

MARCH 2021



PO Box 788, 6810 Hwy 2 W, Cass Lake, MN 56633

tlclsecretary@gmail.com 218-335-6393

like/follow us on Facebook

(Trinity Lutheran Church of Cass Lake)

WEB site: tlccasslake.com

Pastor's Reflections

The Very Present Moment of Lent

by Bp Amy Odgren

For some of us – especially those who have been on the hamster wheel of providing worship, youth group, and Christian education experiences in new and creative digital ways these past few months, it is hard to believe that we are entering into the season of Lent already. The word “Lent” means “long spring days.” It commemorates the forty days Jesus spent in the desert where he was led (or “driven,” “thrown” – or “hurled” as some translations put it) shortly after his baptism. Lent exists to prepare us to experience the central story of the universe and the defining story of our lives: the death and resurrection of Jesus.

We are going into Lent, as if Lent were something to fall into, a vessel. Victor Turner, the celebrated anthropologist, said that on a pilgrimage the whole of geography takes on symbolic meaning. We begin a pilgrimage on Ash Wednesday, a journey in which each step we take matches one in a story. It's like falling into a world, in which each movement reflects a movement elsewhere; each step is matched by another in a parallel dance.

However, on Ash Wednesday, all of time collapses into the present moment as the cross is traced on our foreheads – a cross of ash which reveals our dusty sinfulness and the stark remembrance of our future mortality. That same cross reveals the cross of salvation won for us in the death and resurrection of Christ – the very promise to us of eternal life into the future. The Dalai Lama said, “There are only two days in the year that nothing can be done. One is called yesterday and the other day is called tomorrow, so today is the right day to love, believe, do, and mostly live.” The Apostle Paul says it another way, “See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation” 2 Corinthians 6:2.

Lent is a journey toward the cross. And toward a tomb, and the mysterious, unending joy of those who found that tomb empty. The goal is to bring its geography, its story into our very selves, to bend beneath it, to allow the soul to find its narrative within its unfolding story.

On Ash Wednesday, we enter the season of Lent – and we stand at a threshold of “now.” We can boldly claim the promises of Christ already received, yet during this season, we will examine just how much we continue to need God's love and mercy on account of our sin and brokenness. We are assured of our certain promised future, while simultaneously being released from our past. Lent is a time of the holy “now,” while we move from ashes to the burning fire of the Paschal candle brightly lighting our darkened world and as we celebrate our Lord's resurrection and see the light of Christ before us.

I've come to see Lent as a chance to rewrite our own stories. The essence of healing, perhaps the essence of what we mean by resurrection, is to take the chaotic and traumatic events of our lives and rewrite them into a new story, a new life. The resurrected Jesus offers new life and promise out of the chaos and trauma of death. But before a new story can be rewritten, the old one needs to be examined. Where is your treasure? Where is your heart? Where are you putting your time and attention? Where is God's activity right before us and how is it that we're responding to God's incredible grace, mercy and love in the present? Before we can put our hearts and our treasure in right relation, we have to know where our hearts and our treasure are now. Truth chases us during Lent. Transparency is all around us in Lent.

I remember once when I signed up to help take care of a friend of mine who was dying, I had imagined sitting in a hospital room, quietly reading a book while my friend peacefully slumbered. Instead, what came to pass was that I sat in my friend's living room, bone tired, shoveling pizza and Chinese take-out food into my mouth, my own house strewn with dirty laundry and a full cat-litter box. I had not imagined that I wanted my friend to hurry up and die. In short, I was the same messed up woman – not the person of my imagination. But in that time, I learned that everything is God's: my messed up self, my dirty laundry, my harrowing inability to be perfect for my friend. But the important lesson I learned through this is that everything is God's: shame, depression, egotism, anger, pain, arrogance, betrayal...all of it! Because God is inside everything. Findable in everything. God is ever present even with a bone-tired woman

with dirty laundry and an overflowing cat litter box and with a friend dying slowly of cancer... and with Christ nailed in humiliation to a cross - and in the glorious plan for promised salvation through the resurrection of Jesus.

That is why, in Lent, we can examine all that is within us and bring anything to God. To see what the story is *now*. To find out where our hearts are. And that will mean some pain, yes? It's not easy to face our own darkness, our foibles and innermost feelings and secrets...our own ashes. We are all going to come up short, believe me. As a friend said once, when she wanted to take a day off from work, "I'm just going to call in ugly." We're all going to have to call in ugly during Lent. That's why we journey together within our faith communities and around people who know us and love us.

The season of Lent urges us to live in the present moment, where our sinfulness meets God's grace in the cross of Christ – grace assured, with no fear of our past and no worry about our future. The truth that defines how we live the gift of faith is that we must live it now, in the present, before our earthly dust puts on eternal life. There is no time like now to explore and define who we are, marked by the cross of Life.

As you enter into the very present moments of the season of Lent, perhaps you will be invited into spiritual disciplines. Sharing with those in need, prayer, fasting, pausing to recall others, reaching out with compassion to those who need a visit, or any other multitude of ways that can attune focus to the present moment – the invitation of the gospel frees us from the never-ending and self-centering cycle of the past and future by pushing us into the grace we know in this present time. We are free to rest and serve in the present moment until we are filled to overflowing with love.

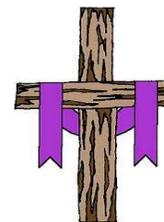
2021 Lent Study & Worship

Please join us on **Wed at 4 pm**, online or in-person for our World Hunger Lent **Study**. If you wish to join us online, please email Pr Amanda or message her on FB and she will send you the Zoom link. Then at **5:30** we will have **worship**, which you can either join us in person or digitally when it is posted later Wed evening on our website (tlccasslake.com) and FB page.

Wed in Lent: Feb 24 – Mar 24

4 pm Lenten Study

5:30 pm Worship



Mar 28 – Apr 4 Services

Palm Sun 10:30 am

Maundy Thurs 5:30 pm

Good Fri 5:30 pm

Easter Sun Worship 10:30 am



Zoom WORKSHOP

Join us for

The Spring "Called to Arise" Series

**Tuesdays, 6:30-8pm, March 2-23,
2021, on Zoom**

Topic: From Death to Resurrection

[Register here](#)

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScDd0AqzdE4FY6Q9LmqEpm__mESPluPL92tLPjuh60MYR4YdQ/vi ewform

A collaboration between Together Here Ministries - NEMN Synod, EcoFaith Network - NEMN Synod and Care of Creation Work Group - St. Paul Area Synod

Standing at the Intersection of Racism, Inequality & the Environment

MARCH IS FOOD SHARE MONTH

For 40 years, March in Minnesota has been designated as Minnesota Food Share month. It is a time when nearly every food shelf in the state makes an all-out effort to raise as much food and money as possible. During the 2020 March campaign, more than \$21.5 million dollars and over 7.4 million pounds of items were raised by Minnesota food shelves. During this past year, food insecurity has affected 1 in 11 families in Minnesota. The need during the pandemic has never been greater. The board of Worship and Education has considered food donations vs financial donations and because of the pandemic are requesting that you make a financial contribution vs a food donation. However, if it's your desire to donate a product, one such need that is particularly in short supply at this time are personal care type items, like toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, shampoo, deodorant, hand lotion & etc. You can find these items in many stores but I know they have them at Target, in aisle 40 in Bemidji. Your financial contributions and product donations will be split between the Cass Lake and Bemidji food shelves. We at Trinity support both food shelves though our donation of time, and the citizens from the community of Cass Lake also go to the Bemidji food shelf to obtain assistance. It is our hope and desire that you will make a financial contribution or a product donation to help feed the hungry and thirsty during this special time of need in our local area. You can do this by making out a check to "Trinity Lutheran church" and on the memo line write, "Food Shelf." For personal care products, drop them off any Sunday morning at church before services or during the week during normal office hours, Mon, Thur and Fri, 9 -12. God bless you and thank you for your support.



Service Groups

Date	Reader	Singers
3/7	Bev L	Bev & Gary L
3/14	Delores B	Roy B & Laurie B
3/21	Gary L	Bev & Gary L
3/28	Patti H	Roy B & Laurie B

Ushers for March

Bill & Susan Schulz

Financials for Trinity

January Financials

Giving	\$ 8,643
Actual Expenses	\$ 14,900
Budgeted Expenses	\$ 15,641

THANK YOU FOR YOUR

Kindness

Thank you so much for the kind words, thoughts, and Prayers.

MUCH LOVE
The Koski Family

A Sunday school teacher asked her children as they were on the way to church service,

"And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?"

One bright little girl replied, "Because people are sleeping."



EcoFaith Green

Tip

While gardening is not for everyone, many studies show that the ability to relax and enjoy working the soil, planting, pruning, and even weeding, is beneficial to one's health. The fun is in the adventure, not just the results, so instead of purchasing instant beauty, enjoy watching plantings slowly develop. When we beautify our yards and doorsteps, we also garden for the pleasure of others as well. Take time to garden with children, who will learn to appreciate nature, learn a skill, and are more likely to eat more vegetables if they've participated in the growing. Use herbicides judiciously and sparingly. When trees are exposed to fumes and soil penetration of frequent doses of lawn weed killers, toxins can accumulate in tree tissue with potential for irreversible damage, and making them targets of insect and disease. Most lawns are over-watered, causing a shallow-rooted turf dependent on spoon-fed moisture, quick to suffer if the addicted grass doesn't get its water fix. Instead of watering every-other-day, apply one inch per week given in one or two deep waterings to encourage deep root systems. Locally owned garden centers offer plants and expertise not available at national chains, so buy local, giving them the support they need and deserve. When purchasing annual flowers, try some you've never grown before, such as cleome, lisianthus or some of the new zinnia varieties. Finally, choose to grow some of your own vegetables, with big harvests yielded from even small spaces. Patios, decks and balconies become productive gardens as many new varieties are well-suited for pots and planters.

Stewardship Article

(This article was first published

on <https://faithlead.luthersem.edu/massachusetts-council-of-churches-one-church-fund/> on Feb 16, 2021)

Massachusetts Council of Churches: One Church Fund *by Kenneth Young*

"Spring is here! The snow is over, and the sun will shine again." That's what was going through my mind in March of 2020. Although the sun was shining and the temperatures were warming up, there was this sense of darkness cast over Massachusetts. The governor of Massachusetts had just articulated guidelines about the capacity of people who could worship in person. The limit was only ten people—which meant that churches could not open for in-person worship.

Amid this news, we met for our once-a-day Zoom meeting at the Massachusetts Council of Churches. We mourned the loss of our sense of well-being and routine. We spoke about not comprehending how to move forward with our ministry. We were also concerned about the churches and ministries we lead. How do we administer communion? How do we exercise baptism? Will there be a right hand of fellowship for those who join the ministry? Do we have to cancel weddings? After outbreaks during funerals, we thought through a funeral guide that was adopted by several congregations. We were trying to get our bearings as the world turned upside down in a day.

The Money Question

What happens to churches that do not have money to sustain for a month? This question sparked a fire that consumed us for weeks. The Massachusetts Council of Churches is over 115 years old. There are well-established churches that are members of the council. Some have historic venues and deep pockets. Others have endowments to help them survive a pandemic, and some were on shakier financial ground. And, there was significant concern about newly formed and minority churches. This novel coronavirus hit Black and Latinx communities the hardest, and these congregations were losing loved ones frequently. They were serving meals, distributing clothes, and making masks. How do we help these churches remain open?

One Church - One Church Fund

The question of how churches would survive continued to make our wheels turn. The staff wondered if established churches in the Commonwealth could help churches serving communities in need. A small think tank assembled

to explore a new program idea designed to help faith communities help each other, and the One Church Fund was born.

We formed the One Church Fund *believing in faith* that God called the churches in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to function as One Church. We prayed with leaders, pastors, and bishops. We asked for people who could help churches complete the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), set up Zoom conferencing and other administrative activities. The One Church Fund was not a well-thought-out plan. We didn't know if it was going to work or fall to pieces.

Faith + Goodwill = Success!

Fortunately, we were able to raise \$100,000 rather quickly. The success story of the One Church Fund was that we acted on faith and goodwill. We received phone calls from people willing to use their time and talent to help churches with virtual worship. Some churches were able to give physical items to churches. Rev. Kyung Yoon of the Korean Church of Boston made masks for the Haitian Evangelical Church Network and Ministerios Cristo El Rey. Churches were helping each other. Doing ministry together for the sake of the gospel.

The Church is the light in dark places, and the Massachusetts Council of Churches facilitated this light through the One Church Fund.



WRAPPING OUR QUILTS AROUND HUNGER 2021

(A quilt auction for the ELCA World Hunger Appeal)

Dear NEMN Synod quilters,

Below you will find information about the Synod Assembly Quilt auction 2021.

- The quilt auction will be on-line only since the Synod Assembly will be on-line as well.

- The quilt auction will be in early May, shortly after our virtual Northeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly is completed. We don't have a firm beginning and ending date for the auction yet but will know and advertise that in the next few weeks.

- We are excited that we will be using the same auction site as last year, provided graciously again by Voyageur's Lutheran Camp Ministries!

- Those of you who donated a quilt last year will be very familiar with how the auction works, but if you are did not...don't worry - it's straight forward and non-threatening. There will be an information sheet with all you need to know mailed out in March/April to each congregation, plus it will be posted on the synod web site. For now, please note you do not need to send us your quilt, what we will need are pictures and information about your quilt. Those pictures and that information are what will go up on the auction site. You also will not need a bid card, just an ID card for the winning bidder (you will receive one included in the Synod Assembly packet coming in early March).

- After the auction is over, we will let you know who won your quilt; send you all their contact information and work with you to figure out the best way to get the quilt to them. Winning bidders may be from within the synod and live close enough to come and pick it up, but some will not, since we will be reaching bidders from across the United States now. If you do have to ship your quilt, we will reimburse your expenses. We hope this does not sound too burdensome. The feedback we received after the 2020 auction was that it was not, and it was fun to meet, probably by phone, the person who had the winning bid on your quilt. Last year we had winners from as far away as the state of Washington, Montana, New York, etc.

We have long dreamed of and tried to expand our pool of bidders for your beautiful quilts. Last year that became a reality! Raising money for the ELCA Hunger Appeal has never been more important, as those living in deep poverty both here and around the world have increased in number due to the pandemic and have suffered greatly this past year.

Thank you for being the heart and soul of this ministry.

The Northeastern Minnesota Synod Quilt Auction Team



Mental Health Corner

(from <https://www.nami.org/About-Mental-Illness/Warning-Signs-and-Symptoms>)

Trying to tell the difference between what expected behaviors are and what might be the signs of a mental illness isn't always easy. There's no easy test that can let someone know if there is mental illness or if actions and thoughts might be typical behaviors of a person or the result of a physical illness. Each illness has its own symptoms, but common signs of mental illness in adults and adolescents can include the following:

- Excessive worrying or fear
- Feeling excessively sad or low
- Confused thinking or problems concentrating and learning
- Extreme mood changes, including uncontrollable “highs” or feelings of euphoria
- Prolonged or strong feelings of irritability or anger
- Avoiding friends and social activities
- Difficulties understanding or relating to other people
- Changes in sleeping habits or feeling tired and low energy
- Changes in eating habits such as increased hunger or lack of appetite
- Changes in sex drive
- Difficulty perceiving reality (delusions or hallucinations, in which a person experiences and senses things that don't exist in objective reality)
- Inability to perceive changes in one's own feelings, behavior or personality (“lack of insight” or anosognosia)
- Overuse of substances like alcohol or drugs
- Multiple physical ailments without obvious causes (such as headaches, stomach aches, vague and ongoing “aches and pains”)
- Thinking about suicide
- Inability to carry out daily activities or handle daily problems and stress
- An intense fear of weight gain or concern with appearance

Mental health conditions can also begin to develop in young children. Because they're still learning how to identify and talk about thoughts and emotions, their most obvious symptoms are behavioral. Symptoms in children may include the following:

- Changes in school performance
- Excessive worry or anxiety, for instance fighting to avoid bed or school

- Hyperactive behavior
- Frequent nightmares
- Frequent disobedience or aggression
- Frequent temper tantrums

Where To Get Help

Don't be afraid to reach out if you or someone you know needs help. Learning all you can about mental health is an important first step. Reach out to your health insurance, primary care doctor or state/county mental health authority for more resources. Contact the [NAMI HelpLine](#) to find out what services and supports are available in your community. If you or someone you know needs help now, you should immediately call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 or call 911.

Receiving A Diagnosis

Knowing warning signs can help let you know if you need to speak to a professional. For many people, getting an accurate diagnosis is the first step in a treatment plan. Unlike diabetes or cancer, there is no medical test that can accurately diagnose mental illness. A [mental health professional](#) will use the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, published by the American Psychiatric Association, to assess symptoms and make a diagnosis. The manual lists criteria including feelings and behaviors and time limits in order to be officially classified as a mental health condition. After diagnosis, a health care provider can help develop a treatment plan that could include medication, therapy or other lifestyle changes.

Finding Treatment

Getting a diagnosis is just the first step; knowing your own preferences and goals is also important. Treatments for mental illness vary by diagnosis and by person. There's no “one size fits all” treatment. Treatment options can include [medication](#), [counseling \(therapy\)](#), [social support and education](#).

Just spent 15 minutes searching for my phone in my car.

While using my phone as a flashlight.