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PASTORAL LETTER – MARCH 2022

Dear Friend,

Lent is here.

It is the time of the church's liturgical calendar when we, Christians, observe the 40 days between the mortality of Ash Wednesday and the victory of Easter Sunday. Also, Lent is a time when we study the implications of Jesus' journey in the wilderness, where he spent 40 days fasting and battling temptation. It was a significant event in the life of our Lord for a couple of reasons.

First, Jesus was taken by the Spirit to enter an intense period of vocational discernment in the wilderness. This detail in the story establishes that Jesus did not volunteer to go to the wilderness. Instead, he was taken there, and he was receptive to where God wanted him to be. This story is significant because all of us are thrust into a spiritual wilderness. Just like Jesus was changed by the wilderness, we can be transformed by the unexpected spaces that the Spirit takes us to be. Most of us are comfortable with our station in life. Lent challenges us to move beyond personal expectations and societal conventions. In this sense, Lent invites us to confront change.

Second, while in the wilderness, Jesus was locked into a fierce cosmic battle. He was tempted, but he overcame. Lent offers us a lesson about perseverance against the devil's blandishments and the devil's persistence to derail us from doing the things that God would have us do.

Lent is an opportune time to remember that we all must take a route to Easter and that we all face temptations on our way there. Just like Jesus was tempted, so will we be. None of us escape the shadow of the cross.

I look forward to growing with you in Christ during Lent. Below are some opportunities for us to grow in our knowledge of divine wisdom, and to grow in faith through corporate worship.

~ Consider attending our church's weekly **Adult Bible Study program** led by Dr. Jane Ferguson. It is currently being offered through Zoom. More information is available on the website and in this newsletter.

~ Consider attending our **Ash Wednesday service** on March 2nd at 7 p.m. in Cordes Hall. At this service, we will explore how we can come in touch with our humanity and our need for a savior. Also, we will administer the ashes.

~ Consider attending our **Agape Meal** on Thursday, April 14th at 7 p.m. in Cordes Hall. This is a service where we commemorate Jesus' washing of his apostles' feet as the highest expression of servant leadership and of love. Through music, breaking bread, prayers, and song, we hope to enter into this holy weekend through the lens of Christ's sacrificial love.

~ Consider attending our **Good Friday service** on Friday, April 15th at 7 p.m. in the sanctuary. We will share a slideshow of classical and modern paintings interwoven with biblical passages to depict Jesus' ministry and path to Golgotha, enriched by the wonderful reading of our fellow worshippers.

I look forward to growing with you in Christ!

Pastor Luis
