

March 2023

The season of Lent is now upon us. On Ash Wednesday in worship we heard the words, “Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return.” In Lent, we are reminded of our mortality. In Lent, we enter a season of intentional grief. In Lent, we intentionally bear witness to the suffering of the world. It is uncomfortable, but this is Lent. It is a time to take out the silver linings and perfunctory optimism and step deep into the wilderness. It is in the wilderness that we grow. In the wilderness, we problem solve and acknowledge the reality of the unknowns as we sit in the discomfort. Lent is a 40-day observance that honors the season of wilderness experienced by Christ and his ancestors. Lent brings space for grief and our own internal dissonance. It is intentional time to engage the deeply spiritual aspects of our lives where Christ meets us in the wilderness.

40 days. Consider how you may want to observe Lent in your home. It could be reading a devotional book or joining in on the 7am zoom devotions (link on the website). It could be adding a practice in or taking something out. Remember, Lent is not about a “self help” action (e.g. giving up chocolate to lose weight) but rather a way to connect with Christ. Whatever you add or subtract, ask how it is helping you engage your spirituality.

There are many resources available. Christ in Our Home devotionals can be found in the office. [Faith Formation Journeys](https://faithformationjourneys.org) (faithformationjourneys.org) is a website that has a weekly option for devotions, mealtime prayers, daily blessing, and caring conversation questions. Home kits for households will be available on Sunday to take home and use during this season.

If you have palms in your home from last year, perhaps light a candle and think about all that the palms have seen and experienced in your home the past year. Pray over people and the times experienced—the good and the hard. Return the palms to the earth or compost, for you will make room for the new palms in a few weeks.

Mid-week worship will take place on Wednesday nights at 7:00p with Holden Evening Prayer. Please join us for a midweek time to gather and pray. Planning ahead, Maundy Thursday worship will be April 6 at 7:00p and Good Friday on April 7 at 7:00p.

Over the past number of weeks there has been an intentional crescendo of liturgical music in worship. Throughout Lent, notice how we will gently begin to strip one piece at time, leaving additional space for silence and quiet prayer. It is a “stripping of the altar” as we work our way towards Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

However you choose to engage your Lenten journey this year, I pray that it weaves deep into your soul as Christ meets you.

With Lenten blessings,
Pastor Shannyn