



Crossings

Lent 2025





The mission of Christ Church is to bring God and people together to know and live the good news of Jesus Christ.

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He `ōlelo i ku'u mau hoaloha (a word to my friends)

That your joy may be complete!

(John 15:11)

Dear Friends,
Several years ago a local gym offered a 6-week intensive training program to kickstart your physical wellness journey. In spite of the hours of grueling physical exercise, challenging dietary attention, and humbling accountability, I was happy to participate!

All that work for the simple goal of living a healthier and happier life.

Friends, the Church wants nothing less for you! In fact, the Church wants all of that and more for you!!

Since the foundation of the world, God's dream for you and for the world has never stopped at simple happiness. Let's recall a few of Jesus' final words to his disciples: "I have said all of this to you so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete." Everything, all of scripture and all of Jesus' life is offered so that we may know the fullness of God's joy and that our joy may be complete.

Here's the thing about happiness and joy — happiness is always fleeting. It's here for a moment and gone the next. Joy, however, lasts! It lives within us. It's this eternal thing that never really goes away. It's just there, ready to be recalled, ready to re-fill our hearts and minds. This joy, the joy that abides with us, the joy that unites us to one another and to all things, is the joy that Jesus knew ... and the joy God wishes for each of us.

And, like that healthier and happier life the gym promised — the joy God dreams for us sometimes requires a bit of work on our part.

Fortunately, to help us along our way, the Church has set out a similar, 6-week period of reflection and discipline as a pathway to greater joy. For the past 1800 years the Church has called us to the observance of a holy Lent, not to mire us in guilt and regret, but to help us re-kindle and deepen our life in Christ, with the promise that such a life will bring ever-greater joy to our home and to our lives and to our world!

So, I encourage you to do a bit of work this Lent.

First, I encourage you to give something up — not simply a bad or destructive habit — but something you truly enjoy; something hard to live without.

The act of fasting has so much to offer us! At the very least, it reminds us of the greatness of Christ's love for us, for he chose to give up his life out of love for us and for the world. Fasting might inspire us to think more directly about what we are willing to give up ourselves out of love for God and our neighbor. Finally, fasting can help us to remember that, for much of the world, want and need are daily deprivations. We who lack for nothing in our lives, will be drawn closer to the suffering of the world when we remember that suffering and lack are a daily reality for the vast majority of the world.



Next, I want you to take something on — I want you to commit to rekindling your life in Christ. For some among us that may be as simple as recommitting to church on Sunday. If that's not you, I suggest you commit to reading the daily reflection from *Day by Day*. In either case, I invite you to enter into your life of faith with greater intentionality — in order that you may see a bit more clearly the story of grace and mercy and beauty that are, in fact, all around.

And finally, I encourage you to find a friend in Christ. Not the saccharine — "what a friend I have in Jesus" — but the profound friendship of another who encourages you and holds you in faith; someone with whom you can share your aspirations; one who will celebrate your progress and hold you accountable to your commitments.

Friends, God yearns for you to know fullness of joy. May this be a truly holy Lent where you encounter the depth of God's love for you; and your heart grows with love for the world.

For there you will find great and abiding joy!

What is Tenebrae?

by Erika Soby Davis and Ian Davis

We invite you to this year's Tenebrae service at Christ Church. Every year, on the Wednesday of Holy Week (this year the 16th of April), this introspective and deeply profound service provides a unique, more individual spiritual experience.

Tenebrae, from the Latin for "darkness", is an annual tradition in the Episcopal church. It is a time for solemn reflection before the capture and subsequent crucifixion

'Alleghi' serves as a haunting guide through this somber time. Choir and quartet alike break through the silence periodically to remind us, even in reflection, of our presence in a sacred, communal space.

Alleghi's Miserere Mei, Deus, Latin for "Have mercy on me, O God" is a piece straight out of the Renaissance, and takes us back to an earlier time. Beckoning to that time and place where the stars shined so brightly,

it is necessary, just as the terror of death is necessary for life.

Tenebrae is a time for us to reflect, both individually and as a community, on the whole story of Holy Week, rather than just Easter day. The candles are snuffed out, only to return – this disappearance and return of the light is deeply symbolic of Christ's own journey to and out of death. In the total stillness and darkness towards the end of

"I love the somber quality of the service and how the lights dimming symbolically shows a loss of hope as Christ died for three days, and then when the light returns it is this outburst of hope within the dark. That's really cool to me honestly, because that means the service is hopeful overall."

—Laila Hakim

of Jesus on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. While the great joy of Easter and the Tragedy of the Cross are important days in the fellowship of this tradition, they are more outwardly focused. Whereas Tenebrae is very intrinsic in its message. It is a service of remembrance, with the lights being slowly dimmed throughout until there is no more light - but then the light returns, suddenly, at the very end.

It is a time of silence, stillness and reflection, guided on by a series of psalms and notably, Gregorio Alleghi's Miserere Mei, Deus, performed by Christ Church's choir. Always a highlight, and powerful to those a part of its performance, according to Head Chorister Laila Hakim. The

to the land where Jesus preached. It speaks of the coming storm, of the biblical tragedy that is to befall the world just two days later.

Tenebrae is all about lamenting. It is an outpouring of grief for what is about to happen – a sorrowful prayer, filled with angst, pleading for a different outcome. But if the outcome is unchangeable, and the resurrection comes either way, what purpose would this have? Herein lies the power of Tenebrae – loss of light, of our primary sense causes a time of genuine reflection. Facing more than just the cross, or the lamb, but rather facing it all at once, provides an opportunity for thought and catharsis of emotions that many find they did not know they had. And while it's difficult, and occasionally painful,

the service, we can only see just enough to get by, and we have a rare opportunity to focus solely on the central message of Holy Week and of Christianity as a whole.

There is a great heaviness in this service, but also a great hope. If you should look for anything in this service, it is that hope. For the light does return, and the service ends (symbolically Easter) in hope. The darkness is everywhere, but it does not do more than engulf the service and the spirit. It cannot.

So this service is significant. It transfers what is said in the pulpit, lectern, and choir to what is in our hearts. We hope that you will join us, then, for this year's Tenebrae service at 7 pm on Wednesday, April 16.

Holy Week

Holy Monday and Tuesday,
April 14 and 15

Soup Supper at 6 pm
Choral Eucharist at 7 pm

Holy Wednesday, April 16
Service of Tenebrae at 7 pm

Maundy Thursday, April 17
Maundy Thursday Dinner at 6 pm
Choral Eucharist, and Stripping of the
Altar at 7 pm (incense is used)

Good Friday, April 18
Good Friday Liturgy at Noon and 7 pm

Holy Saturday, April 19
The Great Vigil of Easter at 7 pm
(incense is used)

Easter Day, Sunday, April 20
Holy Eucharist at 7 am
Festival Eucharist at 9 and 11:15 am with
the Brass Quintet
(incense is used at the 11:15 am service only)
Easter egg hunt after the 9 am Service

Birthdays & Anniversaries!



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March

- 1 Al Mazur
- 2 Maxwell Getz
Jonah Pietsch
- 3 Rebecca Anderson
- 4 Lynn Anslow
- 5 Jeffrey von Schwarz
Laura Hetzler
Mary Worrell
Page Heenan
Suanne Taylor
- 6 George Getz
- 7 Harold Marsh
Kenneth Walters
- 8 Stephanie Beattie
- 9 Linda Cotter
- 10 Charles Schuetze
James Flom
Margaret Woodford
Milissa Crowley
Sarah Teachey
- 12 Ann Eatherly
Linda Solterisch
Michael DeFillipi
- 14 Judith Mathews
Monica Hubbard
Lance & Kathie
Gotfredson, III
Jack & Betsy McCormick
- 15 Catherine Lucander
John Booth
Martha Williams
Scarlett Reck
Scott Oranchak
- 16 Antoinette Book
Charlie & Yolanda Turner
- 17 George Chesterton
- 18 Bradford Stocker
- 19 Clark Standish
Helene Bailey
Kathleen Keating
Richard Beadle
Terrance Lynch
- 20 Lisa Gage
Martha Bangs
Nina Ormsby
- 21 Frank Moran
Jeffry Bauer
Jennifer Ryan
- 22 Emily Wu
- 23 Cass Arrigo
Richard Larpeur

- Robert Harley
- 24 Bruce Rockwell
Emma Padden
Mark Mathews
Mary Holmes
Mary Kay Blaine
Karl Boeckler
& Lori Mouton Boeckler
- 25 Brooke MacMillan
Elizabeth Stroh
Jacqueline Spann
Roger Mason
- 26 Maeve Hix
- 27 Julie Sutton
Nancy Renick
- 28 James McMillan
John Snyder
Whitney Stroh
- 29 Stephanie Johnson
- 30 Andrew Gaggin
Anthony Alcantara
Edward Johnson
Paige Bachand
- 31 Adam Waugh
Angela von Schwarz
Sally Wheeler
Stephen Brownell

April

- 1 April Minetola
Shannon Green
- 2 Thomas Gage
- 3 Dave Anderson
Sandy Baruah
- 4 Catherine Van Culin
J. Peter King
Mary Gushee
Siena Bennett
- 5 David Graff
Emmajean Evans
James Kaler
- 7 Michael Hartnett
Michael Stallings
- 8 Amelte Stroh
- 10 Kendall Zinn
Scott & Kathy Oranchak
- 11 Catherine Dawson
Jon & Anne-Mason Colman
- 13 Alex Deimel
Nancy Ross
Sue Moody-Frezza
Tom & Elizabeth MacMillan
- 14 Adam Beattie

Catherine Ash
 Elese Kogel
 15 Anne-Mason Colman
 Hadley French
 Heather Hakim
 16 Samuel Stanley
 17 Caitlin Rose
 Martha Pietsch
 Robin Hartnett
 18 Lilly Miriani
 Logan MacLean
 Megan MacLean
 20 Karen Shreve
 Lynn Pember
 Micah Pietsch
 William Young
 21 Bruce Birgbauer
 Daniel Hughes
 James Donoghue
 Laura Nealssohn
 22 James Spica
 Jeffrey Clarke
 Lorelei Carr
 Richard & Jill Best
 23 Annabelle Reck
 Darlene Gibson
 David Martin
 Deborah Champion
 Easton Reck
 Jacob Mills
 24 Anna Warren
 Dennis Powers
 25 Chase Niscoromni
 Melissa Graff
 Zach Carr
 26 Helen Clay
 James Flom
 Terry & Laura Lynch
 Drew & Jessica Van Culin
 27 George Detwiler
 David & Susan Tobbe
 29 Elizabeth Trost
 Katherine Trost
 Walter & Edie Jacques
 Mike & Robin Hartnett
 Paul & Yi Vogt
 30 Katherine Bush
 30 Richard Baumgarten
 & Cheryl Wesen
 Nicholas Walsh
 Mark Higbie
 23 Mike Bowe
 24 Carol Newton
 25 Hank Darlington
 26 Kate Everham
 Jeff & Tracy Clarke
 27 Mary Stuart
 Mary Trost
 Josie Fedirko
 28 Richard Rittenhouse
 29 Mike Bamford
 Sara Dirkse

May

1 Beth Alltop
 Dennis Miriani
 2 Katie Alltop
 Karen French
 Courtney Knight
 Kim McNulty
 3 Mary Bamford
 William Ford
 Ginger Hupp
 Roy & Amber Ritchie
 4 Darren Brim
 Lainey Chesterton
 Andrew LeFevre
 Claire Stevenson
 5 Henry Hubbard
 Jerry Brackett
 & Karen Kienbaum
 Andrew & Changel Hines
 6 Conor Magee
 7 Autumn Beattie
 Karl Juergens
 Caroline Peabody
 Abi Peck
 Avery Thaden
 Scott & Kelly Durkee
 8 Teddy Sweeney
 Christie Zinn
 Luke Zinn
 9 Sasha Deimel
 Kelly Gavagan
 Elizabeth MacMillan
 Frank & Sharon Stellingwerf
 11 Burt & Sandra Rudolph
 12 Ned Evans
 13 David Gerdis
 14 Jenny Ahlbrand
 Tom Ahlbran
 15 Violet Hakim
 Nancy McConnell
 Alan & Kiera Phlipo
 16 Michael Labadie
 Jewels Maniscalco
 18 Meredith Hanoian
 Miles & Paulina Kennedy
 19 Nathan Alcantara
 Mary Graham
 20 Michael Blair
 Peter Durand
 Rob Robb
 21 Carrie Cunningham
 Beatrice Felix
 Richard Legault
 Geoff & Vanessa Young
 23 Peter Huebner
 Miles Niscoromni
 Viviana Ostrowski
 Connie Squitieri
 24 Marilyn Bartley
 Libby Irby
 Laine Johnson

25 Catherine Fowler
 Jackson Mills
 26 Benjamin Hermon
 Samuel Hermon
 Sally Whims
 27 Jamie Alltop
 Lawrence Cotter
 Paige Niscoromni
 Kimberly Porter
 Erik Traynham
 Kansas Waugh
 Nick & Rachel Edwin
 28 Chantel Hines
 John Marchi &
 Sarah Eatherly-Marchi
 30 Jack Gray
 Meghan von Schwarz
 John Woodhouse, Jr.
 & Suzy Vercruysse
 31 Ed Fitzgerald
 Marshal Lakis
 Theodore Oldham
 Tim Whims

In Memorium

Joseph Candler
David Douglass
Mary & James Hester
Martha Kellner
Julie Ann Lynch
Robert Craig Maul
Barbara Nickles
William O'Donnell
Alice Oldham
Gary Ohlsson

Forgiveness & Mercy

The Humility to Let Go

by Lisa Abad Brown

Many times in our scriptures, Jesus seems to be pairing God's forgiveness of us with our forgiveness of others. He says, "The measure with which you measure will be measured back to you ... "; "Do not judge others, and God will not judge you ... " Even in the Our Father that we pray together each week, we ask God to "forgive us our trespasses AS WE forgive those who trespass against us." But why? What's the connection?

In thinking about this topic, I landed on Matthew 18:21-35. This passage begins with Peter asking how many times we must forgive and then Jesus offering the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant in response. At first this parable reads like God's not-so-subtle way of saying, "Hey, I forgave your sorry astronomical debt of a gazillion dollars, so isn't the very least you could do is forgive the guy who owes you a measly twenty bucks?" Is Jesus' intent to make us feel bad enough about how much we owe to get us to do the right thing? And what's with the threat of torture in the last two verses if we can't manage to forgive? It just doesn't sound like the merciful God that Jesus is always talking about, right?

Perhaps it's at this point that we need to remind ourselves that the Bible is our "human experience of God written down" AND that the author (maybe authors, plural) of the Book of Matthew is a good Jewish boy, steeped in Old Testament imagery, writing for a Jewish audience, so this is likely his effort to imitate the holy books he studied his whole life. In the Hebrew Scriptures (aka The Old Testament), God sometimes sounds extremely harsh and exacting

because it is an ancient people who are passing along these stories to us, and their experience often reflected the harsh, exacting world in which they lived. So, it's not a surprise that God sometimes sounds like a parent angrily scolding a 2-year-old who reaches for the hot stove. Maybe Matthew, like his ancient teachers, is trying to instill a little bit of fear in us so as to keep us safe.

Maybe that is why God seems to change from the oldest books of the Bible to books written more recently in our human history. Just as we talk and reason with a toddler differently than with a teenager or a 40-year-old, so does God... It's not God that has changed, but it is WE who have grown. The bible reflects OUR experience of God. Not to mention, the author of Matthew was likely raised by a good Jewish mother who probably could wield guilt like a ninja! So, maybe that's why God comes across a little like a manipulative mother (to me anyways. Can't you hear it? "I endured 14 hours of labor to bring you into this world and you can't even forgive your sister from your heart!?!")

The point is, this doesn't sound like how God operates, but it definitely sounds like our M.O. You've heard it said, "God created us in his own image, and we have been trying to return the favor ever since..." God can get pretty tiny and petty if we're not careful.

Of course, there is no right or wrong way to interpret a parable. But may I suggest that this little puzzling pericope might be Jesus' way of telling us that forgiveness is a quality

of being, not a numbers game. It's a way of living, relating, thinking, and seeing that begins with the gift of God's boundless mercy to each of us. God is the vine and we are the branches, but if we block the free flow of divine mercy through us, as the unforgiving servant did, we condemn ourselves to a form of torture – a prison of our own choice and making.

Our culture (both now and in ancient times) tells us that evil is fought through might and muscle. That the way we combat evil is by making sure that people get what they have coming to them – so they learn not to mess with us. An eye for an eye. You attack me and I attack you. But Jesus is telling us this is not the way forward. Forgiveness is the way forward.

That's why when Peter, thinking he is being super generous, asks Jesus, "So, how many times do we have to forgive, 7 times?" (much more than is required by Jewish law, by the way) we can see Jesus vigorously shaking his head saying, "No, no, no Peter ... you are missing the point entirely ... God is way bigger than that! Not 7 times ... but 77 times!" Jesus uses extreme exaggeration in this parable to try and wake Peter up.

The King's generosity in the parable that follows this exchange with Peter is so unheard of and the amount forgiven is so ridiculously enormous (like 7 billion dollars – the guy would have to work every day for 3000 years to pay it off) that the forgiveness of this crippling debt should have a really noticeable effect on the servant's life ... like throwing a stone into the middle of a pond: you

expect to see ripples. But in this story, there are no ripples. The world ought to have changed for this servant, but it's like he doesn't even notice or appreciate that he has been set free. It's just business as usual. He is still counting. It's still the merciless world in which people get exactly what they deserve.



and then Jesus shows us God's method of fighting evil, not by condemning those who put him on the cross but rather by speaking words filled with mercy, forgiveness, and the promise of God's faithfulness.

Jesus spent his whole life telling people they were forgiven, accepted, loved ...

We might ask with Peter: Does that mean we need to forgive the drunk driver? The cheating spouse? The lying businessman? The cold-hearted politician? The racist? The rapist? The bully? The abusive parent? The greedy corporation? Even terrorists?

Yes. That is exactly what Jesus is saying. And let me tell you, I find this completely unreasonable. I shudder sometimes when I think of what I'm capable of if someone should hurt one of my children, let alone the idea of forgiveness! It borders on ridiculous – and that is exactly what Jesus wants us to take away from this parable. The world has changed.

God expects us to forgive as a result of our being forgiven for the same reason we can expect to be wet after diving into a lake: water is wet, and when you immerse yourself in it, you get wet.

So too with God's mercy. We are drenched and dripping with the stuff, and yet we still feed our little grudges against one another.

Some will ask, "But doesn't such lavish forgiving somehow say that what the person did against us was okay? Isn't forgiving over and over just the thing that keeps battered women battered?" On the contrary, forgiveness is the strongest form of resistance. We don't overlook or approve what was done. We can never ignore cruelty or injustice – in fact, we are called to fight it vigorously – but we have to fight it with the right tools.

Pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber says, "Forgiveness is actually the opposite of saying that what someone has done is okay. It's saying it's SO NOT okay that I am not going to absorb it anymore. I simply won't be tied to it ... this is why we need to forgive. Because we can't be bound to that kind of evil. When we forgive someone, it's not an act of niceness, it's not being a doormat, it's an act of fidelity to God's evil-combating campaign. It's the stuff of superheroes!"

On Calvary, God allows our human system of scapegoating, fear, and retaliation to play its natural course

freeing them ... building community among them ... showing them God's boundless mercy. Reminding us that there is no "us and them." Only us ... and that it is God's desire that we are to be one. Forgiveness breaks the cycle of division and evil. As difficult as it may be, we are designed to be a conduit of God's mercy – making known not the "one-false-move" God but rather the "no-matter-what-ness" of God that Jesus lived and taught.

May we listen well. May our lives be changed. And may our efforts send not just ripples, but waves of deep forgiveness into our troubled world.

A Sermon by Fr. Drew

The 5th Sunday after the Epiphany

So now would be a good time — if you have any reservations about following Jesus, if you’ve ever thought, “Is this really the right way for me?” — now would be a good time to leave. I say that only in jest because what we just heard this morning and what we will hear in the coming weeks, and the coming months for that matter, is just the beginning. Friends, things are about to get serious for Jesus’ disciples. Having fled Nazareth, Jesus starts speaking directly to the crowds and his closest disciples about what it means to follow him. He will lead them. He will show them the way. He will walk before them. All along he’s saying those who will listen, “Come on, come on, it’s this way!”

It’s not an easy path in the least, but it’s better than all the alternatives we might try. In fact, it’s the only way to get from whatever darkness we encounter, whatever despair we feel; it is the only path to the light and the hope that we yearn for as individuals and as a society.

But I would be lying to you if I said the path was easy because it’s not. And so we have here in this encounter between Jesus and Peter, on the shores of Lake Gennesaret, we have the call of the first disciples and we get a little inkling of what following Jesus will mean for them.

It all starts so pleasantly! Jesus gets into Simon’s boat and begins to teach the crowds. So far so good!

But then, when’s he wrapped up his teaching for the crowd, Jesus turns to Peter!

“Put out into the deep water and let your nets down for a catch,” he says! “Really!?!” you can almost hear Peter exclaim under his breath before his gently explains, “Master, we have worked all night long.”

***“Yes, the path of Christ
is a hard path,
but it is a remarkably
hopeful one as well.”***

It’s the first indication that Jesus is going to ask more of his disciples — of you and me — than they naturally want to give. The call of Christ is going to call us away from the comfort and ease of our world and our lives. It’s going to call us into the night. It’s going to call upon us when we are exhausted. It’s going to call upon us when all we want to do is sit and rest. It will call upon us when we think all the work is done.

We had hoped that in American society today racism would be behind us. Yet just this morning, after a Civil War and a century of non-violent protests and actions against segregation, lynchings, and racism in all its hideous forms — just this

morning we read of white nationalists on the outskirts of an historically black community in Ohio, marching and shouting and threatening residents. After generations of resistance, people are tired and yet Christ is calling, come and follow me. Yes, it’s been a long night and yet there is more work to be done.

And he calls Peter not to these gentle shoals, along the lake’s edge, the places their small boats comfortably navigate. He calls Peter out into the deep waters where they rarely go.

You see, Christ calls his disciples into places of discomfort as well; not just when we’re exhausted, but also when we’re afraid. Christ calls go to those places where we are uncomfortable, the places society says are unsafe, to proclaim that good news but to live it with generous love.

You see, the call of Christ is a call for all of us, not just all of us as a community, but all of us as individuals. All of me and all of you is invited, is called, is beckoned into the ministry of God as his disciples, his hands and feet in the world.

You see now it’s getting serious for Peter. Now it’s getting serious for James and John. Now it’s getting serious too, for Martha and Mary and Joanna, the women and men that will follow Jesus, that will walk out into the communities around them, proclaiming the good news of God’s kingdom, doing the work of God, curing the sick, casting out



demons, lifting the poor. This is what they will be doing in just a few short stories. First the twelve, then the seventy, going out into the deep waters of human life to be the hands of Christ themselves. This is what we are invited — no, invited is to gentle a word, *commanded* to do, as well.

But let me offer a word of hope. The waters aren't just dark, they are also filled with life. As this very story shares, the deep and dark waters — the fearful places — of this world are teeming with life, teeming with a fruitful abundance of life in two ways. One, the waters are yearning to be caught. It's not quite the right metaphor, but the world is yearning

to be found. And so we'll see in the stories that come, the crowds that come, it's first small than larger, than thousands gathering around to hear this good news, to be part of this great draught, to be part of this community.

The other hope is that the community of Christ does not leave us alone. Even here, Peter, John, James are gathered into a new fellowship, a new community with Jesus, and we will see that inner community grow from days to weeks, from few to many. Yes, the path of Christ is a hard path, but it is a remarkably hopeful one as well. To that darkness in the world, Christ proclaims and reveals light. To those

who despair in the world, Christ proclaims hope and opportunity. To those who are despondent and beaten down, Christ lifts up.

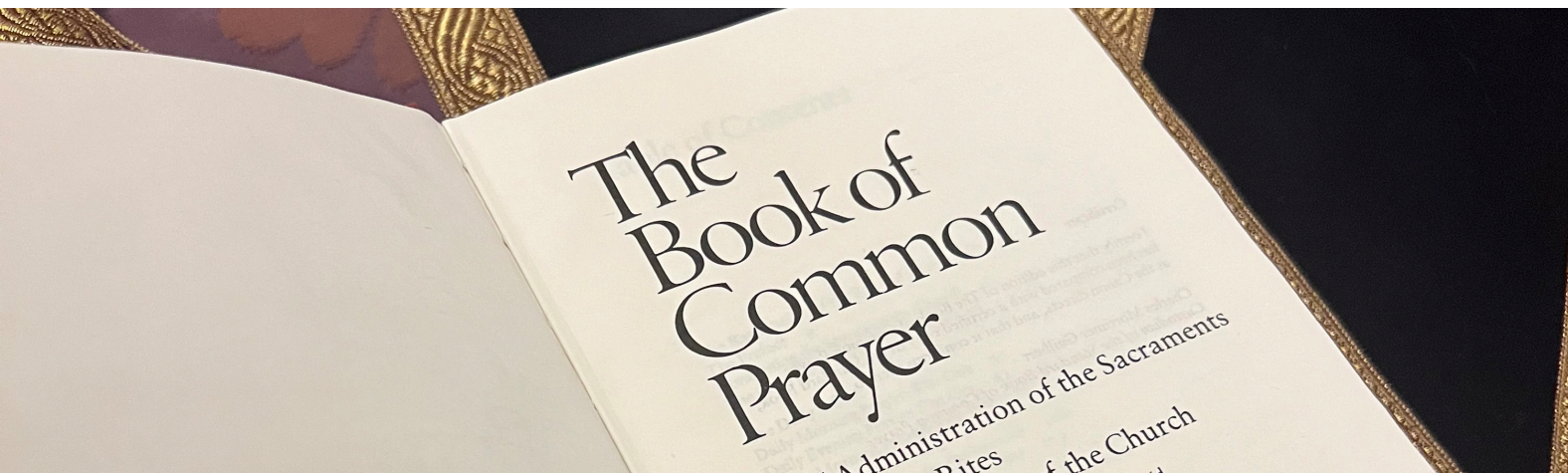
This is good work to be a part of. But I would be lying if I didn't also say that it is hard work as well.

And yet this is the call of Christ, to follow him, to let out into deep waters when we are exhausted and afraid and to do the good work of proclaiming God's kingdom of light and of hope. This is the call presented to all of us.

May we follow where he leads, walking in love as Christ has loved us.

The Vocabulary of Faith: Prayer & Belief

by The Rev'd Maureen L. Martin



Upon arriving in Kansas City for the Episcopal Parish Network Conference I grabbed an Uber and had an edifying conversation about the life of faith and Kansas City BBQ with my driver, a local award winning Grill Master.

We had a lively and easy going conversation which eventually got around to the nature of my visit. With the previous weekend's theme of Women's Ordination still on my mind I found it refreshing that he did not ask for an explanation of the necessity of women in the Priesthood. In fact, without dropping a beat he shifted from BBQ to professing his faith in Jesus Christ. His words to me were: All is well when you know deep in your heart the four pillars of faith: 1) God's action in Creation, 2) What it means to live a just and moral life, 3) The inerrancy of Holy Scripture and 4) The promise of Heaven for all believers. After that he assured me that it is ok that some of us see things differently from one another and it is even ok for us to explore our differences together.

I was struck by two things during this encounter. First, the integrity and

power of his testimony. Second, the steadfastness of his elevator pitch. I got to thinking about how we as Episcopalians struggle with both of these two things. Without question, the ability to share one's faith in simple and clear terms without hesitation is a wonderful tool for evangelism. Alongside of that is the personal joy of having a rich vocabulary of faith and what it does for our sense of identity and our relationship with God and one another.

My cynical self asked; does his life regularly reflect these convictions that he learned by rote? My pragmatic self answered: Does anyone's life reflect their faith convictions at all times? As Paul wrote in the 3rd chapter of his Letter to the Romans, all have sinned and fall short of the Glory of God. Knowing the universality of our sins and shortcomings is a relief in and of itself because it tells us that it is what we do next that matters most. Also universally true is that even as all fall short, all are justified by the gift of God's Grace.

God pours out Grace upon us but I contend that one of the ways in which

we become porous and able to receive Grace is through a robust vocabulary of faith. Without a vocabulary of faith, whenever we fall into sin we are more likely to only see ourselves as a screw-up. We don't have the words for what comes next and so we live a life that doesn't reflect our convictions as easily as could be for us otherwise. In fact, without a rich vocabulary of faith we may not actually know what our own convictions truly are, and, thinking back to my Uber friend, we are not equipped to tell ourselves or others the stories of our lives that matter most. Finding Paul's words spontaneously rising up within us, as just one example, is like being consoled by that friend who always has the word that we need to hear in that moment.

Just as we in our tradition might find fault with the literalism of other traditions, our neighbors in other traditions equally find fault with us, and deservedly so, for not being able to succinctly expound on our faith as the need arises, or, for that matter, in the midst of a conversation on the merits of injecting baby back ribs with butter.

A second question comes to mind: Does it matter that, taken as a whole, few Episcopalians are able to succinctly and with assurance attest to their faith? It matters. Following that, if one wanted to learn to attest to one's faith freely, where should one begin?

In the hypothetical elevator one succinct way of attesting to our faith is this: *Lex orandi, lex credendi*, the law of prayer is the law of belief. We believe that prayer shapes belief. We trust that God is working in us through prayer and we believe that any prayer in our hearts or on our lips is an answer to the prayer that God has prayed in us first. Again, in the 8th chapter of Paul's Letter to the Romans he offers this counsel: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words." God is groaning in you!

Praying shapes believing but we need assistance lest we begin to circle the drain of our inmost thoughts or become like a sourdough starter that needs new food. The regular reading of Scripture is leaven for all Christians. In addition to the Bible, The Episcopal Church possesses a profound resource for feeding and nourishing our prayers in the Book of Common Prayer.

Every Sunday when you come to worship you receive a beautifully made leaflet with the day's readings and liturgy. In the pew rack inches from your knees, though, is the source material for all our liturgies. I encourage you to take up the practice of opening the Prayerbook while waiting to begin worship. Come early, spend 5-10 minutes each Sunday and read the Book of Common Prayer.

The Prayerbook is not called common because it is ordinary, it

is extraordinary in its depth and breadth, containing within it prayers and liturgies drawn from more than a millennia before the Reformation and into the late twentieth century. It is common because it was first written in 1549 to enable people to join together with one voice in their native tongue as they encountered Christ in worship. Every significant transition throughout the entire course of the human life span has a liturgy, from welcoming a new baby into the household of God to Commending our dead into the hands of that same loving God.

As an Episcopalian you are highly unlikely to ever be forced into making a pitch for why your faith matters, and we are the poorer for that. However, that does not mean that you will not be given spirit-filled chance encounters to put forth an eloquent and beautiful justification for why you have taken up the cross of Christ and followed him.



Migration in the Mitten

Birding with Dave Redfield

Friday, May 2 • 7 am
Belle Isle



Journey of Generosity

Embracing Stewardship During Lent: A Season of Reflection and Renewal

As we enter the sacred season of Lent, we are invited to embark on a journey of introspection, repentance, and spiritual renewal. This 40-day period leading up to Easter is a time for Christians to reflect on Jesus' life, death, and resurrection and to consider how we can more fully live out our faith in our daily lives.

One key aspect of our Lenten journey is the practice of stewardship. Stewardship is the discipline of managing the gifts and resources that God has entrusted us. It encompasses not only our financial resources but also our time, talents, and the care of creation. During Lent, we are called to examine how we use these gifts to serve God and others.

Reflecting on Our Blessings

Lent is a time to reflect on all the blessings of this life, above all for God's immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, and to express our gratitude through generosity and commitment. Our financial pledge reminds us that our great hope lies not in the produce of our hands, but the grace and generosity of God's heart, and recommits us to a life of stewardship on God's behalf. This can be a powerful reminder of our interconnectedness as a community, our responsibility to support those in need, and the profound spirituality that infuses all aspects of our life.

Giving of Our Time and Talents

Stewardship is not limited to financial contributions. It also involves sharing our time and talents with our church and community. Being present to and befriending one another, volunteering for church ministries, participating in outreach programs, and offering our skills to support various initiatives are all ways we can live out our call to stewardship. These acts of care and service not only benefit others but also enrich our own lives.

Caring for Creation

As stewards of God's creation, we are called to care for the environment and to use natural resources wisely. During Lent, we can consciously reduce waste, conserve energy, and support sustainable practices. By doing so, we honor God's creation and contribute to the well-being of future generations.

A Season of Renewal

Lent is ultimately a season of renewal. It is a time to deepen our relationship with God, to seek forgiveness and amend our ways, and to recommit ourselves to revealing Christ in the world. Through the practice of stewardship, we can grow in our faith and make a positive impact on our church and community.

As we journey through Lent, let us embrace the call to stewardship with open hearts and minds. May our acts of generosity, service, and care for creation reflect our gratitude for God's abundant grace. Together, we can make a difference and bring the light of Christ to those around us.



Stewardship at Christ Church

Frequently Asked Questions

Why do we do an annual pledge campaign?

Pledging helps to shape our heart for Christ. The annual discipline of making a pledge encourages us to prayerfully recall our gratitude for God, reconsider our personal commitment to grow in Christ, and recommit ourselves to one another as community at Christ Church. The invitation to grow in our pledge – from making a pledge to making a proportional gift to tithing – mirrors our call to grow in Christ: growing in generous love for God and our neighbor.

What is the goal of the annual campaign?

The goal of the annual pledge campaign is 100% by all members of Christ Church!

What is the difference between *To Excel in Love* and the annual appeal?

First and foremost, *To Excel in Love* is our strategic plan to bring our hopes and God's dreams for our community and ministry to life. Alongside our "Christ Centered; Community Focused, and Future Driven" strategic priorities, the Vestry embarked on a \$6m *To Excel in Love* Capital Campaign to support our expanded investment in ministry today and to grow our endowment for tomorrow.

The Annual Appeal is commitment of our members to grow in Christ, to join in the ministry of Christ here at Christ Church, and to support our common life as a community of faith.

What is the financial expectation of Christ Church Members?

For decades The Episcopal Church (and Christ Church specifically) has taught the tithe as model of Christian giving. As members, we are encouraged to grow in love and generosity. At Christ Church, we

encourage members to take four steps as we grow in generosity and love. We encourage you to start by making a pledge – to make an intentional, financial commitment in faith and gratitude to God. From there, we are encouraged "to know our proportion" – to do the hard, yet valuable, work of knowing our pledge as a proportion of our annual income. This uncomfortable step enables us to (re-)consider our gratitude to God for her generous love, our commitment to grow in love ourselves, and to support the important work of proclaiming God's love to the world. Next, we encourage you to "grow in generosity" by increasing your proportion by 1 or 2% of our annual income! If knowing your proportion is uncomfortable, growing in generosity is hard. Growing in generosity is a valuable way of taking on the life of Christ who lived sacrificially with generosity to all people – among his disciples, with those he met on the street, with those who challenged him (think, Pharisees), even those who opposed him (yes, Judas!). Finally, we encourage the tithe as the goal of our giving. This ancient proportion challenges us all to go further than we naturally would go, to remember that all is gift, and that our life is in service not simply to ourselves, but to Christ who first loved us.

Do the clergy pledge?

Absolutely! Even more, Fr. Drew and Jessica have faithfully and generously tithed as committed members of Christ Church and faithful disciples of Christ.

We have an endowment. Isn't that enough?

No. Nor should it ever be! The legacy gifts of former members provide ensure that the essential elements of our life are sustained. Combined, our endowments ensure that we have a Rector and Organist, essential

administrative staff, and attend to the general care of our buildings and grounds.

The living ministry of Christ Church, the programs, activities, and services, that gives life to our Church and extends the love of God to our members and community – that is the work and responsibility of our current members.

How are funds used?

The gifts of our annual pledge campaign support the life-giving work of Christ Church. Whereas the endowment provides for the foundational expenses of Christ Church, the annual pledge campaign supports the ministry life of Christ Church – our Worship life, our ministry to Children and Youth, our choirs and music programs, our adult formation classes, our ministry of care for one another, our parish life events, and our service to our neighbor.

What happens if we do not meet our annual appeal goal?

Either of two things. In the short-term, as part of *To Excel in Love* strategic plan, the Vestry has committed to funding the shortfall that exists between member giving and ministry expenses. The alternative is much harder – Fr. Drew and the Vestry will have to revisit our vision for Christ Church and reduce our programs to align our ministry priorities with our financial capacity.

Why should I fill out a pledge card?

We hope as a gift to you. We hope that the discipline of pledging will help you to broaden your gratitude to God and to deepen your life in Christ in order that your joy may be complete!

Teen Retreat

by Jay Ash

On Super Bowl weekend 25 of our CCGP members traveled to Oxford for our 2nd annual Teen Retreat at Subiaco Benedictine Youth Retreat House. Our retreats are peer-led, designed for and by high school students.

This year Jay Ash, Brady Magee, Vivienne Brown & Carolyn Adams prepared weeks ahead of time to write faith-filled reflections grounded in one or more passages of scripture.

On Saturday evening we all took part in a profound reconciliation ritual created by Fr. Dan Homan, OSB, the monk who founded this sacred retreat space for youth back in the mid-1970's followed by a beautiful celebration of Eucharist in the "upper room" with Mtr. Maureen.

This year's teen retreat was an incredible experience. We had a good balance of planned, religious activity and time to experience God through nature and community. Both parts of the retreat were valuable and enjoyable. We spent time meditating, discussing our thoughts on God and religion, and engaging in a reconciliation ritual that Mother Maureen guided us through.

I particularly liked the array of different ways we were shown to connect with God, because everyone does so differently. One of the best parts was that we were a small enough group that it was a very personal environment, which we don't always get in a standard church setting.

Apart from the religious experience, although it is not truly separate, the retreat offers a good opportunity to



get to know other members of your age group and parish at large. Our small-group discussions offered a good space to share and connect with each other. At mealtimes we were encouraged to sit with people we had not previously sat with.

We had plenty of unstructured time both indoors and outdoors, which was instrumental in bringing us closer together. This year was particularly special because for the most part we all knew each other from last year so we were really able to connect.

The retreat house itself is a wonderful environment. It is very peaceful and serene. The house is comfortably large, with lots of different places to explore and hang out in. It has enough space that while you can always find someone to keep you company, you can also easily get time to yourself if you need it.

The church is a very cool space. I was happy that we got the opportunity to go in it for meditation this year, as last year we did not. The grounds are also lovely. There are many different places you can walk to, whether you are looking to walk to the lake, or the mini-Grand Canyon, or the barn to play sportball.

One of my favorite parts of the retreat was the night walk that we

took on Saturday evening. Earlier on Saturday Mother Maureen had done a reconciliation ritual and a small church service for us. I thought that the night walk gave us a good opportunity to think about that. However, it also gave us the opportunity to have some fun together. It was a good transition, as the earlier part of Saturday evening was focused on serious religious experience, while after the walk was solely for fun. The night walk was also enjoyable because the area was just so nice. The walk to and around the lake is very pleasant.

There is also a dog, Dudley, who is quite friendly. Having been there at both a warmer time of the year and early February with all the snow that it entails, I would say that it is nice any time of year. Overall, the retreat was a fun time and I'm excited to go again next year!

Mark your calendars!

We are already booked for Friday Feb. 6-7, 2026 and every Super Bowl weekend in the foreseeable future.

You do not need to be a member of CCGP to attend – teens of all denominations are welcome! Bring a friend! For more information visit our website and/or contact Lisa Brown at LBrown@ChristChurchGP.org.

He

Is

Risen



Easter Day, April 20

Holy Eucharist at 7 am

Festival Eucharist at 9 and 11:15 am
with Brass

Carillon Clean Up:

An Interview with Tim Verdin

by Jackson Merrill

For the past couple of years, Christ Church has been in conversation and collaboration with the Verdin Company of Cincinnati, one of the world's leading firms in carillon maintenance and restoration, to address some long-running issues with our tower and carillon. In February, the company completed their restoration project of our carillon. I spoke with Tim Verdin, president of the company, and we discussed this exciting project.

Not discussed in this interview is the removal of dozens of pigeons which had taken up residence in the tower, the cleaning of the tower that followed, and the installation of new screens to the tone openings of the tower, which are guaranteed to keep out birds for many decades. While another firm humanely removed the pigeons, the Verdin Company carried out the rest of this work on the first day of their restoration week here at Christ Church.

Jackson Merrill: Tim, what is the significance of our instrument here at Christ Church Grosse Pointe? Will you tell us about its history and its unique qualities?

Tim Verdin: The 30 largest bells were cast by Gillett & Johnston Bell Foundry of Croyden, England. The company traces its beginning back to about 1837 when William Gillett moved to Clerkenwell, London, where he was building clocks. He later moved the business to Croydon in about 1844 and in 1854 he brought in Charles Bland as a partner. The company was then called Gillett & Bland, they continued making clocks. In 1877 Arthur A. Johnston became a partner



and the company was renamed Gillett, Bland & Company. Charles Bland died shortly after this the company was renamed Gillett & Johnston. Along with making clocks, they also made the bell ringing devices that would ring bells and sometimes would purchase bells from other English bell founders to sell with their clocks.

In about 1902 Arthur Johnston's son Cyril started with the company and began studying bells and the sound they made. A few years later he convinced his father and William Gillett that they needed to begin casting their own bells, so he set up a foundry in their works. Cyril was a very intelligent man and figured out how to cast and tune bells to a carillon quality, so Gillett & Johnston began exporting bells to North America and around the world before 1920. In 1925 Cyril cast and installed the largest carillon ever built for John D. Rockefeller which was installed in New York City. This was an enormous 53 bell carillon with a low bass Co

weighing over 40,000 pounds. In 1932 he sold Rockefeller another large carillon, only slightly smaller than the one in New York City, which was installed at the University of Chicago. This carillon was on a C#0 weighing about 36,000 pounds. These two carillons are still the largest carillons ever built and have the largest tuned bells in the world. Cyril Johnston is still known as probably the greatest bell founder that has ever lived, and the carillon at Christ Church was cast by him.

JM: Describe some of the issues our instrument had before your restoration work.

TV: When I visited you the first time the carillon was suffering from lack of maintenance. This caused it to be sluggish and unresponsive. Keys would not return after being pressed. Some bells would only play with great difficulty when engaged.





JM: Will you take us through the process of the restoration?

TV: When we arrived to perform the work at the church, the first thing we did was to take measurements at the playing keyboard and documented the pressure needed to sound a bell and also documented the issues with keys not returning, keys that wouldn't sound a bell, and all of the noises that could be heard other than the bell's ring. After this we removed all the existing horizontal and vertical linkage wires that connected the keyboard to the bell clappers. Once this was removed, it allowed us to remove the transmission bars one at a time, to clean, sand, and lubricated both the pivots on the bars and the cups in which they rotate. All the clevises on the transmission bar arms and on the clappers were removed and soaked in a solvent to remove all

the buildup of grease and dirt that had dried on them and wouldn't let them rotate. Once out of the solvent bath, they could be sanded and cleaned and then reassembled onto the arms and clappers. The swivels on the transmission bars arms were also removed and the bushings reset.

Because the ceiling board had rotted and broken, the umbrella rack was completely out of place, so it had to be reset using lasers to get it perfectly back in line with the playing keyboard below.

The clappers had to be cleaned and lubricated. They also had a thick layer of dried grease and dirt on them which was causing friction that could be felt at the keyboard.

The playing keyboard had several issues as well. Many keys had to be removed because the bushing in the swivels was causing a lot of friction which resulted in the keys not moving freely. Two of the adjustors had to be removed and disassembled. They were re-built and now work perfectly.

Finally, the whole carillon was rewired, and all the springs balanced so that there is now an even, balanced feel at the keyboard. Keys no longer feel sluggish and all uniformly return.

JM: And the overall state of the carillon now, after restoration?

TV: The carillon at Christ Church is in good condition, especially considering the age. I am confident that it now feels and sounds very similarly to when it was installed nearly 100 years ago.

Churches Challenge ICE Enforcement

By David Paulson, Episcopal News Service

More than two dozen Christian and Jewish organizations, including The Episcopal Church, sued the Trump administration on Feb. 11 for allowing immigration officers to target churches and other “sensitive” places for arrests as part of the president’s promised crackdown on legal and illegal immigration.

The Episcopal Church and its fellow plaintiffs, represented by the nonpartisan Georgetown University Law Center, argue that by allowing arrests without first obtaining judicial warrants the Trump administration is violating First Amendment protections of both freedom of religion and freedom of association, because of the burden created by the “looming threat of immigration enforcement action at their places of worship and during their religious ceremonies.”

The lawsuit notes that many congregations serving immigrant communities have already seen decreases in worship attendance and participation in social service ministries since the Trump administration’s new policies took effect.

Presiding Bishop Sean Rowe, in a church news release about the lawsuit, echoed his recent sermon at Washington National Cathedral by saying that immigrants and refugees are not at the edges of God’s kingdom but at its center.

“We believe their struggles reveal the heart of God, and we cannot worship freely if some among us

live in fear,” Rowe said. “We are seeking the ability to fully gather and follow Jesus’ command to love our neighbors as ourselves.”

The federal policy shift, enacted in the first days of the new administration, has spread fear in many of the plaintiffs’ worshipping communities, the lawsuit says, and runs counter to biblical teachings that “every human being, regardless of birthplace, is a child of God worthy of dignity, care and love.”

President Donald Trump vowed during his campaign to oversee mass deportations of millions of people living in the United States without permanent legal residency status. He began pursuing policies to follow through on that promise in the hours after his Jan. 20 inauguration to a second term, with a series of executive orders related to immigration.

The lawsuit filed by the 27 faith-based organizations does not take direct issue with those orders, but rather with separate directives issued by the Trump administration’s Department of Homeland Security. On Jan. 21, the department ended Biden administration policies that had identified certain sensitive areas, including schools, hospitals and houses of worship, as protected from immigration enforcement actions.

The church’s release says some Episcopal congregations in the United States are among the houses of worship where even some immigrants with legal residency

have chosen to stay home rather than attend worship services because of the risk of arrest.

“Welcoming the stranger is not a political act. It’s a sacred obligation,” House of Deputies President Julia Ayala Harris said in the news release. “When immigrants walk through our church doors, they’re not entering as outsiders; they are stepping into the heart of our faith, where their dignity and stories are embraced as reflections of God’s love. This lawsuit is about protecting our ability to live out the Gospel without fear or interference.”

The plaintiffs 80-page complaint includes short summaries of ways the government’s policies have burdened the faith organizations’ practice of their religions. The Episcopal Church’s summary includes the following examples, which do not give specific locations or congregation names:

- Local officials parked outside one Episcopal church during past enforcement efforts and attempted to arrest undocumented congregants leaving the church.
- At another congregation, federal agents already have appeared outside its food pantry, photographing those in line.
- In one Episcopal diocese, some congregants were reluctant to join an informational Zoom call with an immigration attorney.

• Some congregations have stationed members at their doors to watch for immigration officials.

The Episcopal Church is one of 12 denomination bodies that have signed onto the lawsuit, which also includes the Disciples of Christ, Mennonite, Methodist, Presbyterian and AME Zion churches. Other plaintiffs include regional denominational bodies and other religious associations

“We declare our unequivocal opposition to any and all attempts by the government or any other external entity to infringe upon or restrict or otherwise interfere with the free exercise of religion by members of our congregations,” the Rev. Carlos Malave, president of Latino Christian National Network, said in a Zoom news conference about the lawsuit.

Rabbi Rick Jacobs spoke on behalf of the Union for Reform Judaism, the largest Jewish denomination in the United States. “The opening of the Hebrew Bible tells us that every single human being is created in God’s image and there are simply no exceptions,” Jacobs said.

And Rowe, in his remarks during the news conference, affirmed The Episcopal Church’s support for the lawsuit, which he said contained a “compelling and conservative argument about the exercise of religion.”

“We cannot worship freely if some among us live in fear,” Rowe said. “We must proclaim, particularly in this time, that all are welcome in our

places of worship and should be able to be in those places worshipping their faith of choice without fear. This seems a basic human right, but certainly one we’re called to by the God that we serve.”

The lawsuit says many of the member churches and synagogues have undocumented congregants, as well as ministries that serve undocumented people, such as food and clothes pantries, English classes, legal assistance and job training services.

“An immigration enforcement action during worship services, ministry work or other congregational activities would be devastating to their religious practice,” the lawsuit says. “It would shatter the consecrated space of sanctuary, thwart communal worship and undermine the social service outreach that is central to religious expression and spiritual practice for plaintiffs’ congregations and members.”

The lawsuit, filed in the U.S. District Court for Washington, D.C., seeks an injunction against the federal government that would block immigration enforcement at houses of worship or during worship services unless authorities first obtain judicial warrants.

The lawsuit cites at least one reported case in which immigration agents attempted an arrest at a church. Wilson Velásquez, a migrant from Honduras who came to the United States and applied for asylum in 2022, was with his family attending

a Pentecostal service in Atlanta, Georgia. The pastor reportedly was in the middle of his sermon when ICE agents arrived at the church to arrest Velásquez.

The pastor tried to reassure the congregation, according to the lawsuit, but “could see the fear and tears on their faces.”

The plaintiffs, their congregations and their members “face an imminent risk of similar immigration enforcement actions at their places of worship,” the lawsuit says.

Lawrence Hitt II, chair of The Episcopal Church Executive Council’s Governance and Operations Committee, which provides oversight of the church’s legal affairs, said in a written statement for this story that prevailing in the lawsuit was “vitally important” to the church and its ministries.

“The filing of this lawsuit demonstrates the commitment of The Episcopal Church to migrants and others as we strive to follow the Gospel imperative set forth in Matthew when Christ said, ‘I was a stranger and you welcomed me,’” Hitt said.

The Trump administration’s new restrictions on immigration also effectively halted the United States’ 45-year-old program of refugee resettlement, which had been facilitated by 10 agencies with federal contracts to do that work, including Episcopal Migration.

Lent

It's All About Asking the Right Question

By Lisa Abad Brown

I often get asked during the Lenten season “Does this count?” My answer is always the same: “The spiritual life is not about counting. But if you’re counting, it doesn’t count.” Jesus was not about counting. Jesus was about transformation and that is what our Lenten disciplines are designed to lead us to.

Jesus is not asking us to shamefully beat our breasts and enter into some harsh acts of atonement, rather, he is simply inviting us to change our mind. Perhaps most specifically the way we think about God. Jesus knew that our deepest human struggle does not come from God’s image of us but rather our image of God.

for us to be. So, let us pray together for the openness to be transformed leaving behind any old ways of thinking, living and acting that stifle our connection with God, each other and our best self so that we are able to embrace a new, full, and free life in Christ.

The mark of genuine contrition is not a sense of guilt, but a sense of sadness for having taken a wrong turn. Living in grace means knowing we are valued, accepted, and loved even and perhaps most tenderly in our brokenness... “knowing that God does not work in us despite our faults and failings, but rather in and through them is bringing about the Kingdom of God”.

—Maria Boulding

The first public word out of Jesus’ mouth was the Ancient Greek imperative verb metanoia, translated into English as repent. To our modern ears, we usually think repentance means to have a deep regret or remorse about our sin or wrongdoing and then to undertake some punishing hard work in order to make amends. But our modern English take on our ancient texts often misses the mark and doesn’t really capture the fullness of meaning communicated in the original language.

Metanoia, or repentance, simply means to change our mind...to change the way we understand or think about something; it literally translates as ‘change your mind’ or ‘go beyond your mind’ or ‘put on the higher mind.’

In his earthly life, Jesus was constantly trying to convince us that God is not AT ALL demanding any kind of harsh repentance or even a request for forgiveness. It’s automatically given. God simply wouldn’t be God if He (She, They) were as small and exacting as we are sometimes. God in God’s self is mercy and there will be nothing but rejoicing on God’s part if we change our mind and believe this reality fully – grabbing the truth with both hands – that God loves and forgives us without boundary or breaking point. Without conditions or demands, so that we all may be whole – together in mind in spirit once again. This is the nature of true repentance. This unconditional acceptance is what heals, transforms, and fuels us to become all God dreams

In other words, perhaps some of the question we may wish to bring to this sacred season of Lent are: “What can I change or think about differently in my life so as to live more concretely like Jesus?” and/or “What course correction would help me to be a more loving person?” and/or “What will draw me nearer to God, strengthen my relationships with others and form me into all that God’s wishes for me to be and do?”

“Little children, (believers, dear ones), let us not love (merely in theory) with word or with tongue (giving lip service to compassion), but in action and in truth (in practice and in sincerity, because practical acts of love are more than words).” I John 3:17-18 Amplified

The background of the entire poster is a vibrant, abstract painting. In the foreground, several swans are depicted in shades of blue, white, and yellow, standing in a body of water. Below them, several fish are visible, also in similar color tones. The background features a mix of warm and cool colors, including yellows, oranges, pinks, and purples, suggesting a sunset or sunrise scene. On the left side, there are stylized, dark, vertical shapes that resemble trees or reeds. The overall style is expressive and painterly.

The Seasons

—Franz Joseph Haydn

Sunday, May 4, 2025 | 4 pm

Christ Church Choral
and Orchestra

Pre-concert lecture at 3 pm

\$25



Requiem

– Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Palm Sunday, April 13, 2025 | 4 pm
Christ Church Schola with Orchestra
Pre-concert lecture at 3 pm

Free-will offering