



You are invited to Holy Lent

By The Rev. Jarrett Kerbel (2/20/26)

Lent is a time set apart for special devotion to God. (Holy = ‘set apart’) With the reassurance that God loves us with an unbreakable love, we give God a larger share than usual of our attention and we open our hearts incrementally as we prepare to receive the “He is Risen” Good News shout of Easter!

“How do I set apart time for God?” is the question before us all as Lent begins. Here are some options.

Relinquishment: Many of us give up something for Lent; this can be food or drink, or a behavior. The goal here is to substitute attention to God whenever we have an urge to indulge. Say I am craving chocolate; if I have time to crave, I have time to pray. Relinquishment builds the spiritual freedom we need to go through all of the bigger and smaller losses that come with loving engagement with life.

Regular Prayer: What is your existing daily prayer schedule and how can you add to it during Lent in an achievable way? Jesus - as a faithful Israelite - stopped to pray three times every day. Monastics pray five times a day. The Prayer Book offers the Daily Office as an option and I like to recommend starting with Compline before bedtime. All starting places are good! For example, make the intention to say the Lord’s Prayer, the Hail Mary, or the Serenity Prayer three times per day.

Self-Examination: According to my rule of life, I should take a personal inventory every evening to reflect on my sins of commission and omission as well as moments of grace and goodness. This is called “the Prayer of Examen” and it is meant to be a gift of prayerful honesty, accountability, growth, affirmation and redemption. We only venture into self-examination in the assurance of God’s unbreakable love for us and we are always cautious about the voice of the accuser which is not from God. We do self-examination, trusting that God’s will for us is freedom and salvation and that all things work for the good with God.

Spiritual Reading: Make a commitment to read one or two books this Lent that will strengthen your bond with God. Join the parish as we read Paul's Letter to the Ephesians together and N.T. Wright's book "The Vision of Ephesians" or Eugene Peterson's "Practicing Resurrection." Read through a chapter of the Gospel of Matthew each day.

Worship: Join us for Morning or Evening Prayer on Zoom or Morning Prayer in person in the Chapel. Join us for Eucharist on Wednesday afternoons and stay for dinner and Bible Study. Worship and study in a supportive and loving community are full of blessings and encouragement. Make a plan to attend all of our Holy Week services. There is no better way to understand the full meaning of Easter joy than to journey with Jesus through his Passion!

Confession and/or Spiritual Direction: The Episcopal Church does offer individual Confession if you are especially burdened by your sins. Individual Confession is by appointment with a priest and is confidential. I can also assist you in reconciling a ruptured relationship or in making amends with someone you have offended. In the Episcopal Church, Confession (or the Sacrament of Reconciliation) is a constructive and merciful encounter with the truth of our actions within God's will to love us into freedom.

Happy Lent, ya'll. My prayer for you is that this Lent be a time of great spiritual consolation and grace for you.