with the evening program on world religions beginning at 6:30. (Many of you expressed interest in learning more about other religions when you completed our adult education last summer.) Each week we will watch a video that describes a major world religion and we will discuss the contributions that religion's beliefs and practices make in our pluralistic world. Come for all or part of the evening!

February 24	Hinduism
March 3	Buddhism
March 10	Islam
March 17	Judaism
March 24	Christianity

What is going on with the music???

James O'Hare, our organist and choir director of 23 years, retired at the end of 2009.

We are currently in an interim period between church musicians. During this time we are seeking to discern what type(s) of music best facilitates our worship. Over the next few months members and friends of St. Peter's will play the organ and guitar and lead our singing. We will experience a variety of music during the 10:00 Holy Eucharist on Sunday mornings. We will be asking for your feedback. Please participate in this discernment process: we need to hear everyone's voice!

Are we going to one worship service at 9:00?

While we received lots of positive feedback about combining the 8:00 and 10:00 services, there was enough uneasiness about it that we will not be moving to one service during Lent. (We will definitely continue with our summer tradition of one service at 9:00.)

February Birthdays

2/04 Patrick Dittmer
 2/04 Marty Dittmer
 2/09 Larry Johnsen
 2/09 Amira O'Hare-Bouagadi
 2/10 Caryl Bucksbaum
 2/12 Ron Anderson
 2/14 Sherree Koch
 2/14 Sonita Oldfield-Carlson
 2/18 Mark Dittmer

February Anniversaries

2/12 Skip and Lanell Mogab
 2/21 Hovey and Maggie Tinsman
 2/23 Henry and Linda Neuman

March Birthdays

1 Judi Pilcher
 2 Ella McDonald
 8 David Hoffman
 9 Kenton Allen
 16 Barbara Nelson
 18 Kathy Dittmer, Charlotte Mogab
 19 Ellis Carlson
 29 Ghada Hamdan-Allen
 30 Peter McAndrews

March Anniversaries

9 Donald & Mary Lou Jones
 10 Paul & Sherree Koch
 27 Kenton & Ghada Hamden-Allen

FEBRUARY/MARCH CALENDAR**Sunday, February 7 – Epiphany 5**

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist
 9:00 a.m. Christian Education
 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Friday, 2/12 – Saturday 2/13

Paperless Music Workshop

Sunday, February 14 – Last Epiphany

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist
 9:00 a.m. Christian Education
 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Tues 2/16 Vestry Meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Wed 2/17 Ash Wednesday
 Holy Eucharist with Ashes at 7 p.m.

Sunday, February 21 – Lent 1

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist
 9:00 a.m. Christian Education
 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Wed 2/24 Holy Eucharist at 5:30 p.m.
 Soup Supper at 6 followed by program on
 Hinduism

Sunday, February 28 – Lent 2

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist
 9:00 a.m. Christian Education
 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Wed 3/3 Holy Eucharist at 5:30 p.m.
 Soup Supper at 6 followed by program on
 Buddhism

Sunday, March 7 – Lent 3

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist
 9:00 a.m. Christian Education
 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Wed 3/10 Holy Eucharist at 5:30 p.m.
 Soup Supper at 6 followed by program on
 Islam

Sunday, March 14 – Lent 4

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist
 9:00 a.m. Christian Education
 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Wed 3/17 Holy Eucharist at 5:30 p.m.
 Soup Supper at 6 followed by program on
 Judaism

Sunday, March 21 – Lent 5

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist
 9:00 a.m. Christian Education
 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Wed 3/24 Holy Eucharist at 5:30 p.m.
 Soup Supper at 6 followed by program on
 Christianity