



I Was Just Thinking...



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Normandy News

...about preparing for the sacred season of Lent. Lent begins this year on Feb. 14 (yes, that's Valentine's Day) and is a 40-day period (not counting Sundays) which mirrors the 40 days Jesus spent fasting in the wilderness, preparing for his ministry. This purposeful and intentional period is intended to be a time of reflection, repentance, and spiritual renewal. In taking this time to turn our hearts inward, examining our lives in the light of God's love, enables us to identify areas where we can grow and deepen our relationship with God. Lent also prepares us to truly receive and celebrate the glorious news that awaits us at the end of the journey – that Easter's tomb stands empty!

Traditionally, Lent is associated with fasting and sacrifice – giving something up: i.e. chocolate, caffeine, meat, etc. Or maybe we decide to add something to our daily lives, i.e. daily devotional, prayer, journaling or random act of kindness. By sacrificing certain luxuries or habits, or by doing something new, we create space for God to work in our lives, and for us to become aware of our dependence on God and equips us for our spiritual journey.

As we prepare to embark on this Lenten journey, may we know that we do not journey it alone. We journey together as a family, a community of Christ followers. May we support one another individually and collectively so that spiritual growth might take place. Through shared prayers, kindness, and encouragement, we can grow closer to one another and to God.

In closing, please allow me to personally invite you to participate in some of the special worship services we will be having during the Lenten season:

Ash Wednesday - Our Lenten journey will begin with Ash Wednesday services on Feb. 14 at both 11:30am (Fellowship Hall, followed by a light lunch) and 6:00pm (Grant Chapel). In this service we will be reminded of our mortality and our need for repentance.

Sunday Morning Lenten Worship Series: "A Man from Galilee" – Each Sunday of Lent we will focus on the man from Galilee, and how his life fills us with life.

Maundy Thursday, March 28, at 7:00pm, we will gather and recall all the events of this sacred night– from Jesus washing his disciple's feet, to holy communion, to Jesus being arrested in the garden while he prayed.

Good Friday, March 29, the Grant Chapel will be available from 9:00am to 6:30pm for you to take time to personally reflect upon how Jesus willingly gave of himself upon the cross for the forgiveness of our sins so that we might be made one with God. A guided devotional/prayer will be available. Pastor Dave will lead a Good Friday service at 6:30pm in the worship center.

[Look for more details for each of these services as they draw closer.]

My hope and prayer is that this Lenten season might be a transformational and spiritual awakening for each of us. Let us walk this journey together, pursuing a deeper and more life-giving relationship with our Savior.

In Christ's Service,
Pastor Mark

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