



Anglican Church of North America

The ST THOMAS' CHURCH Epistle

February
2009

"Following Christ and His Commands"



THIS ISSUE:

Pancake Supper

*Shrove Tuesday /
Fat Tuesday
February 24 at 6 PM*

Vestry Meeting

*The Vestry Meets
Sunday, February 8*

Lent Begins

*Ash Wednesday
February 25*

Saint Story

St. Matthias

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper Last Chance For Fun Before Lent!

Fr. John and the men of the church will do all of the cooking Tuesday, February 24.

That's right ladies. It's your one opportunity of the year to sit back and relax. The men of the church will cook, serve, and clean for you (at no cost). This is always a fun event and a great time of fellowship.

Join us for games and great food!

Pancakes

Eggs

Sausage

Coffee, Milk, and Juice

& Bingo



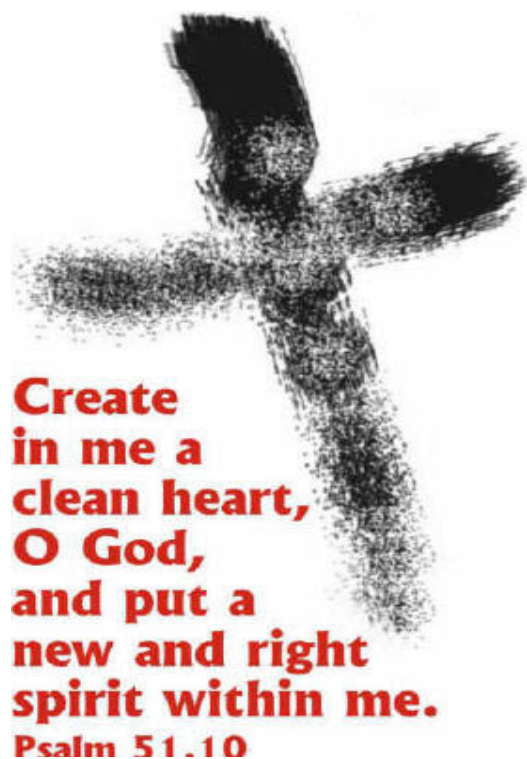
The Meaning of Lent

Lent is a time period of fasting and repentance traditionally observed by the universal Church as early as the 4th century. In Lent we eat sparingly, or give up a particular food or habit as a way to prepare our hearts for the coming celebration of Holy Week and Easter. The length of 40 days is taken from the 40 days Jesus fasted in the wilderness before overcoming the three temptations of Satan. Ash Wednesday is the beginning of Lent. Lent reminds us how we should always repent of our sins. On Ash Wednesday, ashes are marked on our foreheads in the sign of the cross to remind us that God made us from dust and to dust we shall return.

Giving something up for Lent is not a way to earn a favor from God through good works. However, when we give up something that consumes our time, it helps us to spend more time with God in prayer, Bible reading, and Bible study. God blesses our efforts through Godly wisdom and He strengthens our faith.

The Bible teaches us that our acts of fasting and repentance should be done in a manner that does not attract attention to ourselves. In Matthew 6:16-18 Jesus said, “When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.” After many people have received the imposition of ashes they wash their foreheads immediately. Others don’t, not to make it obvious before others, but to remind themselves throughout the day of Ash Wednesday that they have made a stronger commitment to God for the next forty days. This is a personal preference.

Fasting is good for the soul, especially when it is done with a biblical perspective. It is good and pleasing to God when we give up sinful habits and practices. There is absolutely nothing wrong and everything right when we set aside time to focus on the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. However, these practices are things we should be doing every day of the year, not just for the 40 days between Ash Wednesday and Easter. When we observe such a time of penitence and fasting in Lent our hope is to set a pattern that will draw us close to God for the entire year.



**Create
in me a
clean heart,
O God,
and put a
new and right
spirit within me.
Psalm 51.10**

The 2009 St. Thomas' Vestry

Bob Howland - Senior Warden

Jason Rice - Junior Warden

Steven Smith - Treasurer

Danny Erlandson - Clerk

Laurie Pierce

CURRENT EVENTS...

New Worship Times:

Classic Worship @ 9 AM

Family Worship @ 11 AM

* Monday through Thursday Intercessory Prayer suspended until after sanctuary renovation

Strategic Planning Committee

Our strategic planning committee continues to meet and discuss the direction of the parish. To better fit people's schedules the meetings were moved to Tuesday nights at 7:30 PM. We currently meet in the Parish Hall.

The dates for this month are **Tuesday, February 3**, and **Tuesday, February 17**.

These are public meetings and all interested persons are invited to attend.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Tuesday, February 23, at 6:00 PM is our annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper. As every year, we will serve pancakes, sausage, and eggs. This is always an important fellowship event in the life of our parish. It's a great time to invite your friends to meet people in the church and there is no cost. Pulaski Heights Presbyterian Church has graciously offered for us to use their fellowship hall and kitchen again this year. Join Us for Food and Fun!

Ash Wednesday

The Ash Wednesday Worship services will be at 7:00 PM, February 24. This will be a Classic Worship Service with Holy Communion celebrated, the Imposition of Ashes, and the Penitential Office.

(The sermon will be short.)

Anniversaries

February 25

Joe & Jan Burnett

Happy Birthday!

3- Justin Tucker

6-Carole Carroll

7-Nancy Howland

10-Isaac Tucker

13-Anne Winnans

22-Joe Burnett

WELCOME!

Steven and Aimee Smith recently decided to join the parish. We welcome you to our community with the right hand of fellowship in Christ!

Please consult the calendar on our new website for any other events, worship times, etc. This is an easy way to keep up with things without using paper!

ST. THOMAS CHURCH

Little Rock's American Anglican Church
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Little Rock, AR 72205

FIRST CLASS

St. Matthias **February 24** **Apostle and Martyr**

The Greek name Matthias is derived from the Hebrew name Mattithiah, meaning “gift of Yahweh.” Matthias was one of the seventy disciples of Jesus who had been with Him from His baptism by John to the Ascension. In the days following the Ascension, Peter proposed they choose one person to fill the place of the traitor Judas in the Apostolate. Two disciples, Joseph, called Barsabas, and Matthias were selected, and lots were drawn. Thus, Matthias became associated with the eleven Apostles. Since there is no other mention of Matthias in the Bible, all other information concerning his life and death is vague. According to Nicephorus he first preached the Gospel in Judea, then in Ethiopia and was crucified. The Synopsis of Dorotheus says Matthias preached the Gospel to barbarians and cannibals in the interior of Ethiopia, at the harbor of the sea of Hyssus, at the mouth of the river Phasis. This legend says he died at Sebastopolis, and was buried there, near the Temple of the Sun. Still another tradition maintains that Matthias was stoned at Jerusalem by the Jews, and then beheaded. From this story St. Helena brought the relics of St. Matthias to Rome, and a portion of them is at Trier. Bollandus doubts if the relics that are in Rome are not rather those of the St. Matthias who was Bishop of Jerusalem about the year 120, and whose history would seem to have been confounded with that of St. Matthias

the Apostle. The Western Church celebrates the feast of St. Matthias on February 24, and the Greek Church celebrates on August 9. However, the Latin Church recently moved the feast of St. Matthias to May 14. Clement of Alexandria records a sentence that the Nicolaitans ascribe to Matthias: “We must combat our flesh, set no value upon it, and concede to it nothing that can flatter it, but rather increase the growth of our soul by faith and knowledge.” This teaching was probably found in the Gospel of Matthias which was mentioned by Origen and by Eusebius who attributes the Gospel of St. Matthias to heretics. St. Jerome and the Decree of Gelasius both declare the Gospel of St. Matthias as apocryphal. This non-canonical Gospel is probably the document from which Clement of Alexandria quoted several passages, saying that they were borrowed from the traditions of Matthias, as it belonged to the middle of the second century. This apocrypha relates that Matthias went among the cannibals and, being cast into prison, was delivered by Andrew. Needless to say, the entire narrative is without historical value. Moreover, it should be remembered that the apocryphal writings are not God’s Holy Word. They can be read for wisdom and some historical content. The apocrypha does not line up with the whole of Scripture and cannot be used for doctrine of the Church.

