

LENT 2024 at St. Thomas

Lent is a season of the church year that is 40 days long. It begins on Ash Wednesday and lasts until Easter. It is the most somber season. We use the color purple which is a sign of penitence, and we omit all of the "Alleluias" from our Sunday worship. In the early church, Easter was the one time of the year for baptisms. Candidates for baptism (who were all adults), prepared during Lent and used this as a time of learning. Those who were estranged from the church used this time for penance. Eventually the church adopted this as a season for spiritual renewal for everyone. Notice that the Gospel lessons focus on the themes of baptism, new life and redemption.

Why do we fast or "give things up" for Lent? Jesus fasted for 40 days in the wilderness and we try to model his self-denial. When we give up things we enjoy, we have the opportunity to open our hearts to God. Some people take on new things in Lent. When we give to the poor, we live more abundantly. This season reminds us that above all else, we are to love God and love others. Here are some ways to do that:

Sunday morning worship in person and online every week at 9 am.* Try to come to church at least once a month during Lent. Eucharist, community prayer and fellowship are good for so many reasons!

Thursday compline (evening prayer service) via Zoom at 6:30pm on Feb. 22, 29, Mar. 7, 14, 21 We will pray at 6:30 pm, then have some fellowship time for those who want to stay on. We are finished by 7pm. The Zoom link is: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81676416848?pwd=aVZxU2Fucit5ck5jaGxhT3ErZFpyQT09>

HOW PETS CONNECT US WITH GOD-Join us after the worship service on March 3 for a video presentation and discussion about our pets and our relationship with God. Read more about it on the next page. We will meet during coffee hour that day from 10-11am.

Book Club-For those of you who would like to read a book together during this season, this Lent we will read, *Open and Unafraid-the Psalms as a guide to life* by W. David Taylor. Buy the book on your own, and then we can have a group discussion about it in person or on Zoom. Sign up on the sheet in the parish hall. You can also read the daily pages in the *Forward Day by Day* books or on social media. Or, sign up to receive a Lenten word a day in your email inbox. Go to ssje.org/word/

Mite boxes- these are boxes that are used to save coins for charitable purposes. The word **mite** means a very small contribution. The origin of the mite box is found in Luke 21:1-4 when a poor widow gave everything she had, her tiny mite, for the Temple offering. Mite boxes are often given out during the seasons of Lent (and Advent). They are collected at Easter.

Follow-The *Way of Love* calendar on the attached sheet offers daily thoughts

Donate- Every month we deliver food or prepare a meal for the **WARM Center in Westerly**-they need juice boxes, water bottles and single serve packages of cookies/crackers. Or sign up to prepare a meal for them! Canned/boxed food items and personal care items are needed at **RICAN in Charlestown**. Used household goods can also go to RICAN. Gently worn clothing & shoes can be dropped off in the shed in our parking lot.

Other? Think of other ways to observe Lent. Listen to your heart and go where God leads!

*The links for the online worship services can be found on the church website stthomasalton.blogspot.com

How Pets Connect Us With God

Sunday, March 3 from 10-11am

Learn how our relationship with pets can teach us about God's love. Bringing a pet into our home pulls us out of our human-focused mindset and into direct relationship with an element of God's created world. The fact that in a culture where many of us no longer need pets for practical reasons, so many people take on the expense and responsibility of caring for animals suggests that we long for this connection with God's creation.

Topics to be discussed include

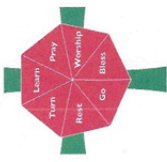
Pets and creation

Pets and pure relationships

What pets teach us about God

How pets teach us spiritual values

We will watch the video presentations and then discuss the questions provided with the program. All are welcome!!



Life Transformed: The Way of Love in Lent

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Reflections from "Living the Way of Love" by Mary Bea Sullivan (Church Publishing, 2019). Used with permission.						
19 Bless Who has taught you to live a Jesus-filled life? Who have you taught? 2 Cor. 4:16	20 Rest How do you incorporate rest into your life? Jer. 6:16	21 Pray Go for a walk today and pray with your feet, each step with intention. Is. 2:3a	22 Rule of Life How do others experience the love of Christ you bring? Gal. 5:22-23	23 Go Where are you being encouraged to "show up"? Matt. 25:44-45	24 Worship What is most meaningful to you in worship? BCP, pg. 281	25 2nd Sunday of Lent
26 Bless Notice the pattern of your breathing. Pray for awareness of blessings. Gen. 2:7	27 Learn What passage of scripture is important to you? Why? Is. 40:8	28 Pray Listen to the Daily Office today at missionstclare.com. Ps. 55:17	29 Turn How did you turn back toward God's love when you made a big mistake? Lk. 15:18	Mar 1 Go Where can you seek and serve Christ in someone unlike you? Jer. 30:22, 31:4-5	2 Worship In your prayers today, what new words or thoughts touch you? Phil. 4:6	3 3rd Sunday of Lent
4 Bless Intentionally smile at least ten times today. Phil. 4:4	5 Rest How might you connect with others in the spirit of renewal? 1 Kings 19:11-12	6 Rule of Life How can you build pauses into the day to reflect on the work of the Spirit? Jn. 15:5	7 Turn What relationships do you need to mend? Is. 55:6-8	8 Go Create a prayer representing how you seek to serve God and follow Jesus. Matt. 5:15	9 Worship What seminal moments have informed Christ? Ps. 51:10	10 4th Sunday of Lent
11 Bless What challenges are you facing today? Job 1:18	12 Learn How is the Jesus who walked the earth beckoning you to meet him? Mk. 10:46-52	13 Pray Try praying with Anglican prayer beads. Lk. 18:1	14 Turn Where do you find joy and passion? Lk. 24:32	15 Go Where might God be asking you to take your great love into the world? Is. 48:6b	16 Worship How do you want to prepare people to remember you? 2 Cor. 1:3-4	17 5th Sunday of Lent
18 Bless When you reflect on financial giving, are your palms open? Matt. 12:43-44	19 Learn Who might you have a conversation with to learn about God? Ps. 119:105	20 Pray What are you thankful for? 1 Chron. 29:15	21 Way of Love Where do you see the seven practices of the Way of Love in this story? Lk. 5:19	22 Rest How do your creative outlets impact on taking rest? Gen. 1:1-24	23 Learn Practice lectio divina with this scripture: Lk. 15:17-24	24 Palm Sunday
25 Rest What can you say "no" to so you can say "yes" to prayer, rest, and joy? Lev. 23:3	26 Learn Slowly read this passage aloud. How does this passage speak to the world today? Matt. 4:8-22	27 Rule of Life Who can support you in living a Jesus-centered life? 2 Cor. 3:6	28 Turn How might you share what brings you great joy with others? Rom. 12:6-8	29 Rest How can you incorporate rest from technology today? Matt. 11:28	30 Rule of Life How has this Way with God impacted your experience of God? Jn. 7:38	31 Easter Day

