

# YOU ARE INVITED TO OBSERVE A HOLY LENT

This year during Lent, we invite you to participate in a variety of opportunities for spiritual formation. We offer the following programs and resources to consider for your Lenten journey:

## TUESDAY CENTERING PRAYER

We all recognize that communication is a two-way street. We also recognize that healthy relationship requires effective, two-way communications between the parties. Our relationship with God is no different. Prayer is the primary means of communication between us and God. But what generally happens is that we do all the talking and don't give God a chance to get a word in edgewise.

Centering prayer is an ancient method of prayer that is designed to allow God to have an opportunity to speak to us, and in the process, to allow us to connect with God, which provides the deepest kind of refreshment. As Thomas Keating, one of the great masters of contemporary Centering Prayer notes, "Centering prayer is not a way of turning on the presence of God. Rather, it is a way of saying, 'Here I am.' The next step is up to God."

We meet every **Tuesday at 6:30 PM** to explore the ancient practice of Centering Prayer. Sessions are held on Zoom. Contact Fr. Michael at [rector@stgregoryschurch.com](mailto:rector@stgregoryschurch.com) for Zoom access information.

## WEDNESDAY BOOK STUDY

Mother Sharon at St. Thomas will be offering a book study on ***A Different Kind of Fast: Feeding Our True Hungers in Lent***, by Christine Valters Paintner and exploring the spiritual practices in the book. This is a brand-new book and is available from Barnes & Noble, bookshop.org, Broadleaf Books, and Amazon. Each week we will explore a different kind of hunger and a different way to live in the world, using practices such as *lectio divina*, contemplative walking, journaling, and imaginative prayer. While many of our book studies work well if you can only attend occasionally, this is definitely a book study that asks for intentional participation and consistency. The study will begin with an **introductory session on Wednesday, February 7 from 7:00 to 8:00 PM** at St. Thomas of Canterbury (5306 E. Arbor Rd., Long Beach). We will then meet weekly at the same time from **February 21 through March 27** (we will not meet on Ash Wednesday because of the evening service). If you plan on attending class, please buy the book and read the introduction before the first class.

## THURSDAY BIBLE STUDY

Our parish Bible Study meets every **Thursday at 11:00 AM** in the Fireside Room. Not only do we learn a lot about the Bible, we also have a great time doing it.

## THURSDAY SOUP SUPPERS AND COMPLINE

On each of the Thursdays in Lent (**February 22, February 29, March 7, March 14, and March 21**), St. Gregory's will host a soup supper beginning at **6:00 PM**. Diane Kela and her team of cooks will feed us delicious meals of soup, salad, and bread. We ask a free-will donation, as you are able, to help defray the cost of the food.

Following supper (at about 7:00 PM), we will have a brief service of Compline (Night Prayer) in the church.

## DAILY DEVOTIONS

“Lent is a time for introspection and self-reflection, a time to reflect on the core of what it means to live a Christian life in the midst of great change and uncertainty. When facing change and uncertainty, practicing forgiveness becomes more central to that life so that we are freer to both receive and share the healing love of God.”<sup>1</sup> To aid in your Lenten journey, we are offering ***Living Well Through Lent 2024: Practicing Forgiveness with All Your Heart, Soul, Strength, and Mind***, which has daily reflections on the subject of compassion. Copies are available on the Lenten Pilgrim Bags and on Parish Hall Information Table. If you prefer a PDF version, you can download it from the parish website at

<https://stgregoryschurch.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Living-Well-Through-Lent-2024.pdf>

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<sup>1</sup> From the Introduction to *Living Well Through Lent 2024*, produced by Living Compass.