



ST. TIMOTHY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

# CONNECTIONS

A SEASONAL NEWLETTER

## Journeys in the Wilderness

During our Advent series in December, we followed the road to Bethlehem through a series called The Journey. It's no accident that Christians throughout history have often described their spiritual lives in the language of a journey. The earliest Christians even described their faith as "The Way" or "The Road" (Acts 9:2). We recognize that our life with Christ is not one of completion and perfect contentment, but a pilgrimage in which we are constantly following Jesus forward in pursuit of something new.



That journey towards our destination, however, is rarely straightforward. It curves. It dips. It doubles back. It passes through spiritual landscapes that can only be described as wilderness.

The imagery of wilderness appears in story after story throughout the Bible: From the forty-year-long wilderness wanderings of Israel, to the story of the exile, to Christ's temptation after his own forty-day sojourn in the wilderness. It's that final wilderness story that provides the framework for the forty-day season of Lent

The wilderness is a barren place, cut off from the comforts of "civilization." There, life is stripped down to its bare essence in often disconcerting ways. In scripture, it is often a place of tribulation and despair. People struggle with hunger, with thirst, with isolation, and with a lack of stability. And yet the wilderness is often the place where these same people encounter God in new ways and find their lives transformed. Stripped of the comfort and security of their normal lives, they find themselves with no choice but to trust in God's provision.

Our Wednesday night Lenten Series this year will focus on this theme of wilderness. How did the biblical characters navigate the wilderness, and what can we learn from these stories as we pass through the wilderness on our own spiritual journeys? The season of Lent is an especially appropriate time to explore these questions. This liturgical season is a yearly reminder that the life of discipleship is not always peaceful and joy-filled. After the emphasis on light after Epiphany, but before the jubilant announcement of the resurrection at Easter, Lent rudely breaks in and forces us to face head on the reality of our world's brokenness.

Honestly reckoning with the wilderness in our lives is a crucial part of our spiritual journeys. Sometimes we need to take the time to sit with our grief or anger or sorrow. The impulse to push quickly through the barren waste in search of greener pastures is strong. The wilderness is not a comfortable place to be. But it may be precisely the place where we find God moving in new ways.



## Ash Wednesday Services

Wednesday, February 14 at 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.

The observance of a holy Lent begins with the imposition of ashes and continues with self-examination, repentance, and other spiritual disciplines intended to prepare our hearts for Easter.

# LENTEN SERIES

**Wednesdays, February 21–March 20**

**6 p.m. Worship in the Sanctuary**

**6:30 p.m. Dinner in the Parish Hall**

**7 p.m. Programs for Children and Adults**

### Adult Program: “Journeys in the Wilderness”

The motif of wilderness is one that recurs again and again in the Bible, as a place where people are challenged and tested, but also where they encounter God. Over the course of five weeks, we’ll take a look at some of these stories and consider how they may help us see the challenging landscape of our own spiritual journeys in a new light.

**February 21:** Troubles in the Wilderness

**February 28:** Encountering God in the Wilderness

**March 6:** Temptation in the Wilderness

**March 13:** Lament in the Wilderness

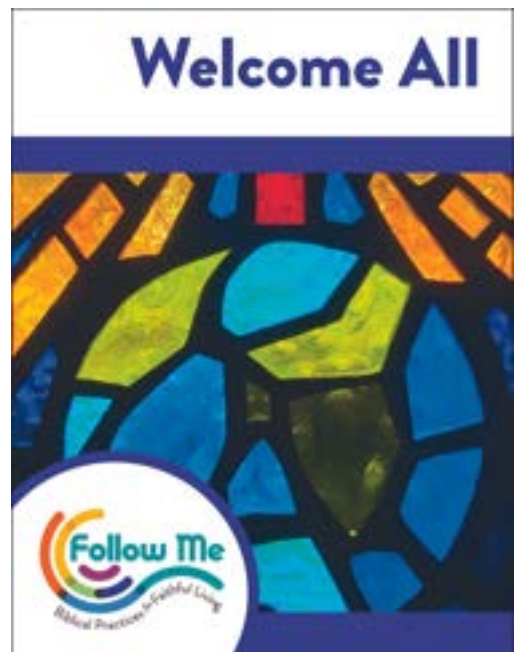
**March 20:** Growth and Hope in the Wilderness

### Children’s and Youth Program: “Welcome All”

Our younger members will divide into children (Grades K-6) and youth (Grades 7-12) to engage in lessons designed for their age group, with both groups focusing on the biblical practice “Welcome All.”

The lessons are rooted in biblical stories of hospitality that will help each person examine their own idea of welcoming and ask how they can show the welcoming spirit of Christ to others.

*There will be no Children’s and Youth Program on March 13 for Spring Break.*



# HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SERVICES



## Palm Sunday

March 24 at 10:15 a.m.

## Holy Wednesday with Service of Healing

March 27 at 6 p.m.

## Maundy Thursday

March 28 at 7 p.m.

## Good Friday

### Stations of the Cross (Sanctuary)

March 29 at Noon

### Interactive Family Stations of the Cross (Parish Hall)

March 29 at 7 p.m.

## Holy Saturday Service + Vigil Rehearsal

March 30 at 10 a.m.

## Easter Vigil

March 30 at 8 p.m.

## Easter Sunday Service

March 31 at 10:15 a.m.

Flowering of the Cross prior to the service;  
Easter egg hunt following service

## Adult Forum

Sundays at 9 a.m. in the Gathering Center

During February and early March, Adult Forum will focus on the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip. We'll learn about the sources of the conflict, what motivates both sides and discuss our own perceptions. We'll feature videos by Daniel Sokatch, author of *Can We Talk About Israel: A Guide for the Curious, Confused and Conflicted*.

## Instructed Eucharist

Sunday, March 17 at 10:15 a.m.

We celebrate the Eucharist every week, but the reasons our liturgy takes the shape it does aren't always widely known. Why do we exchange the peace right before the Liturgy of the Table? When do we say "Alleluia" and when don't we? What is Kyle doing with his hands up there during the Eucharistic Prayer?

The Instructed Eucharist will answer all these questions and more, as we proceed through a typical worship service with explanations narrated along the way.

## Upcoming Second Offering Partners

MARCH 2024

**Women at the Well**

APRIL 2024

**The Faith and Grace Garden**

MAY 2024

**Joppa**





**Epiphany Celebration Craft**



**Chalking the Door**



**Epiphany Celebration Cookies**

# This Spring



## TUESDAY NIGHT CONNECT

Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. in the Gathering Center  
Resuming in April

Tuesday Night Connect will be on pause during the Lenten season. When we resume after Easter, we'll be looking at spiritual gifts. We'll do some inventories and discuss how gifts of the head, gifts of the heart, and gifts of the hands all contribute to the flourishing of St. Timothy's and the bringing of the "kin-dom" of God!

## Bishop's Visitation

Saturday, April 27 and Sunday, April 28



Bishop Betsey Monnot will join our regular Saturday and Sunday services to preach and administer the rites of Confirmation and Reception on those who have completed a course of preparation.

## Pentecost Sunday + End of Year Picnic

Sunday, May 19

We will wrap up our program year by celebrating the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost on May 19. We will also take this opportunity at the end of the school year to honor our graduating seniors. After the service, we'll enjoy a time of fellowship together with a potluck picnic.

