



The Cross & Flame



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FEBRUARY 2024

As the season of Epiphany draws to a close, we find ourselves standing at the threshold of Lent, a period of reflection, repentance, and preparation leading up to Easter. The journey from Epiphany to Lent is a natural progression, offering us opportunities to turn moments of revelation into intentional disciplines that encourage spiritual growth. Let's explore how we can carry the light of Epiphany forward into the season of Lent.

During Epiphany, we celebrate the manifestation of God's presence in the world through the birth of Jesus and the visitation of the Magi. It is a time of revelation, where the divine becomes tangible in our lives. Epiphanies are like star openings to the sacred, inviting us to respond with gratitude and transforming our lives.

As we transition from Epiphany to Lent, it's crucial to carry the lessons learned and revelations experienced into a season of intentional discipline. Rather than allowing the epiphanies to be fleeting moments, Lent invites us to integrate these truths into our daily lives through practices that deepen our connection with God and one another.

- **Prayer and Devotions:** Use the quiet introspective nature of Lent to deepen your prayer life. Set aside dedicated time for reflection, contemplating the revelations received during Epiphany. Consider journaling or engaging in meditative practices to foster a deeper connection with Jesus.
- **Acts of Compassion:** Epiphanies often reveal the interconnectedness of humanity. Direct this awareness into acts of compassion during Lent. Consider volunteer work, supporting the church or charitable causes, extending kindness to those around you, embodying the spirit of love and empathy. This can be an excellent way of bringing new people into your life.
- **Fasting and Simplicity:** Lent traditionally involves fasting as a form of self-discipline. This can go beyond abstaining from certain foods to simplifying your lifestyle. Consider reducing material distractions, social media consumption, or other habits that may hinder your spiritual focus.
- **Study and Learning:** Epiphany often sparks a thirst for knowledge. Use Lent as a time for spiritual study and growth. Dive into the Bible, explore new devotionals, engage in discussions with fellow seekers, or perhaps start a small group. Ask the Holy Spirit to deepen your understanding of divine truths.

These are just a few ways to bring discipline into your lives. The journey from Epiphany to Lent helps us journey from revelation to discipline. As we embark on this spiritual journey, let us carry the light of epiphany with us, allowing it to illuminate the path of Lenten disciplines. May this season transform us as we reach for a more profound connection with the divine.

Grace & Peace,

Pastor Barbara

“Where the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Power of the Holy Spirit converge to change hearts and lives.”



February Events

Sun 2/4 after worship: Council Meeting
Mon 2/5, 7pm: Cooperative Parish Meeting
Tues 2/6 7pm: Prayers for Hope & Understanding
First & Wesley UMCB
Wed 2/7, 7pm: Church Council
Thurs 2/8, 6:30pm: Learn & Play Advisory Council
Sun 2/11 after worship: Souper Bowl Luncheon
Wed 2/14 1pm: Prayers for Hope & Understanding
UMC, Branford
Wed 2/14 time TBD: Ash Wednesday Drive-Thru
Wed 2/14 6:30pm: Ash Wednesday Worship
Mon 2/12, 6pm: Men's Pizza Night
Mon 2/19, 12:30pm: Ladies Luncheon
Wed 2/21, 7pm: Faithful Stewards
Wed 2/28 1pm: Prayers for Hope & Understanding
Hamden Plains UMC

RECURRING WEEKLY EVENTS

SUNDAYS

9:30am **Worship Service** (in-person and
livestreamed)

MONDAYS

11AM **Monday Zoom Prayer Meeting**
1PM **Sewing for God** (except 2/19)
6PM **"The Chosen" Group Study**

TUESDAYS

7:30pm **AA meeting**

WEDNESDAYS

10:30am **Prayer Shawl Ministry**
11am **Lenten Devotional Study**
starts 2/21

THURSDAYS

7:30pm **Al-Anon meeting**

SATURDAYS

7pm **AA meeting**

February Birthdays

1 Jennifer Sygiel
3 Sam Appleton
13 Sue Beatty, Dick Robinson
15 Joan Dunican
16 Lori Cartwright
19 Pam Johnson
25 Heather Mazzucco

February Anniversaries

19 Ro & Dick Robinson
27 Charlie & Pat Steeves

Pastor Barbara will hold a Lenten devotional study on Wednesdays at 11:00AM beginning February 21. We will explore Kate Bowler's [Have a Beautiful, Terrible Lent!](#). Consider new ways to bring the light of Epiphany into your everyday Lenten practices. Purchase the devotion book or just join us in conversation as we find courage in our everyday journey.

"Bowler understands how every day can be an obstacle course. She encourages us to develop our capacity to feel the breadth of our experiences. The better we are at identifying our highs and lows, the more resilient we become. "It has bite-size reflections and action-oriented steps to help you get through the day, be it good, bad, or totally mediocre. This is a devotional for the rest of us—which is to say, the people who don't have magical lives that always work out for the best. As she composed these meditations during a season of chronic pain, Bowler understands how every day can be an obstacle course. She encourages us to develop our capacity to feel the breadth of our experiences. The better we are at identifying our highs and lows, the more resilient we become."

If you want to build your daily habit of spiritual attentiveness, this book is here to say: May all your days be lovely. But for those that aren't, "Have a beautiful, terrible day!"

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NEW HAVEN CHORALE
PRESENTS



VOICES OF PRAYER & POWER

The New Haven Chorale welcomes back gospel singing sensation Jeremiah Paul for this concert in celebration of Black History Month.

The program features poignant spirituals, dynamic and moving gospel selections such as Total Praise, I Shall Not Want, and Somebody's Knockin', Shine on Me arranged by Rollo Dilworth, as well as Rosephanye Powell's settings of To Sit and Dream and Still I Rise.

The audience will also be able to sing along on some special pieces!

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 17, 2024
4:00 PM - BATTELL CHAPEL
NEW HAVEN

NEW HAVEN CHORALE

For tickets or more information, call 203-776-SONG or visit our website at www.newhavenchorale.org