

## Lent 2018

### *The Kingdom of God has come near*



The season of Lent is a sacred time in the life of the church. It is a time when we take stock of our lives, we review God's story, and seek to fit our lives into God's history and project for creation.

As during the time of Jesus' life, we live in a time of uncertainty. There are many external forces seeming to work against the creation of or nurturing of shalom. Yet God's story in the First/Old Testament is about a God who did seemingly impossible things to enable shalom to grow and thrive. God makes covenants with the people of God.

- Noah and the promise that the world will never again experience a total flood [Gen 9:8-17]
- Abraham will be the father of nations [Gen 17:1-7, 15-16]
- God instructs the people of God on how to live in community with the giving of the Ten Words [Ex 20:1-17]
- God saves the people who rebel in the wilderness with the bronze serpent [Num 21:4-9]
- God makes a new covenant that is not a stone tablet but is written on the people's hearts [Jer 31:31-34]
- God uses servants that are faithful, yet lowly and despised to do great things [Isa 50:4-9a]
- God's steadfast love endures forever [Psa 118:1-2, 14-24].

This Lenten season we will remember what God has done before (Old Testament) as we look at what God was doing during the time of Jesus. Just exactly *how* is the Kingdom drawing near?

Jesus lived in an occupied country. We live in a land where current political and social events seem like anything *but* the kingdom of God sometimes.

When we feel estranged in our own land, how do we respond? Can we find examples in the life and ministry of Jesus for ways to respond, both small and significant, in our own contexts to embody and trust the good news rather than other powers?

Might this be a time to look at ourselves as well as our neighbors, and see how God is calling us to be the light, to be harbingers of the kingdom here and now?

## LECTIONARY TEXTS, THEMES AND PREACHERS

Feb 18	Feb 25	March 4	March 11	March 18	March 25	April 1
Lent 1	Lent 2	Lent 3	Lent 4	Lent 5	Palm Sun	Easter
Karl Shelly	Karen & Adam Graber Roth	Tom Kauffman	Regina Shands Stoltzfus	Paul Keim	Mary Lehman Yoder & Lisa Koop	Lora Nafziger
Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-10; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15	Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Psalm 22:23-31; Romans 4:13-2; Mark 8:31-38	Exodus 20:1-1; Psalm 19; 1 Corinth 1:18-25; John 2:13-22	Numbers 21:4-9; Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22; Ephesians 2:1-10; John 3:14-21	Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 51:1-12; Hebrews 5:5-10; John 12:20-33	Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16; Philippians 2:5-11; Mark 14:1-15:47; Mark 11:1-11	Acts 10:34-43; Isaiah 25:6-9; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11



Along the way, you can enter the season more fully by participating in these special services & activities:

- *February 14, Ash Wednesday Service 7PM, the Meetinghouse, childcare provided*
- *March 29, Maundy Thursday Evening Service, in small groups*
- *March 30, Good Friday Service, 7PM, the Meetinghouse*
- *April 1, Easter Worship, the Meetinghouse*