

Lent Comes

Today begins the season of Lent. The next 40 days (not counting Sundays since all Sundays are 'little Easters') are a solemn time of preparation for the celebration of Easter; the resurrection of Jesus. As they contemplate Jesus' teaching, ministry, and call to discipleship; and remember his sacrifice for us, some engage in fasting, extra acts of service to those in need, Bible Study, prayer, and self-denial as part of their Lenten observances. Lent is a time of soul searching and recommitment to the life of discipleship Jesus calls his people to. Especially in this time when the community of faith is not able to gather as usual due to COVID-19, find ways to engage in your own soul searching and reach out to others with support, encouragement, understanding, and empathy. Lord, help us learn new ways to be your church in these new circumstances.



This week, remember in prayer:

- **People dealing with COVID-19** & the problems the pandemic is creating for people & their communities.
- **All countries where poverty, unrest, corruption, or other circumstances are making dealing with COVID-19 more difficult.**
- **Chibok Girls** – There is no further clarity about reports that several of the Chibok girls (still missing 7 years after they were abducted by Boko Haram in 2014) have escaped their captors. One girl's father, who received a call from his daughter to say she had escaped & was safe, has not seen her. No girls are back with their families. Pray for all the girls & all their families.
- **Nigeria** where kidnapping for ransom is a growing problem. Boko Haram attacks continue as do attacks by Fulani herders and bandits. The effects of COVID-19 are also being felt.
- **The Church in Haiti** – & all people there as they continue to deal with COVID-19 & the epidemic of kidnappings for ransom in the country. There continue to be at least 160 people are kidnapped in Haiti each month & no one is safe.
- **People who live with the ugliness of racism, bigotry, or prejudice** because we have not learned the lessons Jesus taught about how we should treat each other, or the lessons our past has tried to teach us about the dehumanizing nature of fear & the all-consuming & destructive power of hate.
- **Those who are victims of hate crimes.** The incidents of such crimes against Asian Americans have been increasing dramatically in recent months.

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