



HARK! THE HERALD

The Newsletter of St. Luke's Anglican Church, Merced, CA

February 2018



From the Pastor's Desk

The introduction to our liturgy for Ash Wednesday reads:

Concerning the Service

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Season of Lent: a time of penitence, fasting and prayer, in preparation for the great Feast of the Resurrection.

The season of Lent began in the earliest days of the Church as time of preparation for those seeking to be baptized at the Easter Vigil. The forty days refer to our Lord's time of fasting in the wilderness; and since Sundays are never fast days, Ash Wednesday is the beginning of the Lenten Fast.

Throughout the Old Testament, ashes are used as a sign of sorrow and repentance, and Christians have traditionally used the same to indicate sorrow for our own sin, and as a reminder that the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). Like Adam and Eve, we have disobeyed and rebelled against God, and are under the same judgment, "you are dust, and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19b).

But as we are marked with ashes in the same manner that we were signed with the cross in Baptism, we are also reminded of the life we share in Jesus Christ, the second Adam (Romans 5:17, 6:4). It is in this sure hope that we begin the journey of these forty days, that by hearing and answering our Savior's call to repent, we may enter fully into the joyful celebration of his resurrection.

We enter into sorrow and repentance of our sins. What an extraordinary thing to embrace! We believe that we have received grace from God; our sins are forgiven. Yet, we still enter into not just repentance (a turning from our sins to follow Jesus), but actual sorrow. We cultivate a feeling of mourning for our sins.

First and foremost, we mourn for our actions against God. Have you ever seen someone you respect and admire attacked unfairly? Have you ever witnessed

cruelty against someone who seemed pure and innocent? The more admirable or innocent a victim, the worse the evil against them seems. God, is both perfectly glorious and gloriously perfect. Any attack on Him is infinitely awful. We should feel some of that as we reflect on our sin. Yes, we are forgiven. To linger too long in guilt is to miss seeing the greatness of our forgiveness. However, feeling real sorrow over our sins is not wallowing in guilt. It is recognizing that we have mistreated someone we love.

When I say or do something hurtful to my wife, she usually forgives me as soon as I apologize. That releases me from guilt, but that doesn't mean I'm free to laugh and change the subject. Sometimes, I apologize several times. The first apology is about acknowledging my fault and asking for forgiveness. Then, an apology is a way of saying, "I hurt because I hurt you."

So too, in Lent, we say, "Lord, I hurt because I hurt you. I feel (some of) the weight of my sin. I want not to sin again. Even though all my sins have been forgiven and will be forgiven, I am still sorry. I still want not to sin again."

We also recognize that while our sins are primarily against God, they have consequences for others, including ourselves. Our sins hurt people, in ways we see and in ways that we will never know. Our sins sabotage ourselves as well. In Lent, we experience the hurt of our sins against God not only in the feeling of sorrow, but in counting the cost of our sins. God forgives sins, but He rarely erases their consequences. It is good to count the cost of our sins, so that the cost of discipleship becomes a gift in comparison.

Lenten Activities

February 13: Shrove Tuesday Pancake dinner at St. Nicholas
5:30PM 1635 Shaffer Rd, Atwater, CA 95301

February 14: Ash Wednesday Services
Noon: Service without music
5:30PM Service with music

February 21-March 21

Lenten Series:

Bible Study with Soup, Salad, & Bread

Hosted in various homes (location announced each week)

First FRIDAY

February 2nd from 6—8 PM. Location to be announced.

Sign-Up Sheets Available

2018 Sign-Up Sheets are now available in the conference room for Altar Flower sponsorship, First Friday Family Fellowship and Men's Night Out.

Thank you, my St. Luke's family, for all of your lovely, cards, notes, phone calls and visits, not only this Christmas but throughout the year! I am so grateful for all of you and am with you in spirit each and every Sunday. Happy New Year. Love, *Jessie*

Up-Coming Events

- Feb 2—First Friday
- Feb 4—Sisters of Prayer
- Feb 8—Vestry
- Feb 13—Shrove Tuesday
Pancake Dinner
- Feb 14—Ash Wednesday
Service



See Cheryl Mayo
to coordinate
bringing food for
coffee hour.

Tote Bags

St. Luke's tote bags
are available for \$10
each. Contact Nancy
384-8034,
nanmausmith
@gmail.com

Weekly Services
Sundays
10:00 am Holy Communion

Church Staff

The Most Rev. Dr. Foley Beach, Archbishop,
Anglican Church in North America
The Rt. Rev. Dr. Eric Vawter Menees, Bishop
The Rev. Ryan Bradley, Rector, E-mail: rector@stlukesmerced.org
Mrs. Mady Montague, Choir Director; Mrs. Marian McFarland, Organist
Mrs. Patti McClain, Administrative Assistant

Members of the Vestry

Class of 2018
Mrs. Kathy Hill

Class of 2019
Mrs. Karlyne Paul, Sr. Warden, Treasurer; Mrs. Cheryl Mayo, Jr. Warden;
Mrs. Victoria Schuller; Darby Minturn

Class of 2020
Mr. Fred Dutton, Mrs. Sylvia Bankson

Mrs. Nancy Tapia, Clerk

Diocesan Convention Delegates

Mike Waite, Victoria Schuller; Karlyne Paul, Alternate

Contact Us

St. Luke's Anglican Church

Office Business Hours:
M - Th 8 am - 2 pm
Friday 8 am—Noon

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ARTICLE DEADLINE FOR
HARK! THE HERALD IS THE
20TH OF EACH MONTH.


Send articles to:
office@stlukesmerced.org

A Welcoming Family...Worshipping Christ...Sharing His love with others

St. Luke's Anglican Church
435 W. 21st Street
Merced, CA 95340

Address Service Requested

PLACE
STAMP
HERE



...but
the greatest of these is
love. 1 Cor. 13:13