

Inside

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**TOWER**

A Communication Channel of the  
Transfiguration  
MARCH 2009

**W**e are a community of Christians in fellowship with each other and Jesus Christ. We gather for spiritual guidance and fellowship by participating together in liturgy, prayer, and traditions. We are committed to providing an atmosphere characterized by freedom, openness, and mutual support for the spiritual journeys of individuals, families, and future generations.



Dear Friends.

As March begins it is good to see the melting snow and to see little specks of green emerging from the ground. Our life experience tells us that soon brilliantly colored flowers will reveal their beauty and fragrance. With the somber purple of Lent soon giving way to the red of Holy Week and the white of Easter, our faith journey emerges from penitence to celebration. Both of these March transitions lead us forth with renewed hope.

This month we will also finish our lenten journey. I have titled this year's Lenten Series; "Lent is for Life." I hope you will take the time to reflect upon and evaluate your own life journey. We are getting closer to Jerusalem and will arrive there by the end of this month.

This type of journey invites the question "How has this journey changed you?" A crucial question that we all need to be asked. If your answer at this juncture is "I don't know?," there is still some time left. Change is not easy. Change is a positive realization that my relationship with Jesus is deepening. With all the changes poised to take place in nature this month, we too should embrace this translation, not just in the perception of nature, but in our lives.

There is a Jewish liturgy book called, "*Gates of Repentance*." And there is an incredible passage from the Yom Kippur liturgy. I would like to share it with you with an adaptation by changing the Fall imagery to the images of Spring.

"Now is the time for turning. The leaves are beginning to emerge and turn to green. The birds are beginning to return and are heading once more toward the north. The animals are beginning to emerge from their winter rest. For leaves, birds and animals, turning comes instinctively. But for us, turning does not come so easily. It takes an act of will for us to make a turn. It means breaking old habits. It means admitting that we have been wrong, and this is never easy. It means losing face. It means starting all over again. And this is always painful. It means saying I am sorry.

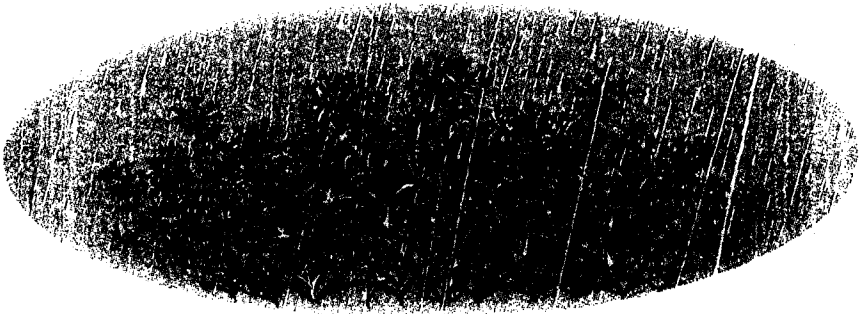
It means recognizing that we have the ability to change. These things are terribly hard to do.

But unless we turn, we will be trapped forever in yesterday's ways. Lord help us to turn, from callousness to sensitivity, from hostility to love, from pettiness to purpose, from envy to contentment, from carelessness to discipline, from fear to faith. Turn us around, O Lord, and bring us back toward you. Revive our lives as at the beginning, and turn us toward each other, Lord, for in isolation there is no life."

This month as new life in nature turns the flora from lifeless drab to a spectrum of brilliant bright colors, let us try to colorize our lives by turning back to God and welcome the potential changes that Lent invites us to make and adopt.

in His peace,

*Jr Henry*



# Lent

*Having nothing and yet possessing all things.* II CORINTHIANS 6:10

ORIGINALLY GOOD FRIDAY and Easter Day were observed as a single festival of the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Our Lord, and from very early times this probably included a fast which was kept before the commemoration of the Resurrection, but it certainly did not last nearly as long as the present forty days of Lent. Irenaeus (*c.* 130–*c.* 200), referring to differences of opinion about the celebration of Easter in his time, wrote, ‘For the difference of opinion is not about the day alone, but about the manner of fasting; for some think they are to fast one day; some two, some more; some measure their day as forty hours of the day and night’. The idea of this fast came from the words of Christ, ‘The days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then they shall fast in those days’; but the interpretation placed upon them varied. Commonly people kept a strict, unbroken fast either on Good Friday only, or for the time between the death of Christ and His Resurrection, which came to be estimated at forty hours.

The period before Easter was the time when converts from paganism were instructed in the Christian religion and prepared for baptism. The same barbarian invasions and collapse of the Roman Empire in western Europe, which turned the three Sundays of Septuagesima, Sexagesima and Quinquagesima into penitential days, brought about the long Lenten fast. The collects for the Third, Fourth and Fifth Sundays in Lent, written in the sixth century, express the outlook of that time with their recurrent thought of adversity, punishment, relief and defence. ↗

The actual duration of the longer Lenten fast varied in different Churches. Some made it last three weeks, some six, some seven; some omitted Saturdays as well as Sundays from the days they observed. In the Eastern Churches it was observed during seven weeks, but as Saturdays and Sundays – with the exception of Holy Saturday – were excluded, there were only thirty-six days of actual fasting. On the other hand, while the Western Church fasted during six weeks, it also had a total of thirty-six fast-days since it usually left out only the Sundays. The Church of Jerusalem was perhaps the first to observe an actual fast of a total of forty days as early as the fourth century. The Roman Church made up the number to forty days under Pope Gregory the Great, towards the close of the sixth century, by adding the four days from Ash Wednesday to the First Sunday in Lent, and this practice

spread from Rome throughout the Western Church. The Eastern Church begins Lent on the Monday after Quinquagesima Sunday.

When the original space of forty hours had been abandoned as too short, it was natural that the length of the Lenten fast should come before long to be forty days. This was identical with the Fasting and Temptation of Christ, the forty days spent by Moses and Elijah in the wilderness and the forty days' grace given in the preaching of Jonah to Nineveh. It also had a connection with baptism, since on the fortieth day before Easter the candidates for baptism were enrolled and thenceforth were called '*competentes*' or 'qualified'. In the Middle Ages, when the custom became general of communicating chiefly, and even only, at Easter, the period of Lent became a time of preparation for the Easter Communion by fasting, prayer and religious exercises.

The degree of fasting also varied widely. St Chrysostom wrote, 'There are those who rival one another in fasting and show a marvellous emulation in it; some, indeed, who spend two whole days without food; and others who, rejecting from their tables not only the use of wine and of oil, and of every dish, and taking only bread and water, persevere in this practice during the whole of Lent'. In the Western Church, the observance of the fast during the first centuries was very strict. Only one meal a day, taken towards the evening, was permitted, and this could not include flesh-meat and fish and, in most places, eggs and milk, butter and cheese; but from the ninth century greater leniency was introduced. The meal was gradually brought forward to three o'clock in the afternoon, and by the fifteenth century it was generally served, even in monasteries, at mid-day. This meant that the evening service of Vespers was said before noon, so as to keep the rule of fasting until after Vespers, and the granting of permission to take an evening 'collation', which consisted at first merely of a drink, but, from the thirteenth century, included also some light food. Fish was allowed throughout the Middle Ages, and from the fifteenth century so also were generally milk, butter and cheese.



# MOTHERING SUNDAY

## MARCH 22nd

This mid-Lent Sunday was kept in the East as a festival of the Holy Cross. From the opening words of the introit, "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem" it came to be known as Laetare Sunday or Refreshment Sunday. In England, however, the day was known as Mothering Sunday and was a welcome break in the long-Lenten fast and abstinence in England. Coming on the Fourth Sunday in Lent, the traditional Prayer Book Epistle ascribed for the day was from Galatians Ch. 4 referring to "Jerusalem which is above" - our spiritual mother.

This was the time when daughters in domestic service elsewhere could return home for a visit with their mothers. It was also a holiday from boarding schools. Or it was a time when all the daughter parishes would return to the Mother Church (the Cathedral) for a grand service. Or both.

At any rate, memory of it lingered on long enough to have it still remain meaningful for our own time. A few parishes found that the Mothering Sunday emphasis helped to pep up a ho-hum Lent. Before the Sunday "coffee hours" appeared, this was one such "once-a-year" event of that kind. The principal dish was something called SIMNEL CAKE or a Mothering Cake. It is a fine flour fruit cake, often with a pink icing. The liturgical color of this Sunday is Rose instead of Purple. For some obscure reasons, the Simnel Cake was a kind of badge that you were doing right by Mothering Sunday.

*From England this tradition has come to these shores. Would someone like to try this cake recipe for our "Refreshment Sunday" or "Mothering Sunday" as a special treat?*

### Simnel Cake Recipe

1/4 lb. butter	pinch of salt	1-1/2 cup currants
1/2 cup & 4 tsp. sugar	1/2 tsp. vanilla	2 oz. finely ch. citron
2 eggs	1 cup flour	1/3 c. powdered sugar

Cream butter and sugar; add eggs one at a time, mixing well. Add remaining ingredients except powdered sugar, and mix well. Pour into a greased and floured 8 inch square pan. Bake at 350 degrees for about 25 minutes. Mix the powdered sugar with water to make a thin glaze and pour over cake while it is hot.

## *A SOLO PIANO CONCERT*

to help alleviate the problem of hunger

will be held at

Temple Torat Yisrael  
330 Park Avenue  
Cranston, RI 02905



*George  
Winston*

**Tuesday      March 24th      7:00 PM**

Non-perishable food items and monetary  
donations will be greatly appreciated.



## *THE EPISCOPAL CHARITIES*

Episcopal Charities Sunday is March 15th.  
Our guest speaker will be

Mr. David Belheumer

a Representative

of the

Tomorrow Fund

Following each Service you will have the opportunity to make a pledge during the Coffee Hour. The amount you pledge may be paid monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, or annually depending on your preference. Together with other Episcopalians throughout the Diocese, we can make a significant impact in the lives of Rhode Islanders in need.



## CHURCH SUPPER

Saturday    March 28th  
5 - 6:30 p.m.

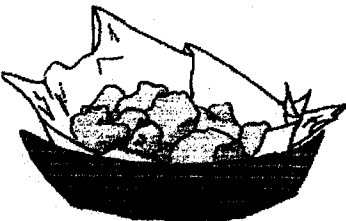
CHOWDER, CLAMCAKES

AND STUFFIES

\$8.00 Per Person

I ♥  
clams

Join us for good food, fellowship and fun!!!



## March Servers

- 3-1     Readers 8 a.m.     Harriett Dever  
              10 a.m.         Janet Burnham  
Greeter                 Marie Barrett  
Altar Guild             Group 2  
Ushers 10 a.m.         David Brierley & Vin DiGiulio
- 3-8     Readers 8 a.m.         Harriett Dever  
              10 a.m.         Jennifer Long  
Greeter                 Mary Holburn  
Altar Guild             Group 3  
Ushers 8 a.m.         John Rowan & Joyce Rowan  
              10 a.m.         Audrey Rose & Bruce Schortmann
- 3-15    Readers 8 a.m.         Harriett Dever  
              10 a.m.         Ed Dean  
Greeter                 Kate Lemery  
Altar Guild             Group 4  
Ushers 10 a.m.         Ed Dean & Karl Nestlerode
- 3-22    Readers 8 a.m.         Harriett Dever  
              10 a.m.         Deborrah Palazzo  
Greeter                 Leta Shepard  
Altar Guild             Group 1  
Ushers 10 a.m.         Christopher Ash & Orville Forbes
- 3-29    Readers 8 a.m.         Harriett Dever  
              10 a.m.         Joe Rose  
Greeter                 Joan Robbins  
Altar Guild             Group 2  
Ushers 10 a.m.         Len Banville & John Kelsall

**THANK YOU FOR SERVING!**