

March Newsletter 2021

Greetings Lake and River Parish

Welcome to March. We had a Chicken BBQ at United Church Cape Vincent March 6. it was successful. TMB UMC is selling masks Contact Tammy Beerman at 315-783-9096



March 22 the St Lawrence Seaway opens the shipping channel, and our ships will be back to watch.

The temperatures are warming up and we are more than ready for Spring.

Our churches are having their lent season and we are reading a book called "Draw the Circle by Mark Batterson. It is a 40 day Prayer Challenge.

We are so looking forward to the return of our summer people back to the Cape and hoping for things to return to normal as more people get the Covid vaccine.



Lee Page Outreach Committee

From Pastor Chris

Friends, I greet you warmly during this holy season of Lent in which we prepare for the most special of all days, on the Church Calendar – Resurrection Day! On April 4, we will greet each other with the words “He is Risen!” And the traditional response is “He is Risen Indeed!”

But on that day, we will have forty days (not counting the Sundays of self-examination and meditation, looking at the quality of our Discipleship and asking ourselves the hard questions. Our GOAL is Maturity in Christ. Our AIM is Spiritual Development through Bible Study, Prayer, Worship and Service and other spiritual disciplines.

How are we growing spiritually as Disciples of Jesus? As we deepen our faith, are we inviting other to Discipleship? We have been tracking Jesus through the various gospel lessons and through our pulpit proclamation, from the time of his baptism and as he invited his first disciples with the words, “Come and See!” and “Follow me!” We joined him on the mountain as he taught his disciples, with the crowds overhearing in the background. Immediately after his baptism, we are with Him in a deserted place, a wilderness, while he is being put to the test by the Satan.

In all this, we are looking at Jesus and listening to him and learning from Him because we believe that that is what we have to do if we intend to keep our baptismal promises that we have made to:

Renounce.....The spiritual forces of wickedness
Reject.....The evil powers of this world
Repent.....Of our sin

Jesus did the first two, and because he had no sin of his own, he took upon himself our sin. On the third round in which he “rejects” (literally casts out) the devil, he refused to bow down and worship the devil in exchange for the kingdoms of the world and all their material benefits (power). In that act, Jesus chose the path of crucifixion and willingly agreed to pay the price for our sins. From that moment, he was consciously on his way to the cross. He chose the path of obedience.

He demonstrated to us, learning disciples, what it means to keep our second baptismal promise to: Accept the Freedom and Power God gives to us to resist evil, injustice and oppression in whatever forms they should present themselves. And as we follow him from that moment, we also learn how to fulfill our third baptismal promise; to confess Jesus Christ as our Savior. We see him going into unfriendly territory (Samaria) and confronting a troubled woman who had a questionable reputation and doubtful credibility. But after her encounter with Jesus, she openly confessed, witnessed, to her villagers and introduced them to one who would become Lord and Christ not only to her but to the whole world and eventually to us.

When we confess Jesus Christ as our Savior, we put our whole trust in his grace and we ‘serve him as our Lord, in union with the church which Christ has opened to people of all ages, nations and races.’

These are the promises we have made they determine our living and our giving; our giving to God and our living, and even dying, for God and for one another.

May THIS HOLY SEASON make a difference. As Jesus told Nicodemus, we must be born from above (born again). Let us pray and work for that spiritual rebirth, which, with Jesus and us, will transform our communities, nation, and the world!

The work of God continues in our Lake and River Parish. Our 40-day Prayer challenge began on Ash Wednesday, and individually we do our daily readings. Over thirty copies for the book “Draw the Circle” were acquired, and every Wednesday evening during Lent, we meet at 7:00 pm via conference call to discuss the Chapter of the day, as follows: March 10 “Prayer Fleece”; March 17 “A New Prayer”; March 24 “Senior Partner”. **Please join us by dialing 1-425-436-6304 Access code 639723# All are welcome!**

Our Prayer Group continues to meet on Wednesday morning at 6:00 O’Clock on the conference call as well. **Please join us by dialing 1-425-436-6304 Access code 639723# All are welcome!**

The **Three Mile Bay United Methodist Church** resumes his Chicken and Biscuit dinners on Wednesday, March 10 at 3:00 pm. TAKE OUT ONLY.

Holy Week Services

Maundy Thursday, TMB at 2:00 pm; UCCV at 6:00 pm

Good Friday, TMB at 2:00 pm; UCCV at 6:00 pm

Easter Service, TMB at 11:00 am; UCCV at 9:30 am

Origin of Lent by Joan Pierce

In late winter, many Christian denominations observe a 40-day period of fasting and prayer called Lent. This is in preparation for the spring celebration of Easter, a religious holiday commemorating the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

The word “Lent” has Germanic roots referring to the “lengthening” of days, or springtime. But facts about the early origin of the religious observance are not as well known.

As a scholar who studies Christian liturgy, I know that by the fourth century, a regular practice of 40-day fasting became common in Christian churches.

Early Christianity

The practice of fasting from food for spiritual reasons is found in the three largest Abrahamic faiths: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. In all three, refraining from eating is intimately connected with an additional focus on prayer, and the practice of assisting the poor by giving alms or donating food.

In the Gospels, Jesus spends 40 days in the wilderness to fast and pray. This event was one of the factors that inspired the final length of Lent.

Early Christian practices in the Roman Empire varied from area to area. A common practice was weekly fasting on Wednesday and Friday until mid-afternoon. In addition, candidates for baptism, as well as the clergy, would fast before the rite, which often took place at Easter.

During the fourth century, various Christian communities observed a longer fast of 40 days before the beginning of the three holiest days of the liturgical year: Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter.

Spiritual renewal

As Christianity spread through Western Europe from the fifth through 12th centuries, the observance of Lent did as well. A few Lenten days were “black,” or total, fast days. But daily fasting came gradually to be moderated during most of Lent. By the end of the Middle Ages a meal was often permitted at noon.

Also, bishops and theologians specializing in church law specified restrictions on the kinds of acceptable food: no meat or meat products, dairy or eggs could be consumed at all during Lent, even on Sundays.

The idea was to avoid self-indulgence at this time of repentance for one’s sins. Marriage, a joyous ritual, was also prohibited during the Lenten season.

Today, Catholics and some other Christians still abstain from eating meat on the Fridays of Lent, and eat only one meal, with two smaller snacks

permitted, on two days of complete fasting. In addition, they also engage in the practice of “giving up something” during Lent. Often this is a favorite food or drink, or another pleasurable activity, like smoking or watching television.

Other activities are also suggested, in keeping with the idea of Lent as a time for spiritual renewal as well as self-discipline. These include making amends with estranged family and friends, reading of the Bible or other spiritual writers, and community service.

Though some practices may have changed, Lent in the 21st century remains essentially the same as in centuries past: a time of quiet reflection and spiritual discipline.

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