

March 15, 2016

Dear Grace Church Family and Friends,

What a Lent it has been.

Yesterday, while we were having lunch, Rev. Amanda said, “This has been my favorite Lenten season, or at least, one of the top three.” And, I have to agree. This has been the most spirit-filled, life-giving Lents I have ever experienced.

I think it is due to the worship and formation programs we had. Our *Year of the Bible* readings focused on the life and ministry of Jesus, and the well-attended Sunday morning discussions were deeply thoughtful, as we addressed important questions such as: Who was Jesus? How was Jesus both human and divine? What makes Jesus different from Muhammad or Buddha?

At the same time, our class on the Episcopal Church included participants who are brand new to the church, as well as life-long Episcopalians, and as we talked about the church’s history, theology, worship and spirituality, I was once again reminded of our wonderful faith tradition and how much I love the Episcopal Church.

Then, there was Dinner Church, our Sunday evening service based upon the worship practices of the early Christians. Our planning for Dinner Church began months ago, and to see it come to fruition, with so many people embracing its intimate, contemplative feel (we had 67 people at Dinner Church on Sunday), was tremendously rewarding.

Thank you to everyone who participated in our programs for adding so much to my Lenten journey.

And now, we turn to Palm Sunday, when we celebrate Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem, followed immediately by Holy Week and Easter Sunday. This is the most important time of the year for Christians, as we recall Christ’s suffering, death and resurrection, the events at the heart of our faith.

I hope you will be with us.

As Phillips Brooks, the great 19th century preacher said so long ago, in summing up the coming days:

Let us set our own soul on that rocky hill and see Christ come to it. Long heard of, not a stranger, having often passed before our sight, at last He comes finally and formally to claim us for his own, to solemnly assert that we belong to Him, to bid us make our choice whether we will take Him for our King or not...

See you in church,
Andrew