



March 1, 2025

My blessed congregants, community and family

Have you ever thought about the joy in sacrifice that Lent provides? Most of us don't delight in sacrifice; in fact, in our daily lives, we often do our best to avoid challenges and practices that push us outside of our comfort zones.

In Christianity, there is a beautiful irony between joy and sacrifice, and we are presented with a wonderful opportunity to embrace this uniquely during Lent.

While giving up sweets in favour of healthy snacks for Lent is a common and noble endeavor, the goal of Lent should not only be a spiritual excuse to lose weight! In choosing acts of self-denial, we are saying "no" to things to get into the practice of saying "no" when inclined towards sin, ultimately deepening our faith and our relationship with the Lord. Victory can be found when we deny ourselves and pick up our crosses and hardships to grow closer to Christ!

Therein lies the joy. When we grow closer to God by denying our will, we say "yes" to a life of abundance with him. Our God is a benevolent God; he will not hold back his grace from those who honour him and choose challenging things to grow and give him glory. Christ even tells us himself, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Without question, Lent is a time for conscious penitence and spiritual preparation for Easter. And it is important to remember that God loves us whether we make Lenten changes or not. At the same time, Lent provides us an opportunity to make God a greater part of our life, and to take our faith to new levels.

Stewardship is a God-centered way of life — a spiritual way of living that, above all, acknowledges God's presence in all we do.

Lent is a time for every one of us to do more than simply deny ourselves; we need to welcome God into our lives in greater ways so that when we get to Holy Week and Easter, we have an even greater appreciation for the sacrifice the Lord made for us.

The first Sunday of Lent is March 9, 2025, and we will be celebrating Holy Communion. Any offerings for the Benevolent Fund would be greatly appreciated.

May you and your loved ones enjoy a holy and joyous Lenten journey.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Carol Merrill
Worship Leader

1 Peter 5:6 - *Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you.*