

TRINITY TIMES

The Newsletter of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Hampstead, NC
www.holytrinityhampstead.com

February 2021

Observing Lent Without Being Lenten

By Father Ron

It feels like we just finished the season of Christmas and yet the season of Lent is fast approaching with Ash Wednesday only a few weeks away (February 17th)! Recently I was talking to a friend and made the comment that Lent is coming soon! She looked at me with disgust and said, "I feel like I have been living in a perpetual Lent for the last year." I think many of us can relate to her comment. It has been a difficult year in so many ways. For many, Lent is about sin, brokenness, the darkness of the human soul and the list goes on.

I believe Lent is not only about humanity's incompleteness, but as importantly, about humanity's healing and wholeness.

The Book of Common Prayer offers us this invitation: "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." (BCP page 265)

It is important to observe a "holy Lent" in order to be able to embrace more fully the hope of Easter morning. During this season the church, though, IS NOT calling us to be "Lenten" with our words and behavior. What does it mean to be "Lenten?" It means always seeing the glass as half-empty. It is always being negative and never experiencing hope. It is the attitude of "Chicken Little" who always thought the sky was falling down. Being Lenten is always seeing the clouds, but never seeing the rainbow!



Instead, for many of us, this season can provide an opportunity to refocus our time, energy and souls. The season of Lent should not be a barren time of pure wilderness, but rather a creative time to explore, expand and excite our minds, bodies and spirits.

No, Lent is the season in which we take on three disciplines: a spiritual, a physical and a compassionate discipline. Each of these disciplines will be unique to each person, but the **spiritual discipline** can be as simple as reading the Bible or a spiritual book. The **physical discipline** can be spending time writing, planting or even doing spring cleaning. The **compassionate discipline** may be bringing food to the food pantry or volunteering or even calling friends.

As Christians, the season of Lent is a time to know ourselves and our Lord better in order to proclaim the goodness of life and the power of love to our broken world. My hope and prayer for all of us this Lent is that we will observe the life-giving components of the season without being engulfed with a "Lenten" personality.



**ASH
WEDNESDAY**

Each year, **Ash Wednesday (February 17th)** marks the beginning of the season of Lent. Lent is a 40-day season (not counting Sundays) marked by repentance, fasting, reflection, service and ultimately celebration.

This 40-day period represents Christ's time of temptation in the wilderness, where he fasted and where Satan tempted him. Lent asks believers to set aside a time each year marking an intentional season of focus on Christ's life, ministry, sacrifice, and resurrection.

Ash Wednesday is a sacred day in the life of Christians. In order to start the season of Lent in a holy way, we will have two services of **Holy Eucharist and the Imposition of Ashes at 12 noon and 7 pm.**

Stewardship: The Grace of Giving

“do not say this as a command, but I am testing the genuineness of your love against the earnestness of others. For you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.” (2 Corinthians 8:8-9).

Without commands or even arm-twisting, St. Paul encourages, even challenges, the Church in Corinth to demonstrate the sincerity of their faith by their generosity in giving. He does this because giving generously is a gift of the Spirit given to us through the Gospel.

St. Paul wrote: *“Now as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in utmost eagerness, and in our love for you—so we want you to excel also in this generous undertaking.”* (2 Corinthians 8:7). In other words, just as we grow in faith and speech and knowledge of eternal things by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God, so also do we grow in giving from the same Spirit through the same Word.



The problem is that the grace of generosity often grows cold in us. It's not so much that we stop giving, but we

don't put it first. We treat it like all the other bills that must be paid. It becomes a chore, just one more thing to check off a list of things to do. That empties it of its spiritual power and robs us of the joy that Christ and the Scriptures assign to it.

On top of that, since this generosity is linked to faith and knowledge of divine things, a lack of excelling in giving is a sure sign that our faith and knowledge of God are under attack as well.

Thus St. Paul points to the foundation of generosity: the generosity of Christ Himself. Even though He was rich, He became poor so that we who are poor might become rich. Thus, the incarnation, suffering, and death of our Lord on the cross is the reason, source, and driving force for our generosity in giving to the church.

And since Christ who was rich became poor so that we might be rich in His grace—of which generous giving is part—so we also who are rich in His grace can excel in pressing His grace into service toward the gracious work of the church.

Pay attention to what you give to the church so that you may excel at it. And if you find that your heart has grown cold or indifferent toward it, immerse yourself in God's Word. Read it at home. Attend Bible Class. Hear and listen to it preached in the Holy Eucharist Service each Tuesday and Sunday. Be reminded of what Christ has done for you in His incarnation, suffering, and death. For this will strengthen your faith and knowledge. And where that excels, so will the grace of giving excel also.

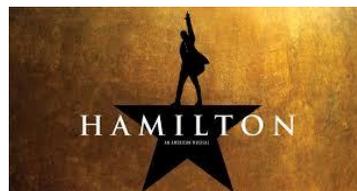
Economy Money Budget Finance Spending

	Month Ended Dec. 31, 2020	Year to Date Dec. 31, 2020	Annual Budget 2020
Pledged Offerings	\$ 7,545.00	\$ 94,610.50	\$118,000.00
Total Income	\$21,290.39*	\$120,521.98*	\$131,660.00
Total Expenses	\$12,321.65	\$128,654.11	\$131,660.00
CASH FLOW	\$ 8,968.74*	(\$ 8,132.13)*	\$ 0.00
* NOTE: Includes Investment Income/(Loss) of:			
	\$ 1,847.39	\$ 6,364.75	
Also includes			
PPP grant of	\$ 10,690.00	\$ 10,690.00	

Adult Formation: Sin and Redemption in the Broadway Musical

Lent is the church season in which we take purposeful time to reflect and examine the brokenness of our lives and the world in which we live. As Christians, it is also a time to focus on the gift of redemption as manifested in the resurrection of Jesus.

During the five Sundays in Lent (**February 21st - March 21st**) we will experience sin and redemption through the music of Broadway. Powerful stories set to music are illustrative of humanity's sinfulness and God's grace.



Some of the musicals we will listen to and discuss include *Hamilton*, *Les Miserables*, *Wicked*, *Jesus Christ*

Superstar, *Carousel*, *Man of La Mancha* and *Rent*. Please join us each Sunday in the Education Room from 9-9:40 am.

News and Notes from Outreach

The Outreach Ministry met January 18 to plan a direction for the year 2021 that will allow our ministry to support and help others. It has been brought to our attention that Trinity Center, located in Pine Knoll Shores, NC, has had a difficult year, as have many entities, due to Covid-19 restrictions.

In March of 2020, 45 employees were furloughed, and the summer of 2020 was the first summer that the Diocese of East Carolina did not have summer camp since the first camp session 90-plus years ago at Camp Leach near Washington, NC. A staff of 10 has been retained and they have maintained the camp and conference center buildings and grounds. However, funds quickly diminished, and the Diocese has financially supported Trinity Center since August.

A summarized and interesting history of Trinity Center takes us back to the late 1940's when Alice Hoffman, who owned the land that today is Pine Knoll Shores, Indian Beach and Salter Path, (between Atlantic Beach and Emerald Isle) spoke with her friend, Episcopal Bishop Thomas



Wright of the possibility of donating some of her property as a camp for young people. Bishop Wright readily agreed and, at the 69th Annual Convention of the Diocese of East Carolina in May of 1949, a resolution was made stating "our grateful acceptance" of this property as a camp site and conference center. Alice Hoffman and her sister did not have children and her niece (who married Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt, Jr. in 1910) was the surviving member of the family.

In 1952 the property was described as approximately 60 acres. Through the years and under excellent management and foresight of many persons involved in the development of the land, Trinity Center has become a beautiful spiritual, educational and retreat facility that is open year-round to all people. The facility is open for reservations for retreats, workshops, wellness meetings, family reunions, training sessions, and business workshops.

The summer camp for youth (rising 3rd-12th graders) has helped campers grow spiritually, physically and emotionally for many years. Mike Morgan was once



a member of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church (along with his wife Helen) and Vestry Senior Warden. He was a volunteer at Trinity Center and later Executive Director. With the Board of

Directors' enthusiastic approval, he set out to create an environmental program for school children (Sound-to-Sea) and to strengthen the Elderhostel program (evolving into a Road Scholar Program for seniors).

As reported in a recent letter from the Chairman of the Board of Directors, Ed Hodges, there are still contracted groups on the reservation books for Trinity Center's services although many have had to cancel. The Board continues to actively seek individuals and small groups to hold safe retreats at the Center. However, they have three substantial projects related to the facilities that need to be completed before the next camp season opens.

Trinity Center seeks our continued support as they struggle to recover and offer the hospitality and Spirit-filled environment loved by so many. **Our Outreach Ministry has chosen to open February Sunday worship collections to collection of monetary donations toward saving the programs of Trinity Center. Sunday, March 7 will be the last day of collection. Checks may be written to "Holy Trinity Episcopal Church" with "Trinity Center" on the memo line.**

Remember that Trinity Center is currently open to individuals and small groups. They welcome visits. Call 1-888-874-6287 or email: trinity@trinityctr.com. More program information can be found at the website: www.trinityctr.com

February Birthdays & Anniversaries



Birthdays:

4 Beth Ronne
7 Caitlin Wiggins
14 Roger Kersey
19 Dave Mahoney

Anniversaries:

25 Carole & Jack Solak

Vestry Retreat Generates Goals

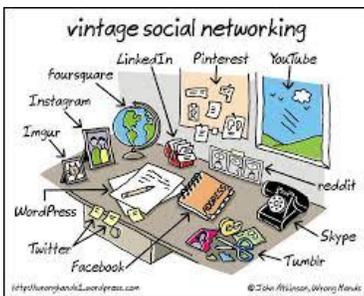
This past Saturday, January 23, the Vestry met at the church for its annual retreat. As you may know, the purpose of these retreats is basically two-fold. The first objective is to have a chance to meet as a group and share our experiences in life, in other words to “get to know each other better.” The second objective is to plan out our goals for the parish for 2021, as well as to allow ourselves to offer some longer-term dreams.

The following is a brief summary:

- Refurbish parking lot with new seal coat, repair any existing cracks, restripe parking spaces and handicap spots.
- Support the Eagle Scout project in refurbishing and updating the playground.

Grow the Parish:

- Recognize that most people in today’s tech savvy world rely on the internet when searching for a



church. Toward that end we need to find a way to update and grow our presence on the World Wide Web, updating and managing our website and Facebook pages.

ARE THERE ANY “TECHIES” OUT THERE THAT CAN COME TO OUR RESCUE?

- Further investigate the idea of being able to donate to the church online through the website.
- Further investigate the idea of setting up a kiosk on site for credit card donations.
- Adult Ed classes revolving around Evangelism: “How do you invite others to church?”
- Adult Ed classes revolving around the liturgy and how music ties into the liturgy.

The History of Holy Trinity Church:

- Generate a written history of Holy Trinity:
 - ✓ What were the beginnings; how did HTEC evolve into the parish of today?
 - ✓ How was the property acquired?
 - ✓ Where was worship conducted before the church was built?
 - ✓ Past Rectors, who were they?
 - ✓ Music in the church – a history of the organ and the organist/choir masters that have played the organ (and the grand piano).

- ✓ Youth programs.
- ✓ Finances.
- ✓ Covid 19: how did we survive through it all?!!
- In conjunction with and in dialog with the Bishop, finalize Fr. Ron’s desire to extend his time as Priest-in-Charge with Holy Trinity beyond next November.
- With Fr. Ron’s help, to expand our ties to the greater ecumenical community in Hampstead as well as the Diocese.

As I stated in my remarks at church, your Vestry is a very strong one. We respect each other’s opinions and ideas and at the same time we have FUN while we work.

Finally, it goes without saying how blessed we are to have Fr. Ron. I thank God for his presence amongst us.

Dave Mahoney, Sr. Warden



Black History Month is an annual celebration of achievements by African Americans and a time for recognizing their central role in U.S. history. Also known as African American History Month, the event grew out of “Negro History Week,” the brainchild of noted historian Carter G. Woodson and other prominent African Americans.

Since 1976, every U.S. president has officially designated the month of February as Black History Month and endorsed a specific theme. The Black History Month 2021 theme, “Black Family: Representation, Identity and Diversity” explores the African diaspora, and the spread of Black families across the United States.

President Gerald Ford officially recognized Black History Month in 1976, calling upon the public to “seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history.” Other countries around the world, including Canada and the United Kingdom, also devote a month to celebrating Black history.

Black History Month is a chance for Americans to learn details of our nation’s history that, unfortunately, are far too often neglected and

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Black History Month *continued*

pushed to the wayside. As the saying goes, black history *is* American history — and it's a varied and rich history.

A wise nation honors and learns from its past. It refuses to let the most important facts about our shared and collective memory disappear into the depths of forgotten history. What happened in the past shapes and informs where we are heading in the future, and it's of paramount importance to set aside a month for learning as much as we can about black history.

Anybody who pays even a little attention to American social affairs and politics knows that we still have much work to do in order for this nation to truly live out its creed that everybody is "created equal." The lessons of Black History Month provide us with a way forward by examining our past.

5 Facts About Black American History

1. **Rosa Parks wasn't the first!** Claudette Colvin, a 15-year-old girl, refused to move to the back of a bus nine months before Parks did.
2. **MLK improvised his most famous speech.** Although he had prepared notes, Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have A Dream" speech was mostly spontaneous.
3. **Esther came before Betty Boop.** The iconic cartoon character Betty Boop was modeled after a Harlem jazz singer named Esther Jones.
4. **There were black senators in the 19th century.** The first black U.S. senator was Hiram Revels, who took office in 1870.
5. **Satchel Paige was baseball's first black hall-of-famer.** Pitcher Satchel Paige was the first black player to be inducted into the Major League Baseball Hall of Fame.

THANK YOU!

I am sending out a big "THANK YOU" to Fr. Ron Abrams, the 2020 Vestry of Holy Trinity and other special ones for their foresight to use my parents' furniture to establish a warm and inviting space within our church walls for gatherings. And thank you for honoring them by naming that space the Kay and Bud Johnson Parlor. My parents would have felt so honored that their friends at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, a very special place indeed to them both, were using the Parlor space for multiple events in comfort. My heart is warmed seeing the Parlor and its familiar furnishings re-purposed by our Holy Trinity friends.

Gratefully, Christie J. Hawkins

Resolution Passed

At its January 17, 2021 meeting the Vestry passed the following Resolution:

RESOLUTION THANKING OUR PRIEST-IN-CHARGE, THE REVEREND RON ABRAMS, FOR HIS LEADERSHIP IN THE COVID-19 CRISIS

WHEREAS, the Rev. Abrams has, for his leadership, devotion, and efforts to keep the congregation of our parish during the current pandemic intact and in service together as a body, and

WHEREAS, by his leadership we have been able to maintain Sunday services, inspire our membership to continue in support of the parish, and keep the ministries of the parish working and active,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Vestry of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church thanks and honors Father Abrams.

Resolution Passed
January 17, 2021

Souper Bowl of Caring

Our annual **Souper Bowl of Caring** collection will be on **February 7th** to support the 4C's Food Pantry in Hampstead and our neighbors who are in need. Vestry members will be at the back doors after church with soup pots to take your donations. Make checks out to Holy Trinity with "Souper Bowl" on the memo line.



Souper Bowl of Caring is a youth-inspired movement working across the nation to tackle hunger in their local communities. Mobilizing grassroots resources

including churches, schools, civic groups and caring individuals, the Souper Bowl of Caring movement has created over \$160 million worth of support that stays completely local.

In 2020, thousands of groups collected over **\$10.6 million** in dollars and food donations for hunger-relief charities across the country. Over **\$163 million** has been collected since Souper Bowl of Caring began in 1990.

Thanks for your generosity to our local food ministry, the 4C's Food Pantry!



Each month, we will highlight one of the wild and crazy holidays our nation (and the world) celebrates...just for the fun of it!



February's Wacky Holiday: February 1 Bubble Gum Day

Today is *Bubble Gum Day*. On this day, kids bring 50 cents to school, and donate it to a good cause. In exchange, they can chew bubble gum in school on this day. The school selects, in advance, what cause the donations will go to.

Ruth Spiro, the creator, wanted to have a day where kids can simply participate in donating, without constantly selling things. She says that since its creation, *Bubble Gum Day* has become a sweet success!

Ruth Spiro is a writer, a children's book author, and a bubble gum fan. She created this day in 2006 originally for schools, but libraries, clubs and community groups can and do participate. Even businesses are encouraged to hold a *Bubble Gum Day* fundraising event.

The date of this event was established on the first Friday of February, rather than a set date. This is so it will always occur on a school day.

February 21: ER&D Sunday!

Episcopal Relief & Development invites churches and supporters to observe **Episcopal Relief & Development Sunday** this year on **Sunday, February 21st**. Lent was officially designated at the 2009 General Convention of The Episcopal Church as a time for dioceses, congregations and individuals to remember and support the important work of ER&D, the international humanitarian agency of the Episcopal Church. ER&D facilitates healthier, more fulfilling lives in communities struggling with hunger, poverty, disaster and disease around the world.

Salt

Jesus calls us "the salt of the earth." But salt has no effect if it never leaves the salt shaker. It must be sprinkled over the food in order to influence its taste. Likewise we must be in the world – making a difference, striving for justice, caring for those who are too easily left behind – if we hope to be the "salt of the earth."

-Br. David Vryhof, SSJE

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Holy Trinity is a Christ-centered community. We are dedicated to reaching and helping people seeking to know God and to serve God.