



KEEPING A HOLY LENT

Lent is the time of year we set aside for our spiritual and religious life to focus on our relationship with Jesus. It is also a time to prepare for Holy Week and Easter observances. Grace Church offers a variety of offerings to help us on our journey. Please note this year's offerings:



Ash Wednesday Services, February 22nd, Holy Communion & Imposition of Ashes: 7 am, 12 noon, 7:30 p.m.



Stations of the Cross, beginning February 24th, 7:30 p.m.



Sunday Adult Education Offerings, beginning February 26th, 10:45 a.m. Visioning: Responding to God's call. Led by Fr. Pat. Adult Bible study is also offered at the same time in the library.



Tuesdays at 12 noon, Haddonfield Council of Churches Preaching Series, beginning February 28th. Featuring the local clergy, the preachers will offer their reflections on a Lenten topic and select Biblical passages.



Wednesday at 6:30 p.m., Potluck Supper & Lenten Series led by Fr. Pat—"First Light: Jesus and the Kingdom of God" beginning February 29.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Grace Church has had the practice of offering the devotional known as the "Stations of the Cross" on Friday nights during Lent. A leader and reader(s) read the devotions called "The Way of the Cross" which recalls Jesus last day on earth, Good Friday. 14 plaques positioned around the Church depict the various "stations" and are taken from the Bible and traditions of Good Friday. If there are not enough volunteers or interest, we will discontinue offering this practice. A sign-up list is available in the Parish Hall.



ASH WEDNESDAY & LENT

Ash Wednesday falls on February 22nd this year. It is the beginning of our Lenten season, a time marked by penance, fasting, prayer and special devotions. Lent last 40 days and recalls the 40 days in the wilderness that Jesus spent at the start of his ministry. The wilderness was a place ancient people believed to be where testing and preparation to carry out God's will take place. Ash Wednesday is the day that calls us to begin a journey towards changing our lives to conform to God's will and to seek an understanding of our ministry. It has been the practice of Christians during this time to pray, fast and give alms. We are encouraged to make time for prayer in our busy lives during Lent. People use devotional aides such as "Forward Day by Day", or online resources to reflect upon Biblical passages and help deepen their pray lives. The practice of fasting was a way to empty the Christian's life to make room for God's presence. The tradition of "giving up" something was to make space for God's gift of grace and discernment. The giving of alms marks the ancient's practice of providing for the needs of others as an act of love and compassion, mirroring God's grace given to us. Other people take on other devotional practices in their lives to live a more fully spiritual life. Some people take up reading the Bible or other religious and spiritual writings. Some take time for retreats to break with the demands of daily life so as to make greater room for God. Some people take advantage of other chances to learn more about their faith. All of these things are ways Christians observe Lent. Each of us is encouraged to give up something in order to take something else on during Lent. The practices we adopt during Lent are meant to help prepare us for the Holy Week observances and celebration of Easter while bringing us closer to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Lent

