THE SEASON OF LENT

Although Easter is the oldest season in the Christian Church Year, the observance of Lent in the Christian church began somewhere between 200 and 300 A.D. Lent was a time of preparation for people being instructed in the Christian faith prior to their baptism.

Following the model of our Savior's time in the wilderness at the beginning of his public ministry, new adult converts in the early church practiced Lenten penance and devoted themselves to prayer for 40 days while awaiting their baptism, confirmation, and reception of the Lord's Supper on the Saturday evening vigil before the celebration of Easter.

The Season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday's somber repentance and leads us to Holy Week's bitter story and Easter's joy in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. These 40 days of Lent (excluding Sundays) are the first half of a larger rainbow arch, centered over Easter. The other half includes the Easter Season's 50 days in which we celebrate our baptismal rebirth in Christ. Today Lent calls us to take time out and look back on the impact of our own baptism on our lives. How are we doing? – we who have died to sin and come alive to a new life in Christ? In repentance, we ask our Lord to clear our hearts and lives of sin's self-centeredness.

Again this year we will be holding our midweek Lenten Vesper worship services on Wednesdays at 5:00 and 7:00 p.m., beginning with Ash Wednesday, February 13, which will include Holy Communion at both services. A Soup and Sandwich Supper will be served by the members of our Ladies' Circle at 6:00 p.m. during the Lenten Season, including Maundy Thursday.

We pray that you will plan to set aside these Wednesdays to worship the Savior who has redeemed you and opened the gates of heaven to you.

&&&&&&&&&&&&