



February 10, 2021



## Pastor's Parable

Lent 2021 is rapidly approaching. The manner in which we ended Lent 2020 is the way in which we begin Lent 2021. Ash Wednesday and the first three Sundays of Lent 2020 were normal occasions of worship, children's sermons, choir practice, open church and Lenten Bible studies. And then COVID-19 derailed our in-person worship allowing us to finish Lent on Easter Sunday much differently than we ever expected or imagined.

Fast forward eleven months with the beginning of Lent 2021 on Ash Wednesday, February 17. Ash Wednesday will be filmed this week and posted in our normal places by Ash Wednesday. Obviously, you will not be able to experience an ashen forehead in the normal Lenten fashion. But Wednesday, February 17 still marks the beginning of a season of examination and repentance. The weeks ahead provide us a rich opportunity of using our spiritual magnifying glasses to examine our hearts and minds as we prepare for Easter. Lent is that opportunity of being honest with ourselves about who we are (and are not) and who God has claimed us to be as we grasp again the power of the resurrection on Easter morning. Easter explodes with the powerful truth that God has claimed us as God's own and we are God's Beloved.

Yet, before we can truly understand that reality, we must again understand the parts of our lives that are in direct opposition to God's saving grace. We have failed and over and over again made choices that displease God and mar God's redemptive work in us. Lent is our opportunity to look deeply within and accept God's forgiving grace in our lives.

During Lent our Sunday meditations will focus on wilderness. We visit the stories of the Hebrew people who wandered sinfully through the wilderness which reminds us of our own wilderness experiences. Lent provides an opportunity to learn from others what they learned in wilderness and God's amazing love that never gave up on them, or on us in our own wilderness!

The Lenten meditations are titled: Wilderness Themes of Lent; The Wilderness of Broken Promises, The Wilderness of Self-Doubt, The Wilderness of Fear, The Wilderness of Scarcity, The Wilderness of Anger and The Wilderness of Justice.

A March Lenten Bible Study will soon be announced that will add to our Lenten options for examination and spiritual growth. Together we are the Beloved people of God. Amen.



[Click here](#) for  
today's sung Psalm

[Click here](#) for a video message  
from Pastor Coggin





# Valentines Day



According to History.com: "The Catholic Church recognizes at least three different saints named Valentine or Valentinus, all of whom were martyred. One legend contends that Valentine was a priest who served during the third century in Rome. When Emperor Claudius II decided that single men made better soldiers than those with wives and families, he outlawed marriage for young men. Valentine, realizing the injustice of the decree, defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret."

Valentines Day happens around the same time as the Roman celebration of Lupercalia, a festival dedicated to the Roman God of agriculture. during the festival, the names of single women were drawn out of a large vase and they were allowed to be paired up with whoever had drawn their name.

By the middle ages, February the 14th was known as a romantic celebration in England. Chaucer mentions it in a poem from 1375. By the middle of the 1700's it was common for people to exchange notes or tokens of love with friends and loved ones. The first mass-produced valentines in North America were designed and sold by Esther Howland in the 1840's. Esther is known as the "Mother of the Valentine".

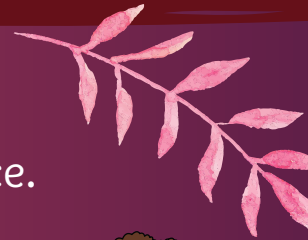
Valentines Day is a nice reminder to spread a little love to those we care about. Consider sending an email or calling someone you love.



## Ash Wednesday- February 17, 2021

Next Wednesday we will include a link to a video service.

In preparation for the Ash Wednesday service, you may want to have a little bit of dirt in a container of your choosing. Rev. Mitch will use the symbol of dirt as he leads us in a time of invitation to the season of Lent.



"I said a Valentine prayer for you and asked the Lord above to fill your heart and bless your soul with the precious gift of love. I asked Him for sincere love, the kind that's meant to stay, just like the generous love You give to those you touch each day. I prayed for love from family and from every cherished friend then I asked the Lord to give you His love that knows no end." (Author unknown)

## Call for Usher volunteers

When we return to in-person worship services, the ushering coordinators would like your help. As you know, the health guidelines direct how we meet safely "in person" and our usher teams are essential for that. Please consider helping, by being part of an ushering team. No experience necessary. Help us to safely welcome folks to St. Andrew's for Sunday services. For more info call Sheelagh 250 - 385-5157 or email the office.

## Pancake Tuesday



The day before the start of Lent was traditionally a time to use up your extra eggs and fats before the beginning of the fasting season. Pancakes have become a traditional food for many people to eat on "Shrove Tuesday" (from the word "Shriven"= "to be absolved"). Try your pancakes with maple syrup or with lemon and sugar.



## Read From Your Bible This Week

2 Kings 2:1-12  
Psalm 50:1-6  
Corinthians 4:3-6  
Mark 9:2-9

