

MY DEAR THEOPHILUS

Volume 2/ Issue 2 (February 2018)

NEWS FROM AROUND THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

<http://www.episcopalhealth.org/en/news/enews/january-2018/episcopal-health-foundation-launches-10-million-effort-actively-fund-clinics-address-underlying-community-conditions-affect-heal/>

EHF launches \$10 million effort to actively fund clinics to address underlying community conditions that affect health.

Lent Resources: North American Anglican and Lutheran leaders offer ecumenical reflections

The Presiding Bishop of the US-based Episcopal Church, Michael Curry, and Archbishop Fred Hiltz of the Anglican Church of Canada, have joined with their Lutheran colleagues to offer a series of Lenten reflections. Together with Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and National Bishop Susan Johnson from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, they have prepared reflections for Ash Wednesday, the five weeks in Lent, Palm Sunday and the Triduum.



Dear Church Family:

Lent is a time of self-examination, repentance, prayer, fasting, and self-denial. Ashes from the burned palms of the preceding year's Palm Sunday are blessed. With these ashes, the priest marks a cross on the foreheads of worshipers, saying, "remember that you are dust, and unto dust you shall return." (Genesis 3:19). From Biblical times, sprinkling oneself with ashes has been a mark of sorrow for sin.

In the early Church during the season of Lent, the catechumens, were preparing for the reception of the Sacrament of Baptism, that being initiation in the Church, wherein we connect with God, and by connecting with God, we also connect with our neighbors and ourselves, through the cleansing of our sin. Lent is about reconnecting. Lent is a time when we examine those things which keep us apart from God, and from our neighbors and from ourselves. The Church calls those things which disconnect us "sin."

What is sin? The Greek word for it in the New Testament is ἁμαρτῶν (pronounced “hamarton”), literally “missing the mark/not hitting the target.” Sin separates us; sin isolates us. Lent calls us to reconciliation and connection. During Lent we shed ourselves of those things in our lives which keep us from being connected, those things that isolate us.

During Lent we must be honest with ourselves, a not all together easy task, and ask: “How have I missed the mark? How have I failed to hit God’s target? Has my missing God’s target caused pain to others? Have I separated myself from others because I have missed the mark? How has missing the mark hurt not only others but God, and even myself? How have I cut myself off from God, neighbor and self? How can I be reconciled to God, neighbor and even myself?”

With the Church all around the world, let us pray: Dear People of God: The first Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church to prepare for them by a season of penitence and fasting. This season of Lent provided a time in which converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism. It was also a time when those who, because of notorious sins, had been separated from the body of the faithful were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to the fellowship of the Church. Thereby, the whole congregation was put in mind of the message of pardon and absolution set forth in the Gospel of our Savior, and of the need which all Christians continually have to renew their repentance and faith.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word. And, to make a right beginning of repentance, and as a mark of our mortal nature, let us now kneel before the Lord, our maker and redeemer.

Your servant in Christ,

The Rev. Chester J. Makowski, Rector



ABSALOM JONES
FEATURED HOLY PERSON
OF THE MONTH
13 FEBRUARY

On the 13th of February, the Church remembers the life and ministry of Absalom Jones, the first Black Episcopal priest. He was ordained deacon in 1795 and priest in 1802 (61 years before the Civil War). (By contrast, Augustus Tolton was the first Black to be ordained a Roman Catholic priest in 1866, a year after the Civil War ended.)

The Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church at the time was Williams White (1789-1st PB; 1795-1836-4th PB). James Kiefer writes: “1786 the membership of St. George’s Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia included both blacks and whites. However, the white members met that year and decided that thereafter black members should sit only in the balcony. Two black Sunday worshippers, Absalom Jones (1746-1818) and Richard Allen (1760-1831), whose enthusiasm for the Methodist Church had brought many blacks into the congregation, learned of the decision only when, on the following Sunday, ushers tapped them on the shoulder during the opening prayers, and demanded that they move to the balcony without waiting for the end of the prayer. They walked out, followed by the other black members. Absalom Jones conferred with William White, Episcopal Bishop of Philadelphia, who agreed to accept the group as an Episcopal parish.”

That parish, St. Thomas, has thrived since the late 1700s to this very day where Fr. Martini Shaw serves as the parish’s 17th rector. Here is a link to their parish’s website: <http://www.aecst.org/>.

Let us pray: Set us free, heavenly Father, from every bond of prejudice and fear: that, honoring the steadfast courage of your servants Absalom Jones and Richard Allen, we may show forth in our lives the reconciling love and true freedom of the children

of God, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

ASH WEDNESDAY

On 14 February at 5 PM we will have the traditional Ash Wednesday service with the imposition of ashes.

ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



We will begin our study of the Book of Revelation using N.T. Wright's *Revelation for Everyone* as our guide. Many people today regard Revelation as the hardest book in the New Testament. It is full of strange, lurid and sometimes bizarre and violent imagery. As a result, many people who are quite at home in the Gospels, Acts and Paul find themselves tiptoeing around Revelation with a sense that they do not really belong there. But they do! In fact, Revelation offers one of the clearest and sharpest visions of God's ultimate purpose for the whole creation, and of the way in which the powerful forces of evil, at work in a thousand ways, can be and are being overthrown through the victory of Jesus the Messiah and the consequent costly victory of his followers. Like the other guides in the N.T. Wright for Everyone series, Revelation brings you into a fresh encounter with Scripture under the guidance of one of the world's leading New Testament scholars. Thoughtful

questions, prayer suggestions, and useful background information guide you and your group through each study.

LENTEN SERIES 2018



In his letter to the Church in Thessalonica, St. Paul writes: “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

If St. Paul tells us to pray without ceasing, how can we accomplish that? How can we be in a constant state of prayer? After all, we do not live our lives in a monastery.

This Lent during our Wednesday Lenten series, we will explore how to pray without ceasing. What does it mean to live a life of prayer at all times? How can we live our lives in that manner? We will begin with Eucharist, Rite II, at 5 PM, followed by a light dinner and a presentation by a speaker.

February 21: The Rev. Dr. Tom Bain, a United Methodist pastor, is the palliative care chaplain at UTMB in Galveston. He is a member of the World Community for Christian Meditation and received training as a spiritual director at the Cenacle Center in Houston.



Contact Us

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February 28: Flo Cruz, a member of St. Luke's, will speak on using a daily helpful tool for one's prayer life.

March 7: The Rev. Ray Gearing, retired Presbyterian minister.

March 14: Bob Hern, an ex-Marine, is a member of Trinity Episcopal Church in Galveston. He is a member of the World Community for Christian Meditation. Bob is also a member of the Community of Hope, founded in the Diocese of Texas by the Rev. Dr. Helen Appelberg, which follows the Rule of St. Benedict.

March 21: The Rev. Chester J. Makowski will speak on the Daily Office as a prayer discipline.



Lent Madness is a fun website about Lent. Lent Madness began in 2010 as the brainchild of the Rev. Tim Schenck. In seeking a fun, engaging way for people to learn about the men and women comprising the Church's Calendar of Saints, Tim came up with this unique Lenten devotion: <http://www.lentmadness.org/category/lent-madness-2018/>



PLEASE LET US KNOW IF SOMEONE NEEDS A HOME VISIT

If you know of anyone who needs a home visit because they cannot get to Church, please call the Parish Office, or let Fr. Makowski know. Either Fr. Makowski or one of our Lay Eucharistic Visitors will call on them. If you have a pastoral emergency, please call Fr. Makowski at 713.299.7675.

THERE IS POWER IN PRAYER

Praying is something that we all can do, young and old, rich and poor, tall and short. Please pray for everyone on our Prayer List.



What is the Purpose of the Church? The church exists primarily for two closely correlated purposes: to worship God and to work for his kingdom in the world ... The church also exists for a third purpose, which serves the other two: to encourage one another, to build one another up in faith, to pray with and for one another, to learn from one another and

teach one another, and to set one another examples to follow, challenges to take up, and urgent tasks to perform. This is all part of what is known loosely as fellowship. — N.T. Wright, *Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense*



***Every Sunday Is Bring
a Friend to Church
Sunday!***

***Don't forget to bring pork and beans for
our Mannafest outreach.***