

# The Living Word

1035 Indiana St.  
Vallejo CA 94590  
707-643-7973



[www.vallejochristian.org](http://www.vallejochristian.org)  
[www.facebook.com/FCCVallejo](https://www.facebook.com/FCCVallejo)

## Lent Demystified



Why do we call **LENT** Lent? Is it because we are “loaned” the time before Easter to prepare for the Resurrection of Jesus? Is the time thus “lent” to us to make good use? Or is there some other significance to the time of **LENT**?

The word **LENT** comes from the Latin word *lentis*, which means “slow.” For any musician, you know that if the director gives the direction “Lentamente” or “Lentando” that the performers slow down their music pace.

*Lentis* found its way from Latin into Middle English where the word “Lenten” came to mean the days of spring which became progressively longer, allowing us to slow down our lives as there was more daylight for us to enjoy. In other Germanic languages, the word “Lenten” simply came to mean “Spring.”

For us at FCC-V, **LENT** is a time period in the spring where we are asked to slow down, think about the progress of our lives, and think about how we can **Move Forward Together**, our theme for this **LENT**.

For Christians in general, **LENT** is a forty-day period preceding Easter (which began on Ash Wednesday) where we are asked to prepare ourselves for the Great Feast of the Resurrection through prayer, penance, repentance, and almsgiving, such as the recent Week of Compassion. For some, penance means “giving up” something during **LENT**, and for others it is “doing something positive” to help us progress in our faith and our ministry.



Officially, **LENT** is comprised of 40 days and 40 nights, (counting Mondays through Saturdays, but excluding Sundays) similar to the forty days of rain endured by Noah and the forty years Moses and the Israelites spent wandering in the desert waiting to enter the Promised Land - and of course, the forty days Jesus spent fasting in the desert preceding his temptation by the Devil. The forty days of **LENT** will end on Easter Sunday . . . Alleluia . . . He is Risen . . . He is Risen indeed!

**LENT AT FCCV**

The liturgical season of Lent began with Ash Wednesday on February 17, and it ends right before Easter on April 4. During this season, we reflect, prepare our spirits, and open ourselves to transformation. Our Lenten theme this year is “**Moving Forward Together**,” and taking the lead from the insightful, short video “5 Ways Forward: Navigating Difficult Conversations,” (<https://vimeo.com/474024998>) the first five weeks of Lent will focus on the five touchstones of navigating these conversations: *Start with Hunger*; *Conflict is Opportunity*; *Compassionate Identification*; *Perceptive Understanding*; and *Practical Love*. I hope you will join us for this rich, reflective time throughout Lent.

**Living Stones**

*Our mission is to plant ourselves at the gates of Hope—  
not the prudent gates of Optimism, which are somewhat narrower;  
nor the stalwart, boring gates of Common Sense;  
nor the strident gates of Self-Righteousness, which creak on shrill and angry hinges  
(people cannot hear us there; they cannot pass through);  
nor the cheerful, flimsy garden gate of “Everything is gonna be all right,”  
but a different, sometimes lonely place, the place of truth-telling,  
about your own soul first of all and its condition,  
the place of resistance and defiance,  
the piece of ground from which you see the world both as it is and as it could be,  
as it might be, as it will be;  
the place from which you glimpse not only struggle, but joy in the struggle—  
and we stand there, beckoning and calling, telling people what we are seeing,  
asking people what they see.*

—“Hope” by Victoria Safford

What is the mission of our church during this extended time of pandemic and physical separation? Quite simply, as Victoria Stafford tells us, “our mission is to plant ourselves at the gates of Hope.” **What is the hope you see—the hope you long for?** The season of Lent is a perfect time to give yourself permission and space to hope. To hope without expectation of the outcome. But to trust the wisdom of your own soul’s leading. Your hope could be simple. Or elaborate. It could be something close in. Or it could be something generations in the distance. Whatever it is, in the weeks ahead, let hope be your guide. Let it encourage your soul-searching and vision-clearing. Let it prepare you and open you up to the transformation that the resurrected presence of Christ promises to bring to our lives and to our world. **What is the real and tenacious hope you see—the joyful and just hope you long for?** The world desperately needs your hope.

See you in (zoom) church,  
Christy

**ZOOM WORSHIP**

As we continue to shelter-in-place, we will continue to worship together online using Zoom. Bible Study begins at 9:30. Worship begins at 10:30. Please join us for any or all of this time together by clicking the link below and joining us through video. Or alternatively, you can dial in by calling the number below according to your time zone. The instructions to connect are fairly easy, but if you need help, please reach out.

In preparation for worship, please have communion elements of some form with you so that we can all partake together. This can be bread and juice—or any other elements that evoke the Last Supper for you. You may also want to light a candle near you as we worship together.

**Bible Study and Worship**

Weekly on Sundays,  
9:30 a.m.—Bible Study  
10:30 a.m.—Worship

**TECH VISIONING TEAM**

In the coming weeks, Christy will be convening a group from our congregation to start envisioning our “new normal” after the pandemic ends and we are able to meet safely together in our church building. It is clear that technology offers many possibilities to us, and we want to think about how to put it to use, what we will need to use it effectively, how to be as inclusive as possible, and ways we might overcome any obstacles. Do you want to be a part of this visioning team? We want to hear your ideas and input! Please let Christy know if you would like to be included.

**MISSION ACTION GIFT**

Our January Mission Action gift supported the organization Life After Hate. They are committed to helping people leave the violent far-right to connect with humanity and lead compassionate lives. Their primary goal is to interrupt violence committed in the name of ideological or religious beliefs. They do this through education, interventions, academic research, and outreach. Their vision is a world that allows people to change and contribute to a society without violence. See <https://www.lifeafterhate.org/> for more information.

Our February Mission Action gift will go to Week of Compassion. In addition to your individual donations, our contribution will help alleviate suffering from the recent catastrophic winter weather in the US and to those in need throughout the world. While there is a special emphasis on collecting for Week of Compassion at the end of February, donations can be made at any time online at <https://www.weekofcompassion.org/>.

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**EVENTS IN THE REGION****VIRTUAL FEB CAMP 2021**

With keynote speaker Renae Earl

Feb 27, 2021 6:00 p.m.

Join us for games, songs, an amazing keynote & fellowship with your camp friends!!!

[Register here for Feb Camp 2021](#)

**PREPARE THE WAY TO CGC!**

Over the years many people have gone to camp, have been a Counselor, have directed many camps, have bandaged cuts and bruises, have preached the Word, have sung the many songs and much more at the Community of the Great Commission. This does not happen automatically, it takes people to put things all together.

One of those things is being a Camp Counselor. Think back, when you went to camp and there was the Counselor waiting at the picnic table or in the cabin, did you ever think what it would be like to be that person. Well here is your chance. Or maybe you never went to any camp, but like to work with children of all ages, here again this event is a good place to start.

On March 27th, starting at 10:00, the Outdoor Ministries Committee will be sponsoring a Camp Counselor Recruitment Event on zoom. We will be talking about what it takes to be a Counselor as well as a Director, a Nurse, a Chaplain, a Musician, a Keynoter. We are bringing in a panel of experts, past people who have done it all, to talk to us about what it takes to be a person who is waiting at the picnic table or in the cabin and is waiting to make the week a beautiful act of love for all who come.

So here is your chance to become that person. Please sign up by March 24th. Please [register here](#).

Carl Cordes, a member of the Outdoor Ministries, will be hosting this event. This is what he says about being a camp counselor, "Being a Counselor can be rewarding, can be tiring, can be full of joy and love, can be challenging, but I would not have it any other way. I have been a Counselor for more than 20 years of my life and would not change anything. I am heading up this mission and very much look forward to seeing all your smiling faces on March 27th."

**CCNC-N WOMEN'S MINISTRY CONVERSATIONS**

Conversations for 2021 will happen on February 26th, 6 to 8 pm, March 10th 6 to 8 pm, and March 26th, 7 to 8:30 pm, April 7th, 1 to 3 pm via zoom.

Conversations are a time of sharing, connecting, and community as Disciples Women of the CCNC-N Region. Please [click here to register](#).



**SPRING RENEWAL!**



**Women's Ministries**  
**Spring Renewal on Zoom**  
**With Rev. Sophia Jackson**

March 12th 6-7:30pm  
"Who is Jesus to You?"

March 13th 10am-1pm  
"Where Do We Go From Here?"

Workshops  
\*Grief & Loneliness  
with Rev. Shayne  
Flowers

\*Noonday Collection  
with Kerry Little

\*Letters to the  
Church with Rev.  
Dr. Leslie Taylor

\*Chat Room with  
Rev. Monica Cross  
& Carrie Osmer

[Click here to register](#)

**CHRISTIAN MEN'S FELLOWSHIP**

On March 18<sup>th</sup> from 7 to 8:30, we, the Christian Men's Fellowship (CMF), are sponsoring a zoom event for the men of FCCV to talk about issues which we as men have in our daily lives. Questions like these:

- When it comes to issues involving men, what have you encountered in your life?
- What issues affect you personally?
- What issues are you concerned with?

This event will be just to talk about our stories not to solve them. It is also a great way to just get to know each other better.

I will send out the zoom link at a later date, but for now please let me know if you are interested and then put it on your calendar.

Thank You!  
Carl Cordes (cc)

DON'T FORGET:

To help earn money for the church beyond your generous donations:

- ✓ Use [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com) (instead of Google or Bing) for your internet searches.
- ✓ Start at [www.goodshop.com](http://www.goodshop.com) when shopping online.
- ✓ Sign up at [www.escrip.com](http://www.escrip.com) for when you patronize local stores and restaurants.
- ✓ Take your recycling to Valcore ([www.valcorerecycling.org](http://www.valcorerecycling.org)) and ask that the money go to the church.
- ✓ Use [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com). The first time you use it, you will be asked to select a charity to support. Pick our church, and don't forget to bookmark the page!

## Mark Your Calendar

Wednesday, March 10	Administrative Council, 5:30 p.m.
Saturday, March 20	FCCV Common Ground Meeting, 10:00 a.m.
Wednesday, March 24	Ministry Council, 5:30 p.m.
Sunday, March 14	Elders' Meeting following Worship
Thursday, April 1	Maundy Thursday
Saturday, April 3	Cross Chat, 9:30 a.m. in the Peace Garden
Sunday, April 4	Easter Sunday

