

Rector's Lenten Letter, 2020

Dear Friends in Christ,

Shrove Tuesday, this year on February 25, is a day when many Christian traditions including Anglicans recognize this final day before the start of Lent. The name "Shrove" is taken from the word "shriven" which means to be "absolved."

While each Sunday when we sincerely repent turning once more to God, we are "absolved" of those things that have kept us from turning to God. We do so in a more deeply, intentional way over the course forty days.

On **Shrove Tuesday** when we eat scrumptious pancakes and sausages, we do so in a celebratory, fun way as we remember there are things that God asks us to set aside in our lives so that we may more intentionally spend time with God. Lent helps us to do this as individual members of Christ's Body, and as a community that together are his Body engaged with him in God's kingdom work here and now.

Then, on the next day, **Ash Wednesday**, Christians (again from many Christian traditions including Anglicans), are called to begin our journey to Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter with the sign of ashes. We come face-to-face with life's uncertainty and promise to turn to God during the Lenten season through self-examination, penitence, prayer, fasting and the giving of offerings of our time, talent and finances. We also commit ourselves to reading and meditating on the word of God alone and together.

This **Lent** I encourage you to take on these practices in an effort to grow in your relationship with God, through your faith in Jesus Christ, emboldened by the movement of the Holy Spirit that is yours through your baptism. There are many opportunities to do so here. When you do so, you will enjoy the fellowship of this, our beloved church and be a blessing to the work and life that God calls each of us to.

In Christ,

Douglas+

P.S. This year we get a bonus opportunity to gather and celebrate all that God is doing through us here at St. John the Baptist! It is traditional in the Anglican Church that there be a celebration when a new rector begins. That celebration will take place in the form of worship together. We will give thanks for God's call as we minister together. We will commit to a Covenant of Ministry that outlines the work that God calls us to.

All of this will take place at St. John's on **Friday, March 27 at 7:00 PM**. This is an important day in the life of our church. Please make every effort to attend. And, help us to get the word out. Perhaps you know of someone you've not seen in church for a while. Please let them know what God is up to at St. John's and invite them to join us for this important event.