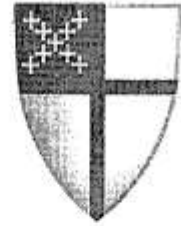




St. John's Episcopal Church and Day School

Alamogordo, New Mexico

Our Mission is to proclaim the Good News of the Gospel
and to seek and serve Christ in all people



2022 – March Newsletter

Greetings in this strange new season!

As this coming Sunday will be the first Sunday in Lent, I wanted to share with you how I am approaching my Lenten fast this year in the hopes that it might be helpful for you. This approach was born of having to preach four times on Ash Wednesday. In the spirit of wanting to preach a unique sermon each time, I spent a lot of time thinking about an approach to Lent that works for right now; and surprise! It came to me by way of more ancient pieces of our Lenten practice.

As I was preaching to the students at the Day School about the origins of Lent I was reminded of how the early church used it as a season of renewal and re-engagement in our relationship with God, in addition to making it a season of fasting and self-denial. But what struck me in a new way is how deeply our Lenten practices are tied to our relationship with the land. The agricultural year revolved around significant dates in the church calendar in different parts of the world. For instance, the growing season in Greece traditionally begins on the Feast of the Annunciation on March 25 and goes until the Feast of St. Mary on August 15, when the weather in Greece turns too hot for many of the staples that grow there. The rose colored Sunday in Lent was a rogation day when the planting would be blessed.

Then I realized that Lent itself is a tradition based in our experience of the Land. Shrove Tuesday Pancakes are made of all of the goods that you traditionally abstain from during Lent: milk, flour, fat, sugar, cream. The reason for this is that many of these were goods that had to be consumed fairly close to when they are harvested, and communities would normally encounter extreme leanness in the time right before their first harvest anyway, so the practice of Lent was to reset our relationship with the world around us. On Shrove Tuesday we finish with the harvest of last year and turn our eyes toward what is coming.

This year, I am remembering many of the things we wanted to do as a community before we were struck by COVID-19. This Lent seems like a good time for us to sit with those things. What of those things do we still want to do? What of what we were then do we still want to be? And where is the Holy Spirit calling us as we embrace the next steps of our journey?

Lent is a good time to reset and think about these things; and I hope you will join me as we pray for where God is calling us, together. Blessings from...

Your Brother in Christ,

The Rev. Michael Peter Drinkwater

Gratitude for Covid-tide

I am grateful for:

learning how to be friends on Zoom
how to get business done on Zoom
how to broadcast and stream a live event
faithful, funny, and devoted prayer partners
telephone chats with folks I don't get to see in person
letters and cards from friends
hearing music
taking long walks in new places
photography
reading books on my book list
savoring the taste of food made with a new recipe
seeing a neighbor as I walk around my neighborhood
friends
ringing my singing bowl
praying
gratefulness
abundance
love
the Holy Spirit

Nancy Gregory, Senior Warden

Turn Off, Tune Out & Drop In, and ...

Join *Life Transformed: The Way of Love for Lent*

The Rev. Br. David-Luke Henton, BSG

Happy Lent, Dear Friends! I have set two broad goals for myself for Lent: (1) With apologies to the late Timothy Leary for borrowing and tweaking his “be-in” slogan from the 1960’s (“turn on, tune in & drop out”), my own Lenten plan is to turn *off*, tune *out*, and drop *in* ... And ... (2) I plan to participate in the Episcopal Church’s 2022 Lenten program, *Life Transformed: The Way of Love for Lent* (<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/life-transformed-the-way-of-love-in-lent/>), drawn from Presiding Bishop Michael Curry’s beautiful, simple and transformative *The Way of Love: Practices for Jesus-Centered Life*. Beginning with Ash Wednesday (the week of Last Epiphany) and continuing through Holy Week, this series designed for Adult Christian Education forums but easily adaptable for individual use, ties the Easter Vigil readings to seven basic ancient practices for a Jesus-centered life: Turn, Pray, Learn, Bless, Rest, Worship, Go.

Turn Off:

If it is electronic and beeps, buzzes, bleeps or rings, I plan to create intentional spaces of silence, peace and contemplation throughout the day when it is turned “OFF” and will not disrupt focused prayer, meditation, and Presence with God and with Sisters and Brothers in Christ in real-time and -place.

Tune Out:

I am doubling down on the decision I made 15 years ago in the aftermath of the Virginia Tech shooting not to watch traumatizing television news or to stream disturbing video. Reading (print or digital) news in moderation and from a variety of viewpoints is quite adequate for staying informed and for forming and updating prayer intentions. I do not need to listen to or watch infotainment, opinion or advocacy ‘news’ from any perspective, nor do I need to spend so much time online with non-church, non-prayer and non-spiritual content.

Drop In:

I am focusing renewed enthusiasm and gratefulness on places of blessing, joy and thankfulness in my life. Some of the opportunities I hope to avail myself of include:

- Prayer Monday-Friday at 8:00am & 4:00pm with St. John’s Playful Prayer Warriors (PPW) on zoom or facebook (links on our homepage: www.stjohnsalamo.com)
- Attendance and participation in real-time when able at the Eucharist and Formation Hour on Sundays, and faithful participation on zoom when physically absent
- Prayerful service at St. John’s Community Kitchen with the PPW
- Participation in the Episcopal Church’s 2022 Lenten program, *Life Transformed: The Way of Love in Lent* <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/life-transformed-the-way-of-love-in-lent/>
- Focus on how I can best support Sharon and others in the creation and distribution of Blessing Bags, which is becoming a wonderful, signature ministry for St. John’s at the Community Kitchen, with COPE, and beyond at our diocesan Center for Borderland Ministries in El Paso and the Anglican (Episcopal) Diocese of Northern Mexico’s shelters at San Matias and Espiritu Santo churches in Cd. Juarez
- Renewing and rejuvenating my private intercessory prayer practices, both with our Gregorian intercessions, and my own individual intercessions, offered systematically at Noonday and throughout the day

- Maintaining the practice of additional reading in conjunction with Noonday. (Right now, I am working my way through Robert Alter's *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, highly recommended by Fr. Michael, and past issues of Spiritual Directors International's beautiful journal, *Presence*.)
- Renewing the practice of Presence with God in the natural world, whether hiking, praying and playing with my dog, reflecting on the intricate, detailed beauty of a houseplant or a cloud or the changing colors of our beautiful mountain and desert landscapes.
- Praying daily for Rio Grande Borderland Ministries and the work of our diocesan Bridge Chaplain Ana Reza and our Mexican partner Padre Hector Trejo and the people of San Matias and Espiritu Santo in Cd. Juarez, as well as our Co-chairs the Revs. Susan Hutchins and Michael Wallens, our Canon to the Ordinary Lee Curtis, and Program Manager Nellie Fagan
- Download and use Episcopal Relief and Development's 2022 Lenten devotions available free at <https://www.episcopalrelief.org/church-in-action/lent/>

If you are interested in either the ERD Lenten Meditations or *The Way of Love* and don't have internet access, please just let us know, and we'll get you print copies.

May you have a Blessed and Holy Lent! Soli Deo Gloria, with love and prayers,

David-Luke, BSG

What Would Hooker Say?

Richard Hooker lived in a time of conflict theologically speaking. He valued Scripture, reason, and tradition in a time very different from our own. He was a priest of the Church of England under the authority of a female monarch and remained so until his death. And yet he embraced a "middle way" that did not embrace Rome. What he wanted was to bring the "Puritans" back within the communion that today we call Anglicanism. He failed and yet succeeded in embracing principles that live today. Although he was not a military man, his father was and yet he did not live for most of his life under the guidance of his father. He was an academic at Oxford University and yet could not afford to remain within academic circles. So he went to the Temple Church, where he would find a good deal of conflict with his assistant, a Puritan named Walter Travers.

I was reminded of conflict as I have watched the news recently and thought of how the world can turn upside down when power and control get the upper hand. We do not know how the conflict between Russia and Ukraine will work out. What we do know, theologically, is that God remains on the throne however the result of current events turns out. Hooker's principles still live. Scripture, reason and tradition work together. Choices must be made. I hope I would have the courage to live out the principles of my life whatever the cost. I know Hooker lived out his principles. May we each have that courage.

The Rev. Aileen Walther

Schedule of Sunday Readings

Date	Old Testament	Psalm	Epistle	Gospel
6-Mar	Deuteronomy 26:1-11	Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16	Romans 10:8b-13	Luke 4:1-13
13-Mar	Genesis 15:1-12,17-18	Psalm 27	Philippians 3:17-4:1	Luke 13:31-35
20-Mar	Exodus 3:1-15	Psalm 63:1-8	1 Corinthians 10:1-13	Luke 13:1-9
27-Mar	Joshua 5:9-12	Psalm 32	2 Corinthians 5:16-21	Luke 15:1-3, 11b-

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Date	Sunday	Reader - 8:00	Reader - 10:15	Preacher
6-Mar	Lent I	Randy Burroughs	Sharon Kelman	The Rev. Michael Peter Drinkwater
13-Mar	Lent 2	John Shipe	Nancy Gregory	The Rev. Michael Peter Drinkwater
20-Mar	Lent 3	Joyce Summers	Sharon Kelman	The Rev. David-Luke Henton, BSG
27-Mar	Lent 4	Randy Burroughs	Nancy Gregory	The Rev. Michael Peter Drinkwater

Community Kitchen Schedule	
1-Mar	St. Joseph's
8-Mar	49th Medical Group
15-Mar	Christ Community Church
22-Mar	St. John's
29-Mar	First Presbyterian

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Facebook Photo series

Please keep an eye on our Facebook page during Lent to learn more about our Chancel screen. Every day during Lent, a new picture from the Chancel screen will be posted with its description on our Facebook page. After our Lenten fast is over, we will have the photos printed in a new booklet. A huge thank you to Tim Schultz for the lovely pictures.

Blessing Bag Ministry

Blessing Bags contain **travel** size items (i.e. hand sanitizer, small note books, toothbrush, toothpaste, pens, pencils, shampoo, deodorant, granola bars, soap, tuna/cracker packs, underwear, socks etc). We place several of the items in a gallon storage bag and distribute them to those in need. Currently, we are working closely with COPE and local partners in addition to Rio Grande Borderland Ministries.

If you are interested in helping in this ministry, please contact Sharon Kelman at 757 718 9451 or email ke4zia@gmail.com. You may bring any items you purchase to the church and deposit them in the bag that is located in the Narthex any Sunday.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Do you knit or crochet? Are you interested in doing it as part of an ongoing spiritual practice that gives back to the community? If you are and would like more information, like patterns or prayers, please contact Joyce at joycesummers@mac.com