Growing up in North Alabama was an experience that has shaped and molded me into who I am today. From the love of the outdoors, the joy of small town company, and no doubt the best thing of all Sweet Tea, I learned to appreciate the little things in life. While I greatly appreciate my upbringing, one thing to which I was not introduced was the season of Lent. Don’t hear me wrong, we had times of fasting and reflection that would typically correlate with the Lenten season, but the tradition I was raised in simply didn’t put a great emphasis on the 40 days leading up to Easter. Easter was still glorious and celebratory. However when I came to the Episcopal Church after college, I was introduced to a season that has richly blessed my walk with the Lord and my faith. I would venture to say that many of you reading this today would have the same testimony if you engage with Lent as part of your spiritual discipline.

Lent is the time of year that one theologian referred to as “a season of navel gazing.” In other words, it is a time to look inside our hearts to see what we need to take to the Lord, that he might refine us so that we may reflect his glory to the world. At times, that refining is a difficult process but certainly a necessary process. We will choose things to give up or add into our disciplines of life that are intended to draw us closer to the Lord as we resist the temptations of the world. Whether that is sweets, your favorite beverage, or Facebook, the intent is to allow the Lord to work in our hearts, minds, and souls as we abstain from that which often may distract us throughout the year.

While I certainly want to encourage you to prayerfully consider what you plan to give up, or add, to enhance your “navel gazing” this season, I also want to encourage you in another way. This year Holy Cross, as a church, is taking on a discipline of study as we begin looking at the seven words (phrases) of Jesus on the cross. This seven-week study, called The Crucified Life, is intended to take our church and our community through the powerful experience of our Savior as he hung on the cross for our sake. I ask that you consider taking on this discipline with me and with many others this Lenten season as we walk the way of the cross to experience Easter in its full capacity. I also want to challenge us as a church to do something that is likely out of most of our comfort zones…invite someone to walk this journey with you. We literally have small groups meeting throughout the week at various places and times that will fit most any schedule. The gift of a Holy Lent is truly a gift that, when experienced in such a way, brings about a more glorious Easter season. Ask the Lord today whom you could invite to join us for seven weeks as we draw near to the Lord and as he draws near to us. The Lenten season is too good not to invite others to experience it. Let’s not keep it to ourselves but share it with our friends, co-workers, and our community. I look forward to walking this journey together and to seeing what God does through each of you during this powerful season of Lent!

Faithfully Yours,

Faithfully Yours,

Fr. Wes +
NEW SMALL GROUPS NOW BEING FORMED

We are excited to begin 2018 with a new small group campaign beginning this February during Lent. We, as a church, will embark on a small group study called The Crucified Life. This study takes us on a journey through the seven last words of Christ leading up to the Cross and the Resurrected Life.

As we draw close to Lent, and the start of our small group study, The Crucified Life, we are still in need of three more hosts to facilitate a group throughout the week. You will find the current groups and times in the Narthex as well. Don’t wait, sign up for your group today. Space is limited to ten people per group. For more information on The Crucified Life, go to christianlifetrilogy.com.

Host training will be held on Sunday, February 11th at 3:00 pm at the church.

ECW EVENTS

Saturday, February 3rd
We are going to see Star Wars at the McWane IMAX Center. We will meet at the church at noon and then travel to the McWane Center for the 1:00 o’clock afternoon viewing. Tickets are $15.00 each.

Tuesday, February 13th
EYC will assist in the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper to be held in the Genesis Room on February 13th at 6:00 pm.

RAFFLE TICKETS

The ECW is selling raffle tickets for $5.00 each for a chance to win a dinner for six. The meal will include pork loin, macaroni and cheese, sweet potato casserole, roasted asparagus, bread, brownies, and wine. The drawing will be held this Sunday, February 4th. Please see any ECW member to purchase your raffle ticket.

CONFIRMATION WITH BISHOP SLOAN

January 28, 2018

Congratulations to Our Confirmands

(Listed left to right)

Piper Grace Powers
James Aiden Johnson
Jackson Elijah Brannan
Jacob Alexander Brannan

Lent is quickly approaching. As we prepare to enter this penitential season of the church, please plan on joining us Ash Wednesday, February 14th at 12:00 noon or at 6:00 pm for the Imposition of Ashes.

ECW

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, February 28th at 11:30 am. Please bring your sandwich and your smile as spring will be here soon.

WELCOME

GREETERS NEEDED

Our 10:30 services are in need of four new greeters to add to our existing team. If you are interested, please contact Gloria Smith or Fr. Wes.

ALTAR FLOWERS

Please note that the cost of altar flowers is now $30.00.

SHROVE TUESDAY

Our Annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper will be held on February 13th at 6:00 pm. Come join us for all you can eat - pancakes, sausage, and bacon - as we celebrate "FAT TUESDAY."

ASH WEDNESDAY

Lent is quickly approaching. As we prepare to enter this penitential season of the church, please plan on joining us Ash Wednesday, February 14th at 12:00 noon or at 6:00 pm for the Imposition of Ashes.

ECW will hold a “Soups & Sweets” sale this Sunday, February 4th, after each service.

TEAM

THIS IS WHAT YOU HAVE SUPPORTED!

In 2017 approximately 417 families from Trussville and the surrounding communities have received assistance with food and/or clothing from the TEAM Ministry. One hundred and thirty (130) of these families have never received help from us before. During the year, with your help, TEAM:

- Provided clothing 1,651 times
- Provided food 1,518 times
- Provided clothing 1,651 times
- Totaling 5,234 bags of nutrition, averaging 436 bags per month

The amount of food provided is based upon the number of documented persons in the household. Without your help, this ministry would not exist to lend a helping hand to our neighbors. The clients of TEAM thank you for your generosity!

The Annual TEAM “Love Your Neighbor” Food Drive will be handled differently this year. Grocery Bags will be available for you to pick up in the church beginning Sunday, February 11th. Please fill the bags and return them to the Narthex by Sunday, February 18th. Volunteers will deliver the grocery bags to TEAM. There will not be a parking-lot drop off this year. Thank you. (For further info contact Harold Jones at 205-655-8301)

Congratulations to Our Confirmands

(Listed left to right)

Piper Grace Powers
James Aiden Johnson
Jackson Elijah Brannan
Jacob Alexander Brannan

Any questions, call Karen Bain at 655-9263 or 612-9833.

ECW will hold a “Soups & Sweets” sale this Sunday, February 4th, after each service.

"My whole family’s giving up something for Lent. Mom’s giving up cookies, Dad’s giving up cake, and I’m giving up squash.”