



Lent, Easter & Pentecost



Christ & St. Luke's
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

At-a-Glance Calendar

February 2026

Please note the '*' means that incense will be used at these services, and please see page 8 for more detail on the musical concerts mentioned.

Tuesday, February 17 — Shrove Tuesday pancake supper in the church at 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday, February 18 — Ash Wednesday with services at 12:00 p.m., 5:00 p.m. (family service) and 7:00 p.m.*

Thursday, February 26 through to Thursday, March 26, Lenten Book Study with Second Calvary Baptist Church (see p. 7 for more details).

February 27, 12:00 p.m. — Midday Music with John Irving.

March 2026

Sunday, March 1. 12:00 p.m.. — Newcomers' brunch.

Sunday, March 1. 4:00 p.m. — "The British Are Coming" concert featuring music from the United Kingdom.

Sunday, March 8 — The Third Sunday in Lent — Guest preacher Leyla King will also lead the Sunday forum at 9:15 a.m.

Sunday, March 8-15 — Norfolk Winter Shelter @ Freemason Street Baptist.

Friday, March 20 — Sunday, March 22 — Youth Retreat at Camp Chanco.

Friday, March 27, 7:00 p.m. — Botetourt Chamber Singers concert.

Saturday, March 28, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. — Parish Work Day.

Holy Week Service Schedule

Palm Sunday, March 29

- 8:00 a.m. & 10:15 a.m. — The Liturgy of the Palms and the Reading of the Passion.
- 5:30 p.m. — A Service of Tenebrae.

Monday March 30, Tuesday March 31, Wednesday April 1

- 5:30 p.m. — Holy Eucharist in the Chapel.

Maundy Thursday, April 2

- 5:00 p.m. — Family Service for Maundy Thursday.
- 7:00 p.m. — Solemn Liturgy, including foot washing and the stripping of the altar.

Good Friday, April 3

- 11:00 a.m. — Stations of the Cross in Stockley Gardens.
- 12:00 p.m. — Solemn Liturgy, including the chanting of the Passion and the veneration of the Cross.
- 4:00 p.m. — Stations of the Cross for families.

Holy Saturday, April 4

- 10:00 a.m. — Brief Liturgy for Holy Saturday.
- 4:00 p.m. — Family Easter Vigil with Baptisms.
- 5:00 p.m. — Easter Egg Hunt (Lychgate Garden).
- 7:00 p.m.* — The Great Vigil of Easter.

Easter Sunday, April 5

- 9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.* — Festive Eucharist with Brass.

April 2026

Sunday, April 12, 9:15 a.m. through to Sunday, May 17 — Adult formation, "Building A Rule of Life" begins, for six weeks (see p. 14 for more)

Friday, April 24, 12:00 p.m. — Midday Music with ODU's early music ensemble concert.

May 2026

Sunday, May 10, 4:00 p.m. — Virginia Arts Festival Organ Recital with James Keeley.

Thursday, May 14, 7:00 p.m. — Ascension Day Hymn Festival at St. Paul's Church, Norfolk.

Saturday & Sunday, May 16 & 17 — Stockley Gardens Arts Festival.

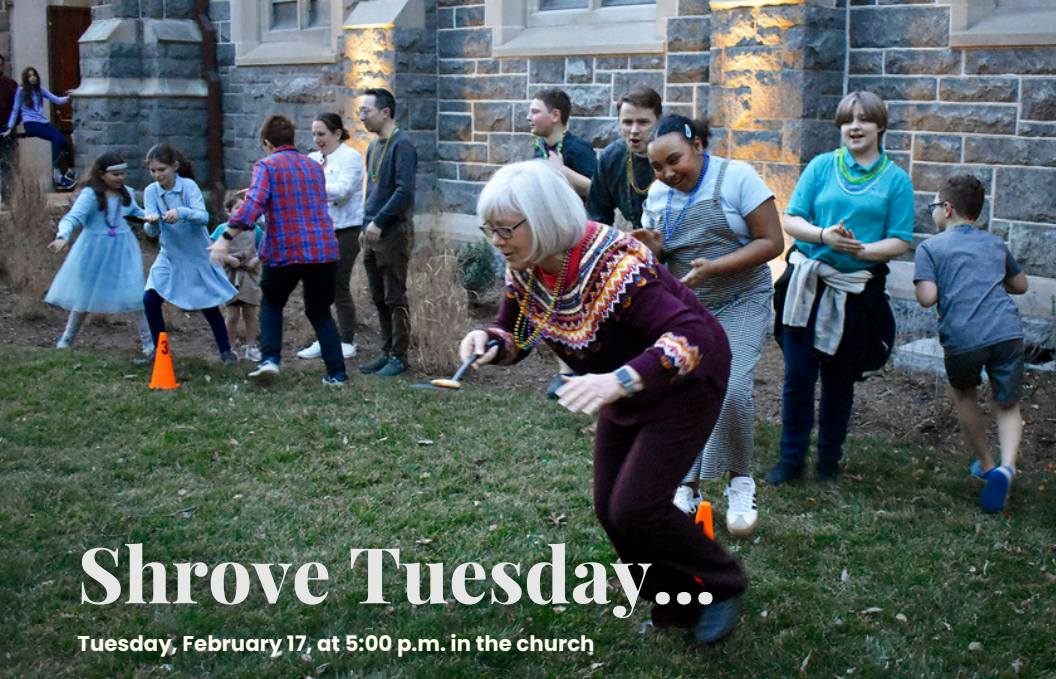
Friday, May 22, 12:00 p.m. — Midday Music with the New Commonwealth Quartet.

Sunday, May 24, 10:15 a.m. — The Feast of Pentecost with "Music Sunday," baptisms & celebrations of the church's birthday

Sunday, May 24. 3:00 p.m. — Memorial Day Service at West Point Cemetery

June 2026

Wednesday, June 3, 6:00 p.m. — Diocesan Pride Eucharist



Shrove Tuesday...

Tuesday, February 17, at 5:00 p.m. in the church

The Pancake Supper is that wonderful moment where our community, from the youngest to the wisest, gathers to enjoy pancakes and have one last "Alleluia" before we begin our preparations for Jesus's journey to the cross. It includes Mardi Gras decor, beads, and of course, our famous pancake races, plus the burning of the palms for Ash Wednesday the following day. It's a fantastic time for fellowship and a beautiful way to mark the beginning of Lent.



...and Ash Wednesday

**Wednesday, February 18 at 12:00 p.m., 5:00 p.m. (family service)
and 7:00 p.m. (service with incense)**

Lenten Reflection



Fr. Noah Van Niel

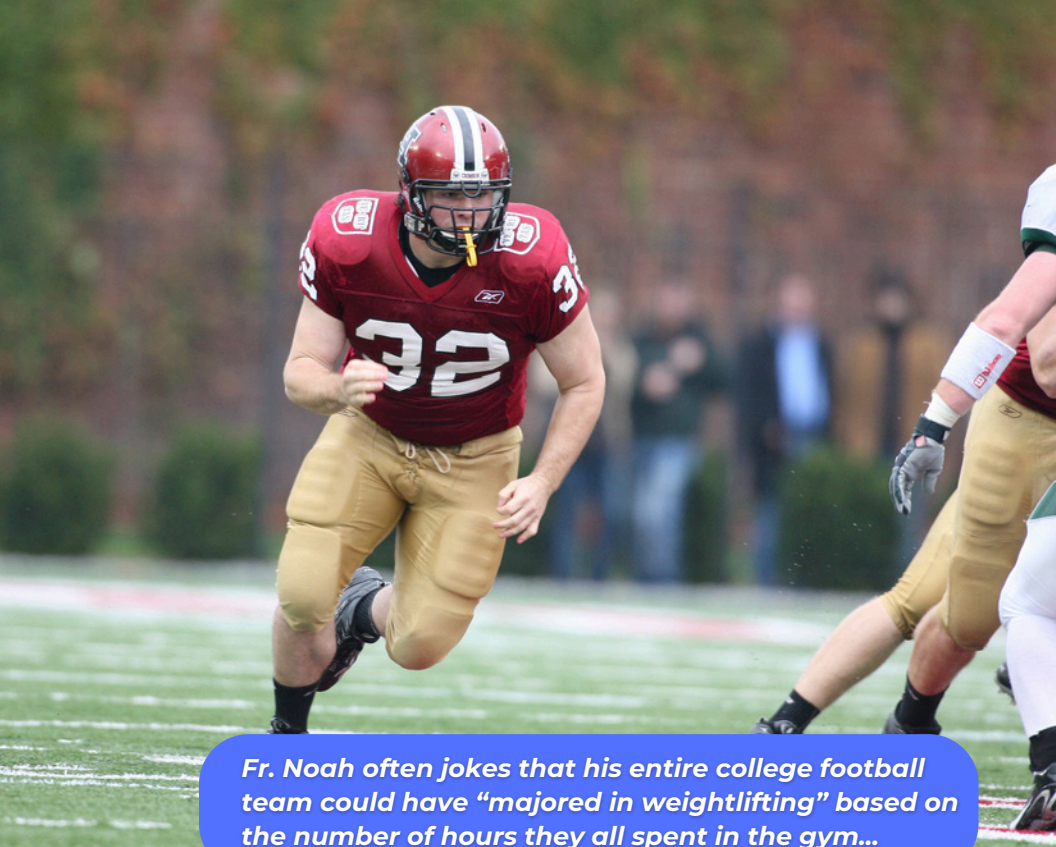
I've always been a pretty simple gym guy. Whether it was lifting weights in our grungy high school weight room with no AC, or all the hours spent training in college with the football team, all I need is a bench, a rack, some dumbbells and I'm good. No machines, no classes, no elaborate ambience. I don't trust gyms that are too fancy; where everything is so clean you feel self-conscious about sweating.

‘Resistance training’ is a helpful term, in the spiritual sense, particularly when we think about the season of Lent...

I don't lift as much as I used to, but I've found it interesting to see weightlifting move more into the mainstream as a form of exercise — not just for jocks and bodybuilders but for everyone. However, I have noticed that in order to escape those associations and to appeal to a broader audience, it's now often referred to by the more palatable term, “resistance training.”

I find that a silly term when applied to the weight room. But I find it's much more helpful in the spiritual sense, particularly when we think about the season of Lent.

Lent is not many people's favorite season in the church year. With its focus on sin and repentance and acts of fasting and self-denial it can feel like a downer. I mean, we take away the exuberant hymns, the alleluias, even the



Fr. Noah often jokes that his entire college football team could have “majored in weightlifting” based on the number of hours they all spent in the gym...

But this year, rather than see Lent as a period to endure on your way to the happier services of Easter, I would urge you to consider it as a time for some spiritual resistance training. By establishing some practices or disciplines to push against, that you may not always enjoy, but which promise to lead to growth. Growth is the whole idea of Lent. It's about committing to a spiritual routine of resisting things which are distracting us, or forcing ourselves to take time to focus on those exercises which bring us closer to God and get us stronger in our faith.

Lent is your chance to hit the weights — spiritually speaking. We're going to have a lot of chances to do that together in church over this season, and we'll be sharing some ways you can do that at home. However you take on the challenge, I hope you will embrace these coming weeks as a chance to grow. For we can all stand to get stronger in those good things like faith, hope, and love. And this is the best season to do it.

See you in the gym — I mean church!



An Introduction to Holy Week



Palm Sunday

Sunday, Mar 29

Palm Sunday begins with the Liturgy of the Palms: where branches are blessed and distributed. The service commemorates Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, where crowds greeted him with palm branches. This year we are pleased to present a service of Tenebrae on the afternoon of Palm Sunday. The service of "darkness" or "shadows" involves the gradual extinguishing of candles until there is no more light in the church.

- **8:00 a.m. & 10:15 a.m.** — The Liturgy of the Palms and the Reading of the Passion
- **5:30 p.m.** — A Service of Tenebrae



Holy Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday

Monday March 30, Tuesday March 31, Wednesday April 1

- **5:30 p.m.** — Holy Eucharist in the Chapel



Maundy Thursday

Thursday, April 2

Maundy Thursday takes its name from the Latin "mandatum," or commandment, given by Jesus to his disciples at the Last Supper: "love one another," before the descent into the darkness of Good Friday.

- **5:00 p.m.** — Family Service for Maundy Thursday
- **7:00 p.m.** — Solemn Liturgy, including foot washing and the stripping of the altar



Good Friday

Friday, April 3

Good Friday is the most solemn day of the Christian year, a time to dwell in the sorrow of Christ's final hours. We observe this day with a commitment to stay at the foot of the cross. We also hold the Solemn Liturgy of Good Friday in the church, featuring the chanting of the passion narrative and the chance to venerate the cross. It concludes with solemn collects and administration of communion hosts from the reserve sacrament, symbolizing the finality of Jesus' death.

- **11:00 a.m.** — Stations of the Cross in Stockley Gardens
- **12:00 p.m.** — Solemn Liturgy, including the chanting of the Passion and the veneration of the Cross
- **4:00 p.m.** — Stations of the Cross for families

Holy Saturday

Saturday, April 4

Holy Saturday begins with emptiness after Jesus is laid in the tomb. A brief, quiet Liturgy for Holy Saturday is held in the Lychgate Garden. By the evening, the focus shifts to the emptiness of the tomb with the Great Vigil of Easter, one of the Church's most ancient liturgies. This service begins in darkness, where a new fire is kindled — a sign of God's active hope. Through sacred stories and the rite of baptism, the service moves from despair to life, culminating in a joyous burst of light and the first shouts of "Alleluia!" Two vigils are offered: a Family service at 4 p.m. followed by an Easter egg hunt for kids 11 and under, and a traditional service at 7 p.m. in the Church, including incense. The day that begins in death ends with the fullness of Resurrection joy!

- **10:00 a.m.** — Liturgy for Holy Saturday
- **4:00 p.m.** — Family Easter Vigil with Baptisms
- **5:00 p.m.** — Easter Egg Hunt (Lychgate Garden)
- **7:00 p.m.** — The Great Vigil of Easter (with incense)



Easter Day

Sunday, April 5

The joys of Easter morning are well earned. After the intensity of the last few days, the sight of the stone rolled away and the risen Christ triumphant from the tomb banishes our fears, affirming that light, life, and love have the final word! Join the Christ & St. Luke's community to have your faith nourished and hope restored. Seating is available 45 minutes before each service and extra parking is available at Ohel Sholom Temple.

9:00 a.m. — Festal Eucharist with Brass

11:00 a.m. — Festal Eucharist with Brass (with incense)

Lenten Adult Formation:

Make No Peace With Oppression

Almighty God, who created us in your own image: Grant us grace fearlessly to contend against evil and to make no peace with oppression...

—Collect for Social Justice, Book of Common Prayer, p. 260

On the five Sundays of Lent (February 22, March 1, March 8, March 15, March 22 from 9:15 a.m. — 10 a.m.)

Throughout the Bible, “oppression” is one of the main evils against which people of faith must contend. They must resist oppressing others and they must work to liberate those who are oppressed. But what exactly is oppression? Who gets to define it? What does it really feel like to be oppressed? What does it do to people? How do we help? Join us this Lent as we use our Sunday Adult Formation time to explore this topic. We will hear from clergy and special guests speaking about their own understanding and experience of oppression and broaden our engagement with this essential aspect of our faith.

Special Guest: The Reverend Canon Leyla King

On March 8th, we have the honor of welcoming The Rev. Can. Leyla King to Christ & St. Luke's. Mother Leyla currently serves as the Canon for Mission in Small Congregations in the Diocese of West Texas, and is the author of *“Daughters of Palestine,”* her memoir about growing up in a Palestinian-American family and the impact it had on her life and ministry. Mother Leyla will be our guest preacher at both services that day as well as our presenter during our Adult Formation series *“Make no Peace with Oppression.”* Join us for a firsthand account of the generational impact oppression can have on a family and a people, and about the resiliency it takes to overcome it.



The Rev. Can. Leyla King

Lenten Book Study: *Jesus and the Disinherited* by Howard Thurman

A joint Lenten Book Study with Second Calvary Baptist Church



In one of the most influential theological books of the 20th century, pastor, educator, and civil rights leader Howard Thurman explores the relationship between “the religion of Jesus” and the African-American experience. Thurman’s work seeks to reach beyond anger and distrust toward a vision of unity and understanding by celebrating and exploring the resonances between those stories which have led to powerful witness to the liberating power of love in the Christian faith and American civic life.

Join us for a five-part series this Lent as we partner with Second Calvary Baptist Church to discuss Thurman’s thoughts and share our own reflections and stories, seeking to find our own way past anger and distrust, to a place of unity.

Discussions will be jointly led by The Rev. Dr. Geoffrey Guns, Senior Pastor of Second Calvary Baptist Church and The Rev. Noah Van Niel, Rector of Christ and St. Luke’s Episcopal Church.

Discussions will take place on Thursday evenings from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

**The first three sessions will take place at Second Calvary Baptist Church,
2940 Corprew Ave, Norfolk, VA 23504:**

February 26 – Preface and Chapter I: “Jesus — An Interpretation”

March 5 – Chapter II: “Fear”

March 12 – Chapter III: “Deception”

The final two sessions will take place at Christ & St. Luke’s:

March 19 – Chapter IV: “Hate”

March 26 – Chapter V: “Love” and Epilogue

Please note that this program will replace the “Rector’s Book Study” in March.

Plainsong: The Music of Holy Week



Kevin Kwan
Director of Music

As we approach Holy Week and Easter, we have an opportunity to reflect on the distinct acts and unique pieces that form the liturgies of these solemn days. The music associated with each service has become the glue that binds these days together. Over the centuries, these holy texts have been most frequently sung to plainsong, or Gregorian chant. While the glitz and glamor of Easter brass and choirs tend to be the most memorable, my favorite parts of the week are the simpler chant-based music.

This year we are pleased to present a service of Tenebrae on the afternoon of Palm Sunday. This service of “darkness” or “shadows” is an ancient service in which candles are gradually extinguished, until there is no more light in the church. The liturgy is largely based on the Psalms, which will be sung throughout the service to plainsong.

Later in the week, on Maundy Thursday, we have another opportunity to hear plainsong during the ceremony of footwashing. The *Mandatum*, or antiphons for the washing of the feet, are based on Jesus’ words to his disciples to “love one another as I have loved you.” The service ends with the Stripping of the Altar, in which Psalm 22 is sung to plainsong.

Lent, Easter & Pentecost Music Events

Friday, February 27,
12:00 p.m. **Midday music
concert — John Irving
and the New
Commonwealth Quartet**

Sunday, March 1, 4:00 p.m.
The British Are Coming!
The Allen Shaffer concert
featuring music from the
United Kingdom.

Friday, March 27, 7:00 p.m.
**W&M Botetourt Chamber
Singers**

Friday, April 24, 12:00 p.m.
**Midday music concert —
ODU Collegium**

Sunday, May 10, 4:00 p.m.
**James Kealey, Virginia
Arts Festival Organ
Recital (Mother’s Day)**

Thursday, May 14, 7:00 p.m.
**Ascension Hymn Festival
at St. Paul’s Church**

Friday, May 22, 12:00 p.m.
**Midday music concert —
New Commonwealth
Quartet**

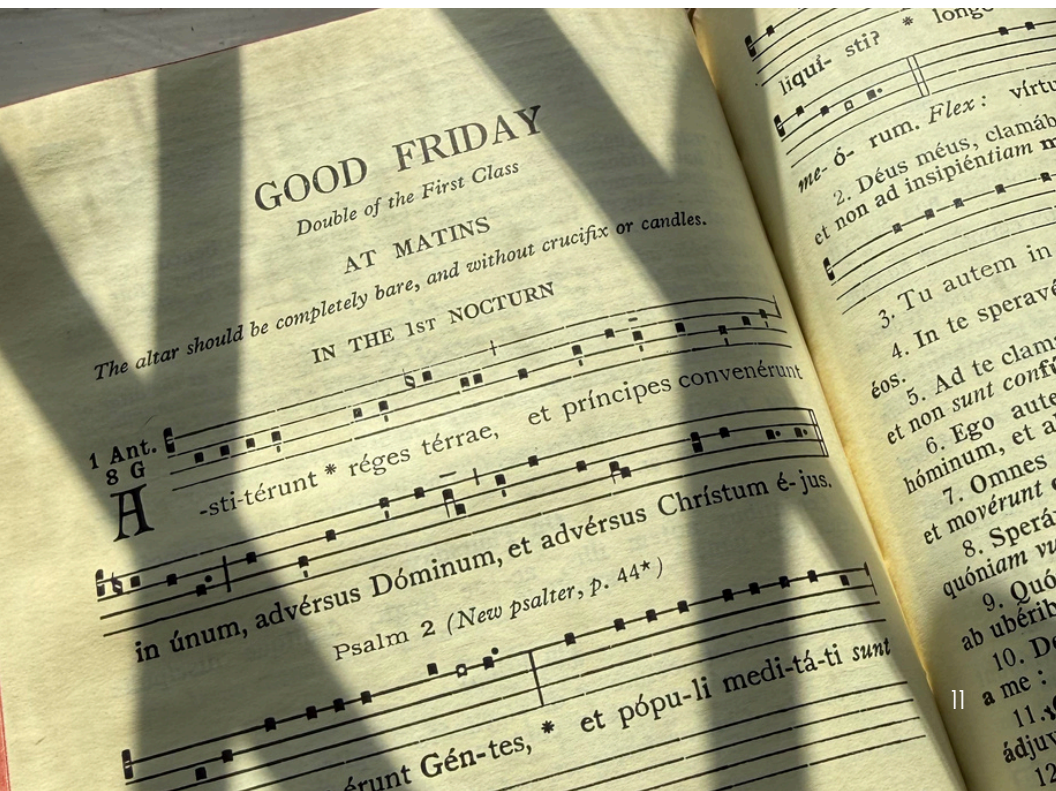
Sunday, May 24, 10:15 a.m.
Pentecost Music Sunday

On Good Friday, the retelling of the Passion story (Jesus' trial, crucifixion, and burial) will be sung to plainsong by three cantors. This method of singing rather than speaking, elevates the text and brings a solemnity to the experience.

And finally, at the Great Vigil of Easter, the culmination of a full week of holy days, we hear the great plainsong hymn of the church, the *Exsultet*, the proclamation celebrating the Resurrection and tying together salvation history with themes of light, redemption, and God's love.

Of course, none of this is new. The church has sung the lectionary for centuries. Why? One reason is practical. Churches did not have microphones, and singing projects texts in spaces and crowds that would otherwise have swallowed it up. But beyond pragmatics, singing plainsong slows things down and, through the inflection of tone, can interpret the text for the hearer. Tonal cues can reinforce textual change, and the combination of words and music can provide additional opportunities for the listener to reflect on what they hear.

I look forward to our Holy Week liturgies: singing and hearing (through plainsong) what the church has to say.



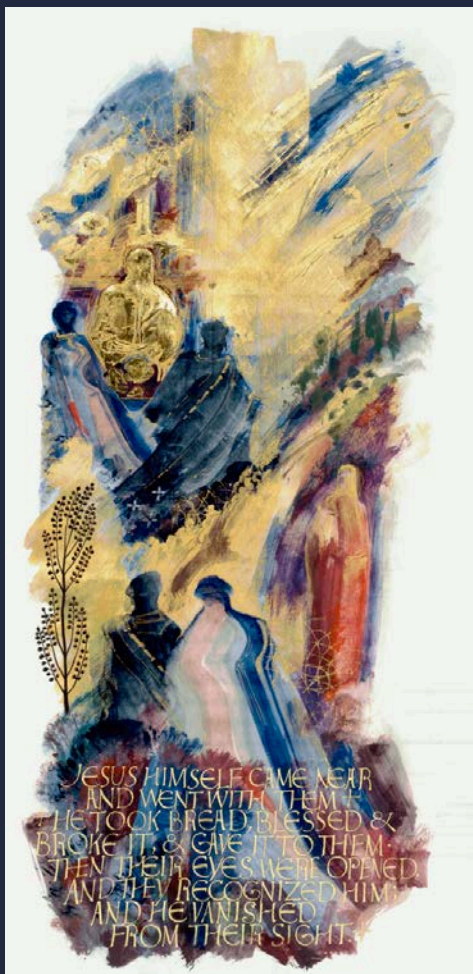
An Easter Reflection



Fr. Jared Grant

One of the resurrection encounters we will hear this Easter is the story of the disciples meeting Jesus on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-49). It's a story emblematic of how the disciples react to the resurrection, and how their grief and distress blind them to the resurrected Christ walking among them. It's a story that reminds us that the turmoil, grief, and distress caused by the world as it is have the power to obscure the poignancy of Christ's resurrection.

Frederick Buechner in his book, *The Magnificent Defeat*, asks a question I often overlook: why are the disciples traveling to Emmaus in the first place? Buechner's answer places us in the middle of the disciples' despair. They travel to Emmaus not for any particular reason, but mainly to get away from the tragedy of their savior's death. Buechner describes Emmaus as "whatever we do or wherever we go to make ourselves forget that the world holds nothing sacred; that even the wisest and bravest and loveliest decay and die; that even the noblest ideas that men have had - ideas about love and freedom and justice—have always in time been twisted out of shape by selfish men for selfish ends."



Road to Emmaus, Sally Mae Joseph, Copyright 2002, The Saint John's Bible

Haven't we all found our own version of Emmaus in times of despair and grief? Haven't we all found our own escape? Buechner goes on to say that while we can escape certain things for a while, what we cannot escape is life itself. "We cannot escape getting hungry, and we cannot escape eating," he writes. To distill Easter down to its most reductionist point is to say that life is stronger than death. Jesus' conquering of death shows us that life is where Jesus is to be found. Which is an interesting point, because Jesus only reveals himself in the Emmaus story when the disciples turn from the urgency of their grief to answering basic questions that move their lives forward: What are we to eat? Where are we to stay? What are we to do? Part of the joy of Easter revealed by the Emmaus story is that Christ is found in the work of life. Christ is found in acknowledging the despair around us, and, rather than fleeing from it, asking how we move forward.



As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.' So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him.

Luke 24: 28-31

That is our task this Easter season: to move forward. To not let the world's despair overwhelm us. To not let our escapes blind us from our call to make the ideas of love, freedom, and justice a palpable reality for all. As we answer the questions such a task is likely to ask of us, we can trust that the resurrected Christ will be with us to guide us in his ways of peace.

Formation: Building a Rule of Life



“We have therefore to establish a school of the Lord’s service, in the institution of which we hope we are going to establish nothing harsh, nothing burdensome.”

—Prologue to the Rule of St. Benedict

Sunday, April 12 until Sunday, May 17 from 9:15 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Around 530 AD, St. Benedict of Nursia, the founder of the Benedictine monastic tradition, wrote a set of rules for the monks in his care. The words above are from the prologue to that rule, which spans many chapters and lays out how a monk is meant to live. For nearly 1,500 years now, many have followed St. Benedict’s rule to help give structure and clarity to their lives. But, St. Benedict’s rule is only one of many such Rules of Life in the Christian tradition.

The idea behind any Rule of Life is to help the follower set a way of life that allows them to better encounter God and follow Jesus. While a Rule of Life may be deeply rooted in the monastic tradition, it is not a concept solely meant for those who have taken monastic vows. Whether we are aware of them or not, we all have rules that govern our lives and the ways we act.

In developing a Rule of Life, we give much needed intentionality to discerning what rules, factors, and forces guide our days. Ensuring that Christ is at the center of those influences is a task worthy of any Christian.

This Eastertide, we will spend some time studying Rules of Life from various monastic and lay traditions with the hope of creating our own individual Rules of Life that allows us to be more intentional followers of Jesus Christ. **Led by the clergy, this class will take place over six weeks during the 9:15 a.m. Adult Forum.**



Don't Miss The Easter Egg Hunt!

**After the 4 p.m. family service on Holy
Saturday, April 4**



Pentecost Music

Sunday, May 24, 10:15am

This year, we will celebrate the feast of Pentecost with combined choirs and brass in what we are calling "Music Sunday." We are blessed with many talented musicians in our church and community, and we will commemorate the birthday of the Church with a musical feast, including Gerre Hancock's anthem *Listen Sweet Dove*.



Christ & St. Luke's
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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