

Lent prepares us for Easter

By Rev. Ellen Richardson

Since about the end of the fourth century The Church has set aside a 40-day season for reflection, self-examination, and repentance, and for working our way through some of the more uncomfortable themes in our Christian belief: sin, judgment and forgiveness. The 40 days of Lent are intended to prepare us for the mystery of the Resurrection and its powers of reconciliation redemption, and restoration.

The Lenten season is an unadorned season. Symbolically we try, in our worship space, our hymns and lessons, even in our sermons, to recreate a sense of our Lord's 40 days in the wilderness—a time when he was alone, preparing himself for his ministry on as the Messiah, doing without the usual creature comforts of food, water and companionship that we so often take for granted every day. The altar in the church is dressed in purple, and no flowers are



used on the altar. You might also notice a change in tone for the music we sing in worship—it is intentionally less exuberant and more contemplative. Lenten prayers are meant to lead us to reflect a little more on “the things we have done and left undone.” There are no “alleluias” spoken until Easter. By intentionally setting aside things might distract us as we journey with Christ to Calvary, we are better able to share in his passion and in the glorious resurrection liturgy of Easter morning.

During Lent, each Christian is encouraged to develop a Spiritual Rule of Life, including a regular prayer time, intentional self-examination, or perhaps adding a new spiritual practice that brings us closer to God or takes on a new caring role for God's people. Lent is known in our wider culture as a time of abstinence and fasting—both powerful spiritual practices for some, and not appropriate or possible for others. “Giving up something for Lent” should be *less* about practicing a marathon of self-discipline—such as a diet or exercise program—and *more* about how an intentional Lenten practice opens our minds and hearts to the voice of God in our lives and in our world.

Solemn service begins Lent

The season of Lent begins in church with the liturgy of **Ash Wednesday**, to be celebrated at Church of the Advent on **Wednesday February 14, 2018 at 6 p.m.**

This special Eucharist begins with a ritual of having the sign of the cross made on our foreheads with ashes as the priest speaks, “Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return,” as a reminder of our mortality and of our fleeting existence on this earth. This moving

acknowledgement is another way of confessing that we are not the center of the universe, and it is meant to mark the begin of our *metanoia*, our *turning around* to recognize our sins—both personal and corporate—to repent of them, to seek and offer forgiveness, and to restore harmony with God and our neighbor.



Wednesday Night Lenten Series

By Rev. Ellen Richardson

I read a phrase a few weeks ago in a communication from the Episcopal ministry, *Forward Movement* that made me stop and think: “I can't change the world but I can change my own heart.” It could have been on a day of particularly distressing world news—it would be difficult to say which one—and it awakened me out of a sense of hopelessness at ever being able to have an impact—to make a difference in a world oblivious to selfishness

and self-destruction. It reminded me that Jesus Christ came into the world to bring the Kingdom of God, armed only with the power of love. And Jesus accomplished his mission by changing hearts. And a change in the world followed a change of hearts, not the other way around.

To explore this idea in our present-day world, Church of the Advent is offering an Adult Lenten Series on Wednesday evenings for six weeks beginning February 21 and ending on the Wednesday of Holy Week.

Drawing from a classic book by Marcus Borg called *The Heart of Christianity*, and other sources, we will meet each Wednesday evening through Holy Week beginning with a quiet celebration of Holy Eucharist Rite I in the church at 6 p. m. followed by a simple meal of soup and sandwiches in the parish hall at 6:30. The discussion class will go from 6:45 to 7:30 p.m.

You are invited to attend, to bring your friends, and if able, to contribute to the meal of soup or sandwich fixings on one of the six evenings. In keeping with the Lenten season, we are intentionally keeping the meal *simple*- nothing fancy and no desserts- so our fellowship does not overshadow our Lenten intention to explore how to invoke the power of love to change our hearts.

Please join us!





Convention convenes

By Rev. Ellen Richardson

The Diocese of East Carolina will hold its annual gathering in New Bern, NC from Thursday February 8 through Saturday, February 10 with the theme *Treasures New and Old* (Matt 13:52).

Priest in Charge, Rev. Ellen Richardson will be attending, accompanied by elected lay representatives from Church of the Advent Doug Chesson, Christine Chesson and John Price. Kit Reddick will be present to take a shift at the Episcopal Church Women (ECW) table, and Stephen Batten will travel from his third and final year at Virginia Theological Seminary and to attend and to meet with the Commission on Ministry and the Standing Committee.

The honored guest for the Annual Convention of the Diocese of East Carolina in 2018 is the Rt. Rev. Carl Walter Wright, VII Bishop Suffragan for the Armed Forces and Federal Ministries.

Thursday workshop offerings include *Disaster Relief and Recovery*, a session entitled *Tending the Home Front*—about how communities may best share ministry with active duty

military persons and their families, and a new offering entitled *Engaging in Difficult Issues Without Getting Political*.

St. Cyprian's in New Bern will host a Jazz Choral Evensong on Thursday evening at 5:30 p. m., and the Convention Eucharist will be held at Christ Church, New Bern, Friday evening at 5 p. m.

Three resolutions will be presented for consideration, including *Guidelines for Clergy, Wardens and Vestries for the use of Alcohol in Church Activities, Renewal of Companion Diocese Relationship with the Dominican Republic, and Empowering the Ministry of Reconciliation*. Details on these resolutions and other Convention activities can be found on the Diocesan website at *Convention Reporter*.

2018 Vestry Leaders

- Senior Warden Doug Chesson
- Junior Warden Don Beach
- Clerk Regina French
- Treasurer Lowell Taylor
- Assistant Treasurer Bill Webb
- Pledge Recorder Bill Webb



Lenten outreach project

Once again, the Church of the Advent will be participating in Blessings in a Backpack as our Lenten outreach during March.

Blessings in a Backpack is a non-profit organization that feeds school children in the United States who currently are fed during the week on the federally funded Free and Reduced Meal Program and are at risk of going hungry on the weekends.

Blessings in a Backpack in Martin County is an ecumenical weekend feeding program for over 100 children in our county schools.

It began over ten years ago by one mother.

With her first child in kindergarten, the mother was looking for a way to help the child's teacher and the class.

She learned from the teacher that some children failed to be fed during the weekend due to either parental neglect or lack of resources.

With the help of her church and friends, the mother began to organize and distribute bags of food for students in the school who needed the food for the weekend.

When the mother and her family moved away, her church agreed to keep the program going, aligning it with the national non-profit program Blessings in a Backpack. Blessings in a

Backpack is a national organization which means there is accountability and all monies not used roll over back into Martin County.

During the school year each Friday 124 students receive a bag of six (6) food items to take home to help sustain them until Monday.

These children have been identified as needing nutritional food.

It takes \$104.00 to provide for one child for one school year.

The following schools are being serviced by this program:

- Edna Andrews Elementary
- E. J. Hayes Elementary
- Williamston Primary
- Riverside Middle
- Jamesville Elementary
- Rodgers Elementary
- South Creek Middle

Churches presently participating in the program agree to purchase, pack and deliver bags for a month at a time. Memorial Baptist serves as the workplace.

For the 2017-2018 school year, the following churches are participating:

- Church of the Advent
- Macedonia Christian Church
- First Christian Church
- First United Methodist Church
- Memorial Baptist Church
- Community Christian
- Christian Chapel of Christ



When making donations at the Mardi Gras Benefit, **write checks** out to **Church of the Advent** with **Blessings in a Backpack** on the **memo line**. Money is also welcomed and appreciated.



Mardi Gras Celebration

Benefits Blessings in A Backpack

Sunday, February 11th

5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Haughton Hall Bed and Breakfast

203 North Haughton Street

Park on Church or Academy Streets

Bring a festive appetizer
and beverage to share.

Family & Friends Welcome!

RSVP or questions

Contact Lucia Peel at 792-0070

or luciapeel@gmail.com

Episcopal 101

Rev. Ellen will offer a series of classes on Sunday afternoons beginning soon called *Episcopal 101*.

It will include an overview of the Episcopal Church, the source and basis for our denominational beliefs, and why we do the things we do the way we do them.



It is meant for those who might be new to the Episcopal Church, those interested in the process for Confirmation or Reception into the Episcopal Church, and for anyone who is just curious and wants to learn more or take a refresher.

Each class will be about an hour and designed to be interesting and fun—and will include playing Episcopal Jeopardy.

If you are interested in signing on, please contact Rev. Ellen so you can be notified when the class begins.

Safeguarding God's Children

By Rev. Ellen Richardson

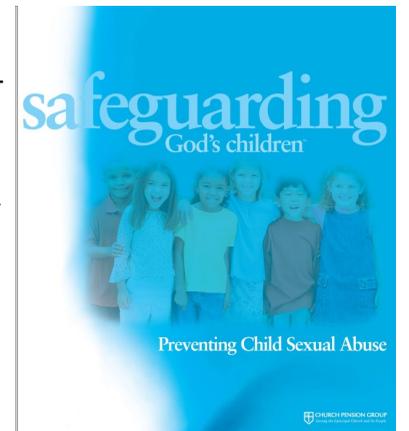
In keeping with the goals of Episcopal Church to make our churches as free as possible of sexual abuse and misconduct, and whenever such abuse or misconduct occurs, to confront it honestly and quickly, the Diocese of East Carolina supports training for its clergy and lay members called *Safeguarding God's Children*.

By Canon Law, this training is *required* for all clergy, all paid church staff and any

adult volunteers 18 and over who teach Sunday School, attend the Nursery, or supervise or provide transportation for youth events, including acolytes, and other youth activities such as Vacation Bible School. It is also highly encouraged for Vestry members and Wardens, and the 2018 Vestry of Church of the Advent has expressed a commitment to participate. Individuals in the above groups will receive an online link to complete the training. Any church member not already listed above who would like to complete the training is encouraged to contact Rev. Ellen so that online access may be secured.

Safeguarding Online has been developed to allow flexible, easy to access training. The cost of the training is covered by the Diocese of East Carolina. It consists of four short, focused online courses. Each course can be completed in

30-45 minutes from any location where a high-speed internet connection is available. Participants can complete the process as time is available and then print a certificate of completion. Confronting and considering the information presented in this training is not easy, but it is important in keeping our church a safe and healthy place for children and their families. If you have any questions, please contact Rev. Ellen Richardson at the church office or at ellenrichardson52@gmail.com.



Dear Parish Family,

We, along with our extended family, would like to thank you for the beautiful service of baptism for our grandson, Webb, and the lovely reception afterward. To all who participated in the service of Holy Baptism, especially Ellen, John, Brandon, Lori, and the choir, we thank you. To everyone who provided the delicious food for the reception, especially Lucia, and those



who attended, we thank you.

As Ellen said in her sermon, "Webb has already been living an adventurous life, carrying his parents and his larger family on a journey showered with challenges and blessings, and the abiding presence of God." To all of our church family, we are humbled and will be forever thankful for your love and support, and especially your prayers for Webb.

With love,
Ginny and Bill

Dear Church of the Advent Family,

We would like to thank everyone for your kindness, generosity and love during our wedding. The brunch was a wonderful celebration and the wedding was perfect. I couldn't have ever pictured getting married anywhere else other than Church of the Advent. There's no place like home.

Thank you.
Rachel and Jesse Gavin

Dear Church Family,

We offer our most sincere thanks and gratitude to you for your many kindnesses shown to our family during our mother's months of declining health and passing. She

looked forward to worshipping with you over the years.

Russ Johnson
Mike Johnson
Sue Johnson Godwin



Take Care

In Jimmy Fallon's first monologue as host of NBC's *The Tonight Show*, he expressed thanks to all past hosts. On an occasion when he might have said, "And now this stage is mine!" or "I'm delighted to be counted among such greats," instead he stated with deep humility, "I just want to do the best I can and take care of this show for a while."

Take care of. That's language not of ownership but of stewardship. That's the language of Genesis 2:15 (NIV) — "The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and *take care of it.*"

What have we been called to "take care of for a little while"? The earth, surely. Perhaps a congregation, a business, a neighbor in need, a volunteer or an employee. A child, who may need less care — or different forms of it — as time goes on. We don't own these people and things. God invites us to be stewards of them, to care for them, to use wisely and value these precious gifts ... and someday, to pass them on to others.

The Newsletter Newsletter



The Prayer List is found in the notebook marked "Prayer Lists" on the usher's table in the narthex of the church. Names may be added at any time by writing them in the notebook or calling the church office after requesting permission of those for whom prayer is requested.. The Prayer List is read aloud weekly at Sunday services. Contact the church office if you wish to have a name added, re-listed, or taken off the list.

Prayer List

James Ford
Nita Fitzgerald
Margaret & Asa Bailey
Paul DelMastro
Mac Allen
David Martin
Howard & Coral Daniels
Bridgette Fleming
Luther Hardin
Frank Ganis
Evelyn Smith
Sara Ostrum
Ricky Roberson
Nan Chesson
Nita Smith
Candy Chambers
Reesie Bradshaw
Warren Gordon
Lindburgh Mitchell

Birthdays

2, Sherry Tanner
3, Christine Chesson
4, Garrett Godard
4, Mike Stancill
16, John Price
23, Paul Sessoms
27, Rex Raiford

The Church of the Advent
Founded 1850

The Rev. Dr. Ellen Richardson,
Priest-in-Charge
Sunday-Thursday, 9:30 a. m.-3:30 p. m.
ellenrichardson52@gmail.com

Doug Chesson, Senior Warden
Don Beach, Junior Warden

Joe Jernigan, Parish Administrator
Monday-Friday, 9:00 a. m. -12 noon
1:00 -2:00 p. m.

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February 2018

Church of the Advent



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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<i>Birthdays in Italics</i>				1	2 The Presentation Of our Lord Jesus Christ In the Temple <i>Sherry Tanner</i>	3 <i>Christine Chesson</i>
4 5 Epiphany 9:45 am, Choir Practice 10:00 am, Sunday School 11:00 am, HE II 12:00, Worship Com. Meeting. 5:30 pm, Vestry Meeting <i>Garrett Godard Mike Stancill</i>	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 Last Epiphany 9:45 am, Choir Practice No Sunday School 11:00 am, HE II 5:00 pm, Mardi Gras Celebration @ Haughton Hall	12	13	14 Valentine's Day Ash Wednesday Service 6:00 pm No Supper	15	16 <i>John Price</i>	17
18 1 Lent 9:45 am, Choir Practice 10:00 am, Sunday School 11:00 am, HE II 6:00 pm, Vestry Meeting	19 President's Day Girl Scouts Parish Hall 6:00 pm	20	21 Lenten Service & Supper 6:00 pm	22	23 Girl Scouts Parish Hall 6:00 pm <i>Paul Sessoms</i>	24
25 2 Lent 9:45 am, Choir Practice No Sunday School 11:00 am, HE II	26	27 <i>Rex Raiford</i>	28 Lenten Service & Supper 6:00 pm			

February 2018

Church of the Advent

Lay Schedule

	4 5 Epiphany 11:00 A.M. Holy Eucharist II	11 Last Epiphany 11:00 A.M. Holy Eucharist II	14 Ash Wednesday 6:00 P.M. Holy Eucharist II	18 1 Lent 11:00 A.M. Holy Eucharist II	25 2 Lent 11:00 A.M. Holy Eucharist II
Acolytes	/ / / / /				
	Chris Cooke	Jean Miller	Khira Jefferson	Khalil Jefferson	Dawson Taylor
	Adison Bosso	Standrick Jefferson		Will Michel	Standrick Jefferson
Lay Worship Leaders	/ / / / /				
<i>Lessons</i>	Valerie Cooke	Regina French	John Price	Jane Jernigan	Ginny Webb
<i>Intercessory Prayers</i>	Al Chesson	Regina French		Lucia Peel	Bill Webb
<i>Eucharistic Minister</i>	Don Beach	Doug Chesson	John Price	Chloe Tuttle	Bill Webb
	/ / / / /				
Altar Guild	Bob Greene	Bob Greene	Bob Greene	Bob Greene	Bob Greene
	Janice Greene	Janice Greene	Janice Greene	Janice Greene	Janice Greene
Ushers	Joe Jernigan	Joe Jernigan	Joe Jernigan	Joe Jernigan	Joe Jernigan
	Johnny Miller	Johnny Miller	Johnny Miller	Johnny Miller	Johnny Miller