

Ebenezer Baptist Church

Lenten Season Notes

Theme: "Still We Rise"-Luke 24:5

In a time and a place where evil is promoted, integrity is lacking, morality is collapsing, principled existence is compromised, and the church is held captive by powers that violate the truth revealed in Jesus Christ, we must enter this Lenten season with deep contrition. According to the Gospel story, Jesus spent forty days in intense communion with God as he prepared to live fully into his calling and purpose. Lent, for many Christians, mirrors the Christ experience and invites the faithful to invest in a focused period of repentance and consecration. This period began on Ash Wednesday (February 18) and concludes on Easter Sunday (April 5). You will note that the duration of this period is forty-six days but the six Sundays in Lent are recognized as worship/celebration days and not "fast" days.

Our focused Lenten repentance and renewal is often expressed in acts of devotion, prayer, fasting, sacrificial offerings, and abstinence. We can sometimes glory on our religious rituals and labor in what we are "giving up". But, perhaps, the deepest meaning of Lent is not in the "pieces" we "give up" for a season, but rather in the "giving over" of the total self to God in every season. Consider again how the Prophet Isaiah helps communicate the fast that God desires and reminds the people that at the same time they fast, they are selfish, arrogant, abusive, and self-promoting in their holiness. God is not pleased by your superficial gestures. "Fasting" requires a prophetic word and witness.

God says: "The kind of fasting I want is this: Remove the chains of oppression and the yoke of injustice and let the oppressed go free. Share your food with the hungry and house the homeless. Give clothes to those who have nothing to wear and do not refuse to help your own...put an end to oppression and to every gesture of contempt and to every evil word...give food to the hungry and satisfy those who are in need, then the darkness around you will turn to the brightness of noon. (Isaiah 58:6,7,9,10).

As we participate faithfully in Lenten sacrifices, may our "giving up" focus our "giving over" to God all that we are in every season. As we walk with Jesus on a road from pain to promise, consideration of moments recorded in the Gospel of Matthew will guide our Sunday messages and the gospel of Luke will guide our Bible studies.

March 1 "Where Do You Turn?" Matthew 27:3-5

March 4 Virtual Bible Study- Failure with a Different Future- Luke 22:54-62

March 8 "Who Do You Blame?" Matthew 27:19-25

March 11 Virtual Bible Study - Is it Me? - Is it You? – Luke 22:24-30

March 15 “I Can’t Come Down!” Matthew 27:39-44

March 18 Virtual bible Study – Got to Go by Myself – Luke 22:39-46

March 22 “What Happened Was” Matthew 27:51-54

March 25 Virtual Bible Study – How Could You Do This? – Luke 22:47-53

March 29 Palm Sunday - Initial Sermon - Deeana Johnson

April 3 Family Good Friday-Fast Day-Easter Egg Hunt 4:30 pm-Meal 6pm-Fun Study 7pm.

Study: At the Cross – Luke 23: 26-49

April 5 Resurrection Sunday - “Suddenly!” Matthew 28:1-10

April 12 “What’s Your Price?” Matthew 28:11-15

April 19 “Draw Me Nearer” Matthew 28:16-18

April 26 “Follow the Directions!” Matthew 28:19,20

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, all to the Creator and Christ we surrender, all to God we freely give!