

Christ the King Episcopal Church

Growing in Love, Striving for Justice, Seeking to be Anti-Racist

The Rev. Janet Vincent, Priest-in-Charge

February 17, 2021 (Ash Wednesday)

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Last year we were able to gather at the church building for Ash Wednesday services. It was one of the last of our pre-covid days together and it's hard to believe that almost a year has gone by.

Pandemic or not we are about to enter the most sacred time of our church calendar. It begins with Ash Wednesday on Feb. 17 and will continue on until we reach the feasts of Easter (April 4) and then Pentecost on May 23.

As we have for the past year, it's time - again - to use our imaginations, creative energies and our care for each other as we follow Jesus through death and resurrection.

In this bag/packet you'll find our **bulletin for Ash Wednesday**. We will livestream two services from the church at 12 and 5 and you are invited to make a reservation to be there (12 people at each service) or follow by going to our web site. A recording of one of them will also be available after the live services are over. Please follow along as you can. We won't be using ashes this year by instruction from Bishop Dietsche. There are other ways to remember our mortality. One of them will be in remembering over 450,000 Americans and so many more worldwide who have died of Covid-19.

You will also find a terrific set of cards (in color on card stock for children and in black and white for the rest of us) for a program called: **Bless this Mess!** There are six cards for each week of Lent. They offer simple ways to pray together, reflect on the deeper questions of life, and stretch ourselves in heart and mind. You won't find clichés. You will find an invitation to go deeper. And best of all, it's accessible for child and adult alike. The color PDF's will also be emailed as a set and each week I'll send out six cards as reminders.

Pull out your bibles or google one online and join me on Sunday mornings at 10 to study Mark's gospel. You may also wish to purchase a copy of Rowan Williams' book: Meeting God in Mark. You'll find the link on my weekly Saturday email with links and Zoom info for coffee hour (9:30) followed by class.

We are also invited to give for those in need. There is a **Lenten calendar** attached that has suggestions for food to collect each day. Use the suggestion or come up with your own plan. **The Rondout Valley Food Pantry** needs our help as they help our neighbors. You may have another favorite organization to give to. And if you are in need of help please be in touch with me or Deacon Robin.

We are going to make a giant **collage for Easter day**. It will consist of 36 letter size pieces of paper colored in by our children and by some adults as well. Children will receive theirs in the bag. Please be in touch with me if you'd also like to color in a sheet. If everyone wants to join in we'll make two collages!

We are all tired of this pandemic and some may be getting weary of winter. It's hard not to see family and friends and harder to take care of those who need us. And yet, like St. Paul (read on Ash Wednesday) we find the courage to believe that:

. . .through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see-- we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything. (2 Corinthians 5&6)

With love,
Janet

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