

The Hillside Messenger

A Message from the Rector: The Value of Lent

The season of Lent may seem to some an anomaly in a hedonistic culture. Why, one may ask, should the Church be concerned with penitence, fasting, and prayer when the Lord Jesus Christ so long ago redeemed mankind from sin and gave them new life in Him? Was the practice of fasting not more suited to a pre-Christian era than it is to this present culture? Admittedly, it was not until the fourth century that Lent as a forty-day period of fasting developed. Yet our Church's retention of it as a necessary and helpful liturgical season implies it has lasting intrinsic value for the Christian life. The forty days of Lent are a reminder of both the forty years of Israel's desert wanderings before they could enter the Promised Land and the forty days during which our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ fasted, prayed, and was tempted by the Devil. Moses and Elijah also

fasted for forty days at times in their lives, whether we understand a forty-day period of fasting to have been literally forty days or that this description is symbolic of a long period of fasting and prayer.

If today some Christians feel Lent is unnecessary, then how does one



explain the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ, whose life we are imitating as Christians and whose teachings we aim to apply and obey, did not even begin His ministry before enduring a fast of forty days? In the *Gospel according to St. Mark*, we read that after Jesus had been baptized, the Holy

Spirit “straightway driveth Him forth into the wilderness” (*St. Mark 1:12*, ASV), where He stayed for forty days and was tempted by Satan. St. Mark gives the details that during this time Jesus was with the wild beasts and angels waited on Him (*St. Mark 1:13b*); St. Matthew provides the information that angels came and ministered to Jesus only after the devil had concluded his temptations and departed (*St. Matthew 4:11*).

Now, the fact that Jesus Christ our Lord fasted forty days sets all His followers an example to follow as each is able. Very few people can actually go without any food for forty days. Even St. John the Baptist needed locusts and wild honey, and the Lord still regarded that as fasting (*St. Luke 7:33*). But we should not argue, if we cannot literally fast forty days, that the discipline of fasting has no value. We should rather try to fast for shorter peri-

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The Value of Lent

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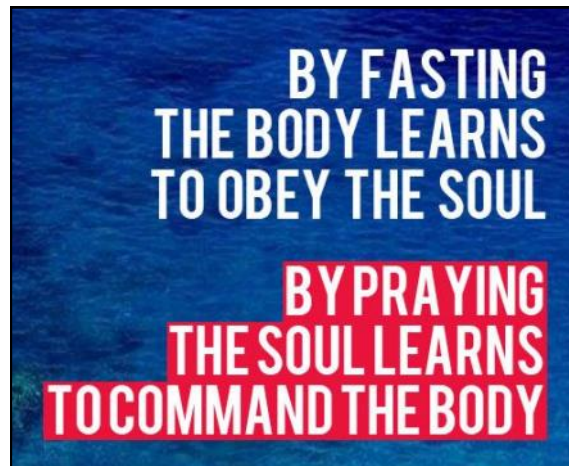
ods of time or eat only vegetables for a while as Daniel did, but in whatever form of fasting or abstinence the Lord leads us, let it be accompanied by prayer and by waiting on the Lord to hear and know His will.

The season of Lent must not be a time to ignore God's discipline or to neglect to humble ourselves before Him. There are portions of Scripture, such as *Isaiah 58*, that denounce exterior rituals associated with fasting, but the intention is not that God's people should never fast, but only that they live rightly and justly, loving God wholeheartedly and loving their neighbor while engaging in this discipline. Sackcloth and ashes and all the exterior signs of fasting will do no good

unless one turns away from all sin. One's treatment of the poor, the alien, the orphan, and the widow must never belie one's Christian profession. Instead, we must be concerned not to oppress and exploit others but treat them justly. People of every race and social class will be found in God's kingdom, and we must treat them all as we would treat any citizen of God's kingdom—with the love of Christ. Fasting and abstinence do not go

together with hypocrisy. The first two have no value in a life in which piety is pretended rather than lived.

The Lord Jesus Christ takes the discipline of fasting to a new level both by His example and by His teaching, in which He tells His disciples to anoint their heads and wash their faces when they fast so that others do not even think that they are fasting and so that their fast remains hidden. Why did our Lord teach



this? It was surely because any visible practice indicating that one is fasting can be misused in the service of outward show and hypocrisy, where pretense and outward show are everything and the inward attitude of sin and wickedness remains.

Now it is natural for us to want to avoid the disciplines of fasting and abstinence that go with Lent, since human nature is weak, as our Lord warned in the Garden of

Gethsemane when exhorting Peter to pray:

Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

St. Matthew 26:41, KJV

Since the flesh is weak, it needs to be subdued by the spirit, which is willing. The spirit of man follows the Spirit of God in leading the man into prayer and the practice of those spiritual disciplines which are conducive to prayer and which strengthen it.

Now the disciples of John the Baptist complained at one time to Jesus that they and the Pharisees fasted often, but His disciples did not (*St. Matthew 9:14 ff.*).

The Lord explained that just as the wedding guests don't mourn while the bridegroom is with them, so during His life on earth His disciples would not fast, but the time would come when He would be taken from them, and then they would fast. At this point, Jesus could have called His disciples together, and said that there had been a complaint about His disciples' never fasting. From now on, He

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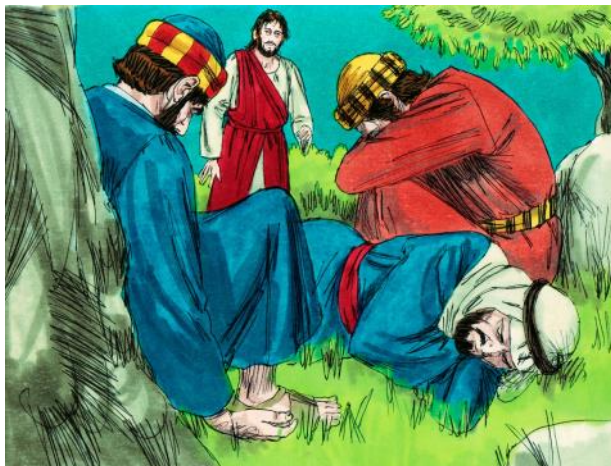
The Value of Lent

(Continued from page 2) could have said, you will all fast at least twice a week. If Jesus never made such a rule for all His followers, we shouldn't assume we, as the Church, may do so. Yet the teaching of our Lord takes it for granted that there will be times when His followers fast, and the first of such times would be between His death and resurrection. Our Lord set the example for fasting, but He allows His followers the freedom of when, how, and how long to fast. The Church has been given the tradition of the season of Lent and other holy days, such as the Ember Days, for fasting and abstinence, but our times of abstinence need not be restricted to such seasons and days either. If the Holy Spirit also leads us to fast on any other days, we must follow His leading.

Though there is this freedom given to Christians, there are also ample warnings from the Lord that we should watch and pray, including also the warning against over-indulgence that may lead to spiritual sloth and carelessness:

And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your

hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that



shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

St. Luke
21:34-36, KJV

Therefore it is better to be found watchful and prayerful, if we must use abstinence to be found so, than to be found spiritually asleep, spiritually lazy, and neglecting to prepare ourselves by faith in Christ and holy living for the great Day of His coming to judge the living and the dead.

So often, this state of spiritual sloth and ignorance comes little by little as we make excuses to ourselves not to read the Bible daily, to neglect our prayers, to pay no attention to studying God's Word or to seeing to it that we find out for ourselves the whole counsel of God for our daily life and His perfect will. It comes in the ordinary and natural process of self-indulgence. It comes as we assume some political ideologies are Christian and that some cultural values are normal for the Christian. It comes as we let down our guard gradually, day by day.

In view of how easily we fall asleep when we should be praying, as St. Peter fell asleep in the Garden of Gethsemane, let us pay attention, wake up, keep vigilant, and use this Lent to recover that prayerfulness and vigilance to which our Lord urgently calls us.

— *The Reverend Christopher Parrish*

Our Chapel Family Prayer List

O God, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, we humbly beseech Thee for all sorts and conditions of men; that Thou wouldest be pleased to make Thy ways known unto them, Thy saving health unto all nations. More especially we pray for Thy holy Church universal; that it may be so guided and governed by Thy good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life. Finally, we commend to Thy fatherly goodness:

Archbishop
Foley Beach;
Bishop
Bill Ilgenfritz;
Canon
Michael Penfield;
Father Chris Parrish;
Deacon Peter Vogel; and
Deacon Linda Bracken;
also all those who serve as Thy ministers in governing our nation and state, particularly:
President
Donald Trump; and
Governor
Gavin Newsom;

as well as all those who are any ways afflicted, or distressed, in mind, body, or estate; especially those for whom our prayers are desired:

the soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen, police officers, firefighters, and pilots who protect us every day;
our persecuted Christian brothers and sisters throughout the world;
all refugees;
all who are suffering from COVID-19 and the medical personnel treating them;
Jim and Edna Davis;
Estelle Wilson;
Joya de Rossett;
Debbie;
Scott;
Brittany;
James and Tanya Theiler;
Dale Quinn;
Brian Quinn;
Lisa;
Ben;
Marion;
Flo;
Max;
Dan and Kendra Pack;
Ernst Hernandez;
the Stanko family;
Yoshihiko and Hideko Ikegami;

Lori Anderson;
Ali Hemphill;
Lori Hemphill;
Pennel Magaw;
Tracy Magaw;
Mary Frances Reeves;
Maryanne Sanchez;
Kaitlyn Lindstedt;
Brenda Terry;
Elise;
Thomas and MaryAlice Dunbar;
Mrs. Kitt;
Jon Carter;
Marilyn;
Frank Capone;
the family of John Jerrehian;
Dave Joines;
Rose Handwerker;
Ann and Frank MacVoy;
Gary Winiger;
Libby Codd;
Bishop Ilgenfritz;
Karen and her family;
Dave Shuman; and
for all those who are in our hearts, that it may please Thee to comfort and relieve them, according to their several necessities; giving them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions. And this we beg for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

This prayer list was current as of March 1st, and the people of St. Luke's will pray for each need until we are notified that it has been met. Please contact Father Parrish to add or remove names. Thank you!



A Prayer for Our Congregation

O GOD,
Holy Ghost,
Sanctifier of the faithful,
visit, we pray Thee,
the Congregation of St. Luke's Chapel in the Hills
with Thy love and favour;
enlighten our minds more and more
with the light of the everlasting Gospel;
graft in our hearts a love of the truth;
increase in us true religion;
nourish us with all goodness;
and of Thy great mercy keep us in the same,
O blessed Spirit,
whom, with the Father and the Son together,
we worship and glorify as one God,
world without end.
Amen.



A Special Prayer Request

Dear Chapel Family,
As you know, St. Luke's is a parish of the Anglican Convocation of the West, which is itself a subset of the Missionary Diocese of All Saints in the Anglican Church in North America. ACOW and MDAS will meet March 26th through 28th at Synod in Ocean Beach, Maryland. The main order of business for the MDAS 2020 Synod is to elect a Bishop-Coadjutor who will then become our next Bishop Ordinary when Bishop Ilgenfritz retires later this year.

Father Parrish and I will attend these Synods as Clergy and Lay Dele-

gates (Deacon Vogel and Clark Patteson cannot attend but have assigned proxies). We crave your prayers for travel mercies as well as for God's guidance in doing the work to which we have been called, and we sincerely thank you for your faithfulness in this matter.

May Almighty God rain blessings upon you!
Kimberly Vogel

Almighty God,
giver of every good gift:
look graciously
on Your Church,
and so guide the minds
of those who shall choose
a Bishop for this Diocese
that we may receive
a faithful pastor
who will
preach the Gospel,
care for Your people,
equip us for ministry,

and lead us forth
in fulfillment of
the Great Commission;
through Jesus Christ
our Lord.
Amen.



Parish Postings

The Vestry will meet on Sunday, March 15th, immediately following the worship service. Interested parishioners are cordially invited to observe.



Here is a quick recap of the business conducted at the Annual Parish Meeting on February 16th:

- The Proposed 2020 Operating Budget was amended to increase Father Parrish's travel budget for Clericus and Synod before the budget was unanimously approved by the membership.

- The proposed amendments to the Parish By-laws were unanimously approved by the membership.
- The membership unanimously elected three Vestry members, and the officers of the Vestry were selected at the Vestry meeting which followed. This year's Vestry is:

Clark Patteson
Senior Warden

Tony Brown
Junior Warden

Mark Cameron
Secretary

Elodia Boreham
Treasurer

(with Deacon Peter Vogel
serving as Bookkeeper)

Jana Baldwin

Ray Boreham
Bill Zahrt
Patsy Zahrt



Our Chapel needs Lay Readers. Any confirmed member of the congregation may serve in this ministry. No experience is necessary—training will be provided. Please let Father Parrish know as soon as possible if you feel God is calling you to this ministry. Thank you!



Upcoming Events

Sunday, March 1st

The First Sunday in Lent

Bible Study: Isaiah

9:15 AM

Holy Communion with Healing Service

10:00 AM

Sunday, March 8th

The Second Sunday in Lent

Bible Study: Isaiah

9:15 AM

Office of Morning Prayer

10:00 AM

Holy Communion

12:00 PM

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Upcoming Events

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Sunday, March 15th

The Third Sunday in Lent

*Bible Study: **Isaiah***

9:15 AM

Holy Communion

10:00 AM

Vestry Meeting

immediately following the worship service

Sunday, March 22nd

The Fourth Sunday in Lent

*Bible Study: **Isaiah***

9:15 AM

Office of Morning Prayer

10:00 AM

Holy Communion

12:00 PM

Thursday, March 26th, through Saturday, March 28th

2020 Synod

*of the Anglican Convocation of the West
and 2020 Synod*

*of the Missionary Diocese of All Saints
of the Anglican Church in North America*

Sunday, March 29th

The Fifth Sunday in Lent,
commonly called Passion Sunday

*Bible Study: **Isaiah***

9:15 AM

Holy Communion

10:00 AM

Sunday, April 5th

The Sunday Next before Easter,
commonly called Palm Sunday

*Bible Study: **Isaiah***

9:15 AM

Holy Communion with Healing Service

10:00 AM





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ST. LUKE'S CHAPEL IN THE HILLS
ANGLICAN CHURCH

A PARISH OF
THE CONVOCATION OF THE WEST,
PART OF THE
MISSIONARY DIOCESE OF
ALL SAINTS IN
THE ANGLICAN CHURCH
IN NORTH AMERICA

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Worship Schedule

St.

Luke's Chapel in the Hills is a traditional Anglican parish which uses the 1928 edition *Book of Common Prayer*. We invite you to join us for worship soon!

***"A place
where the Bible is taught."***



*Biblical in teaching.
Liturgical in worship.
Loving in practice.*

First, third, and fifth Sundays of each month

Holy Communion
(with Healing Service on First Sunday)
10:00 AM

Second and fourth Sundays each month

Office of Daily Morning Prayer
10:00 AM

Said Holy Communion
noon

Please note that both services on Feast Days occurring on these Sundays will be Holy Communion.