



Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church

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A Guide to Lent, Holy Week and Easter | 2020

What is Lent? Lent is a season of preparation leading up to Easter. It is the forty days plus the six Sundays before Easter. For centuries, it has been observed as a special time of self examination and penitence. Lent is a time for concentration on fundamental values and priorities, and is not a time for self punishment. Throughout Lent, the worship services of the church take on a simpler tone, appropriate to this season. Banners are removed from the church. Flowers are not used. Crosses showing the risen Christ are removed. The word "[Alleluia](#)" is not used in the words of the [liturgy](#) or hymns. These practices help the worshipping community to mark this season of renewal as a special time in the church year.

Observing Lent. The custom is to mark the season of Lent by giving up some things and taking on others. Both can serve to mark the season as a holy time of preparation. Some examples of things people give up for Lent include sweets, meat for all or some meals, and alcohol. In most cases, giving up something for Lent can be made more meaningful by using the money or time for another purpose. For example, meal times on fast days could be spent in prayer. Another example is that if you give up meat during Lent, the extra money that would go to meat dishes can be given to a group which works to end hunger worldwide. Some things added during Lent are daily Bible reading, fasting on Fridays, times of prayer, taking a course of study related in some way to spirituality as provided in our Lenten Program. Note that the season of Lent is forty days plus the six Sundays. This is because Sundays are celebrations of Jesus' resurrection and are always an appropriate day to lessen the restrictions of Lent. So that if you have, for example, given up chocolate for Lent, you could indulge in a weekly candy bar on Sunday. Sundays are "in" Lent but not "of" Lent. Lent is also an especially appropriate time for the sacrament of confession. While confession to a priest is not required to receive God's forgiveness, it can be a meaningful rite of reconciliation to God.

Shrove Tuesday is actually the day before Lent begins. The day is named for the "shriving" or confessing that was traditional on this day before beginning Lent. This day is also known as *Mardi Gras*, or "Fat Tuesday," because it was a time for eating the things from which one would abstain during Lent. Pancake suppers are traditional as they were a way of using up some of the ingredients not needed during Lent. ***Saint Stephen's will have a Shrove Tuesday Pancake supper in the Parish Hall from 5:30-7:00 PM.***

Ash Wednesday (February 26th), the first day of Lent, is marked with a special liturgy. The theme for the day, though not for all of Lent, is that we stand as sinners condemned to die, but for God's grace. This concept is symbolized by the imposition of ashes on the forehead, with the words, "You are dust and to dust you shall return." In the Old Testament, ashes are a sign of penitence (feeling regretful at offenses) and mourning.

Ash Wednesday is one of two days of special observance (the other being Good Friday) for which [fasting](#) is recommended. While fasting usually refers to going without food for the entire day, this practice is not practical for all persons, including, but not limited to, diabetics. Use your own discretion in determining how you can best observe this day. ***Ash Wednesday: Ashes and Eucharist will be at Noon at Saint Stephen's. The Reverend Don Muller will be the [Celebrant](#).***

The Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday The last Sunday before Easter and the last Sunday in Lent. The day commemorates Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem with a blessing of palms and a procession in which the whole congregation carries palms. Some of the Palm Sunday palms are kept and used to make the Ash Wednesday ashes for the next year. The day is also marked by reading the story of Jesus' [Passion](#) (the word used to describe Jesus' death comes from "suffering," which is one old meaning of passion). The 10AM service begins in the Parish Hall with the receiving of a palm, prayer and a procession into the Church.

Tirduum (Sacred Three Days) is a period of three days of preparation for a feast day. The term is most frequently used for [Maundy Thursday](#), Good Friday, and Holy Saturday, the three days prior to Easter Sunday that are the concluding days of Holy Week, also known as the Easter Triduum. Other usage for the Easter Triduum reckons the days from the evening of Maundy Thursday through the evening of Easter Day. The term may indicate any three-day period of preparation for a feast.

Maundy Thursday Agape Meal. Prior to the Maundy Thursday Service, Saint Stephen's and The Church of the Holy Spirit will gather for a [agape](#) simple meal of soup, bread, cheese, wine, fruit and fruit juice will we at 6:00 in the Parish Hall at Saint Stephen's. Saint Stephen's needs volunteers to bring an item for the meal: [Volunteer](#).

Maundy Thursday is the Thursday in Holy Week (the week leading up to Easter). The day is a time for remembering the Last Supper. The name comes from the Latin word *Maundatum*, for "commandment", for Jesus said: "*I give you a new commandment; that you love one another.*" This loving of one another is acted out by the Celebrant washing the feet (one foot) of parishioners. If there is to be "Communion" at the Good Friday Liturgy, it is consecrated at this Service for Reservation at the [Altar of Repose](#). At the conclusion of this service, altars are stripped of any ornamentation and crosses are removed or veiled to mark the solemnity of the occasion. ***The Maundy Thursday service will be at St. Stephen's at 7:00PM. It will be a joint service which includes Holy Spirit. The Celebrant will be The Reverend Don Muller.*** Add your name to the foot washing list located in the [Narthex](#).

Vigil at the Altar of Repose begins at the end of the Maundy Thursday Service and continues until the beginning of the Good Friday evening liturgy. It gives us a time to "keep watch with our Lord in increments of one hour". Saint Stephen's parishioners take turns standing watch for one-hour as an individual or group of two. This is an enriching experience. Please sign up for a one-hour watch time. The watch list posted in the [Narthex](#).

Stations of the Cross The Stations are depictions for the 14 incidents in the Gospel accounts of Jesus' suffering, death, and burial. They are used for the service called the Way of the Cross, during which worshippers visit each station in turn with a brief reading, response, collect and, on some occasions, a meditation. This practice is particularly appropriate for all the Fridays of Lent. ***Stations of the Cross on Good Friday will be held at Holy Spirit in Tuckerton at Noon.***

Good Friday, the Friday in Holy Week, is a time for remembering Jesus' death. Some Churches have a service at noon because Jesus hung on the cross from noon until 3 p.m. There may also be an evening service. This is the second day of special observance for which fasting is recommended. There are four parts to this Service: Liturgy of the Passion (focused on the Passion according to St. John); The Solemn Collects (a long series of Prayer Intentions followed by a Collect to gather our prayers on this intention; Veneration of the Cross (an opportunity to meditate on the cross with the possibility of coming forward to kiss [touch] the foot of the cross); and Communion from the [Reserved Sacrament](#). There is no celebration of the Eucharist from Maundy Thursday until the Easter Vigil on late Saturday or early Sunday. However, it is customary in many churches to give out the bread and wine consecrated during the Maundy Thursday service on this day. ***Attend The Good Friday Liturgy at 7:00AM or 7:00PM at Church of the Holy Spirit in Tuckerton.***

Holy Saturday is commemorated with a simple Liturgy of the Word with the Gospel Lesson of Jesus in the tomb.

The Great Vigil of Easter (Saturday) is appropriate from after sunset on Holy Saturday until sunrise Easter morning. The Great Vigil was the traditional time of baptism in the early centuries of Christianity. This service begins in darkness and a [new fire](#) is lit, from which the [Paschal Candle](#) is lighted. It signifies the light of Christ coming into the world anew at the resurrection. This service ends the season of Lent and begins the joy of the Easter season. Its components are: Liturgy of the Light, Liturgy of the Word, Holy Baptism, and First Eucharist of Easter. Historically, this was the primary Liturgy of Easter. ***Saint Stephen's at 7:00PM, The Priest will be The Reverend Rosemary Lillis.***

Easter Day Festal Eucharist. The feast of Christ's resurrection. Easter Day is the annual feast of the resurrection, the [pascha](#) or Christian Passover, and the eighth day of cosmic creation. Faith in Jesus' resurrection on the Sunday or third day following his crucifixion is at the heart of Christian belief. Easter sets the experience of springtime next to the ancient stories of deliverance and the proclamation of the risen Christ. Easter occurs on the first Sunday after the full moon on or after the [vernal equinox](#). The feast begins at sunset on Easter Eve with the Great Vigil of Easter. ***Easter worship will be at Saint Stephen's at 8:00AM and 10:00AM. The Reverend Rosemary Lillis will be the Celebrant.***

LENT & HOLY WEEK 2020 SCHEDULE

LENT

Ash Wednesday

Ashes to Go	Feb 26th	7:00AM—8:00AM	Holy Spirit
Ashes & Eucharist	Feb 26th	Noon	Saint Stephen's
Ashes to Go	Feb 26th	12:00PM—1:00PM	Holy Spirit
Ashes & Eucharist	Feb 26th	7:00PM	Holy Spirit
Stations of the Cross	Feb 28th	7:00PM	Holy Spirit
Simple Meal	March 4th	5:30PM	Holy Spirit
Lenten Program #1	March 4th	6:30PM—8:00PM	Holy Spirit
Stations of the Cross	March 6th	7:00PM	Holy Spirit
Simple Meal	March 11th	5:30PM	Saint Stephen's
Lenten Program #2	March 11th	6:30PM—8:00PM	Saint Stephens
Stations of the Cross	March 13th	7:00PM	Holy Spirit
Simple Meal	March 18th	5:30PM	Holy Spirit
Lenten Program #3	March 18th	6:30PM—8:00PM	Holy Spirit
Stations of the Cross	March 20th	7:00PM	Holy Spirit
Simple Meal	March 25th	5:30PM	Saint Stephen's
Lenten Program #4	March 25th	6:30PM—8:00PM	Saint Stephen's
Stations of the Cross	March 27th	7:00PM	Holy Spirit
Simple Meal	April 1st	5:30PM	Holy Spirit
Lenten Program #3	April 1st	6:30PM—8:00PM	Holy Spirit

HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday	April 5th	8:00 & 10:00	Saint Stephen's
Agape Meal	April 9th	6:00PM	Saint Stephen's
Maundy Thursday	April 9th	7:00PM	Saint Stephen's
Vigil Watch	April 9th	8:00PM– 7:00AM	Saint Stephen's Narthex
Good Friday			
Stations of the Cross	April 10th	Noon	Holy Spirit
Good Friday Liturgy	April 10th	7:00PM	Holy Spirit
Great Vigil of Easter	April 11th	7:00PM	Saint Stephen's
Easter Day	April 12th	8:00AM & 10:00 AM	Saint Stephen's