



St. Barnabas Episcopal Church
Greensboro, North Carolina
The Reverend Randall J. Keeney, Vicar
The Reverend Leslie Bland, Deacon

February 16, 2017

Members and Friends
St. Barnabas' Church

Dear Friends in Christ,

Our Lenten observance begins on Ash Wednesday, March 1, 2017. To begin, I think it is best for me to share the Lenten admonition from the Book of Common Prayer.

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 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 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.

*No worries. No one at St. Barnabas' is guilty of notorious sins.

At St. Barnabas', we will do our best to help you in your observance. Above all, remember that Lent is a time of personal growth in Christian hope and practice. As you consider your Lenten practices, please focus on quality not quantity. And, don't over-do. The last thing we want is to make Lent a time of misery and guilt. There is quite enough of that.

Please allow me to suggest a few simple practices to choose from:

Intention daily prayer
Opportunities to serve others
Exercise
Periods of healthy fasting
Reading

Adoption of healthy life choices
Private / Quiet Time
Praying the Daily Office
*Morning or Evening Prayer
Walks

The point is that we do something or some things that restore our spiritual and physical health and to embrace our humanity with joy and hope. We are the temples of God. Lent is a opportunity to clean the temple up a bit and prepare it so that we can welcome the Risen Christ and God's children into it.

At St. Barnabas', we have set some times aside for you to come and support one another along this journey. First and foremost, **Sunday mornings** will focus on our Lenten observance. We will use the **Rite One** Eucharistic Liturgy as a reminder of our connection to those who have gone before us and to embrace God's saving work throughout our history. In our **Sunday Conversations** at 9:30am, we will use Canon Graham's graphic novel on the Prophet Amos.

On **Ash Wednesday** (March 1), the Imposition of Ashes is available at 8:00am and 12:15pm at St. Barnabas and at The Church of the Redeemer at 7:00pm. Each **Wednesday** following, we will offer Meditations at 6:00pm followed by simple meals of soup, bread, and fruit.

On March 17 (St. Patrick's Day), we will have a **Respite Dinner** from 6:00 pm until 8:00 pm. You'll have a time to come together, enjoy one another's company with a special dispensation to violate practically all of your disciplines for a couple of hours.

As always, we will observe all liturgies of **Holy Week** (April 9 - April 16). Look for specific times in our March Newsletter.

Through this Lenten season, please do keep one another in your prayers. Also, pray for St. Barnabas, your Vicar and your Deacon, our Diocese as we prepare to welcome a new Bishop, and our Nation as we struggle for justice and peace. Do remember that you are in my prayers daily. As always, if you need any, please call or Email me personally. (336-909-0701 / keene.randall@gmail.com) Know that I remain...

Yours in Christ,

Randall J. Keeney
Vicar