



Church of the Advent

# Advent Advisor

March 2021

## Forty Days OF LENT

### An Invitation

I am not a morning person. My preference is to stay snug in my bed until the day is well-lit and under-way. I cannot indulge that most mornings and am roused out of bed by a blaring alarm clock. Occasionally I actually have to arise well before dawn; and, not only am I groggy, for a short while I'm basically no good for anything except brewing coffee.

But, always when I am upright and have my eyes open before the first light, I marvel at the breaking of dawn. A gray dawn is almost as impressive as a brilliant one. Sunrise colors seem to change more quickly than when the sun sets. Birdsong and the sounds of people out and about remind me that God's creatures are wired variously. In the moment I am enthralled by my rather uncommon experience, and decide that I'll become an early riser even as I sense a nagging encounter with reality: old habits die hard. I'll not likely make it a custom to bound out of bed at dawn's early light no matter how good my intentions.

There is similarity in my attitude about early morning and Lent. Unless I'm in the experience, I'd rather be in my cozy bed than up with the early birds, and I prefer to sing *alleluias* rather than observe the sobriety of Lenten discipline. Penitence does not evoke *alleluias*, and a year of COVID has revealed not only our fragile resistance to the virus but also the fragility of our economy and justice in our society.

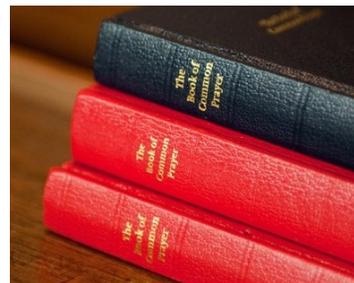
When I consider my need for repentance and forgiveness, in sharp focus during Lent, I cannot imagine that the great Paschal Feast of Easter would have such profound meaning had I not looked inward, deep into the recesses of my unexplored and undiscovered self. That is what the journey of Lent is about. Although it

takes me into a wilderness of sorts, the wilderness is a rich place where growth can happen. It is not an easy journey for me, for us, and was not for Jesus. He beckons us to follow, open to more fully knowing our God-created selves and the God who creates and recreates. Coming to ourselves and moving more deeply into the life of God is a continual process. God is not finished with us.

I urge you to join those of us making intentional Lenten journeys. It's a solitary trek taken in spiritual solidarity with others. Like a dawn awakening for me and folks like me who are not morning people, I don't happily embrace every aspect of it. But, when I'm in touch with the relief of letting go and coming to myself, I welcome it as the gift it is: an opener for a brand new day in God's great enterprise of making all things new.

+Connie

### Prayer Books Back in Use



As part of our COVID-19 protocol for safe worship, we had removed prayer books and hymnals and relied on disposable bulletins for worship.

In an attempt to ease back into use of our prayer books, you are

encouraged to bring your own.

Or you may use one of the carefully selected ones found in the church narthex. These are books showing some wear and are not memorials. A sticker has been affixed to the cover and a pen is available to write your name on the book. You may take it home or leave in the narthex for use at the next service.

Be advised that we adjust our clocks forward one hour on Sunday, March 14th. Remember to change Saturday night or you will find yourself arriving for church one hour early.





**138th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of East Carolina**

Saturday, February 13, 2021

**Convention Thoughts**

Over 230 eastern North Carolina Episcopalians "zoomed" in for the 2021 Diocesan Convention on Saturday, February 13th. The work that Bishop Skirving and his staff had done to prepare for this unprecedented event was obvious from the outset -- streamlined presentations, visually stunning and emotional videos, impressive budget preparation and a heartfelt, informative address by the bishop! Happily, in a special resolution, Connie Connelly was officially welcomed into the diocese!

The best news of the day was that Bishop Skirving and numerous teams throughout the diocese walked, biked or ran over 34,000 miles and raised almost \$217,000 for Trinity Center through his project "Journey Through East Carolina".

Information specifically important for the Albemarle Deanery: Bob Riche was appointed to represent our Albemarle Deanery on the Executive Council and Malone Gilliam (clergy) and Cynthia Harding (lay) were appointed to serve as deans of our deanery.

While much of the convention was conducting the usual business of the diocese, the most dramatic news centered around the future of Trinity Center. After much soul-searching and discussion, the Executive Council and the Trinity Board came to the decision to sell a bit of the oceanfront property to put Trinity in a sustainable position for years to come. If you are standing at the beach house with the gazebo to your left, the property to be sold is to your right. The sale will not affect our parish family weekends but should allow Trinity to completely rebuild from the hurricanes, update what needs updating and maintain the camp and everything that is so wonderful about Trinity!!!

Lucia Peel, delegate

**Needed ... Can You Help?**



We are in need of volunteers to usher and to serve on the Altar Guild.

Also, the Altar Flowers chart is available for volunteers to sign up for offerings on Sundays

other than those during Lent. Flower offerings do not have to be professional arrangements from the florist.



**Evening Liturgy  
Wednesday  
March 10  
6 P. M.**

**Palm Sunday**

Palm Sunday, also known as Passion Sunday, is March 28. Careful planning is underway to develop a service appropriate for the first day of Holy Week while still observing COVID-19 protocol for safe worship.

Please stay in touch with Comings and Goings for the latest information.



## Looking Back to 2020

In 2020 during the last year of his three-year term on the vestry at Church of the Advent, Johnny Miller served as senior warden at a time when the church was without clergy and few supply priests available.

And, unexpectedly, he was faced with leading the church through the COVID-19 pandemic with shut down, then reopening with modifications.

But Johnny set about setting goals for the future of the church.

*My number one goal was to hire a rector for our parish. We had been 11 months without a priest, so we contacted the diocese, but the Parish Transition Officer position was not filled and the availability of priests was not known. We, therefore, went out on our own and made various calls and found Connie Connelly was available. Molly Roberts was then named the transition officer, and we called her. After several weeks, the bishop approved Connie.*

*Since the rectory had not been used for a year and a half, my second goal was to update it as much as possible. It was painted, cleaned, power washed. New carpet was installed in the living room and dining room. Some furniture was also acquired — dining room table and chairs and two wing chairs that were reupholstered.*

*My final major goal was to reorganize our committees, especially the worship committee.*

*While there are still a few housekeeping jobs to be handled, over all I feel that I met my goals.*

Johnny is not a stranger to the work of the vestry. He has served multiple terms and has held the position of senior warden three times.

*Since this was my third time at serving in this position, I pretty much knew what the job entailed. However, with COVID-19, things were a little more difficult. The vestry and I had to arrange for outside services while still keeping those in attendance safe. Additionally, getting supply priests during this time was difficult. I hope that those who attended our outdoor services felt safe and enjoyed being able to attend services. I never imagined it would last as long as it has.*

*The most difficult part was arranging services outside, the unavailability of supply priests, arranging for a wedding, and arranging for a funeral. Thanks to the Rev. Joe Copper who agreed to officiate both the wedding and the funeral!*

*The easiest part was finding parishioners who were willing to lead us in morning prayer. Everyone asked did so with enthusiasm and an eagerness to serve. Thanks to Jane, John, Bill, Ginny, and Kit, we kept it going! Also, a special thanks to Jane and Brandon for their musical talents Sunday after Sunday!*

During the shut down, Johnny walked over to the church every Sunday morning and at 11:00 rang the church bell for those worshipping at home.

In addition to his work on the vestry, Johnny has been an usher for 28 years, served on the Altar Guild for 20 years, and been an assistant treasurer for 25 years.

As with many Episcopalians, Johnny became a member through a journey.

*I grew up in Memorial Baptist Church, but my mother and her parents were Episcopalians. Because of that, we went to Greenville once a month to attend church with my grandparents at St. Paul's. As a teen, I attended Camp Leach several summers and was introduced more to the Episcopal Church. In 1983, I was baptized and confirmed in the Episcopal Church by Rev. Jim Horton.*

*Some of my fondest memories at the Church of the Advent include cooking for the Men's Fellowship with Tom Skinner at the Slade's clubhouse, seeing Hugh Lindsley dressed as Santa for the parish children, serving as assistant treasurer for 25 years and for three years as Capital Campaign Chairman, marrying Ellen on a cold, rainy April day, and seeing my own children, Jess and Jean, baptized and confirmed. I also hold special memories of the majesty of our church on special occasions such as weddings, Easter, Christmas, and Thanksgiving.*

With grateful hearts, we thank Johnny for his outstanding leadership during a difficult year. We thank him for bringing the Rev. Connie Connelly to us and leading us through the transition and for keeping us safe as we returned to worship.

Rev. Connie has also expressed her gratitude from the pulpit, not only for Johnny but his entire family. No matter what she has asked of him, he responds with grace.




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## Paddling through Lent — and life

Lent is a time for restoring balance to our lives. The Eskimos practice balance as they venture into freezing Arctic waters in little boats. If you've ever paddled a kayak, you know how easy they are to tip. Thankfully, kayaks are just as easy to turn back upright.

That isn't a bad image for Lent — or for life as a whole. Whatever spiritual disciplines we adopt, if we succumb to temptation, it's no biggie. One of the lessons of Lent is that, as long as we're traveling light, it takes only a quick twist of the paddle to right us. That paddle twist might take the form of a quick but heartfelt prayer: "Jesus, set me straight again!" Or it might mean some extra time set aside for quiet meditation with God. Don't get worried if your spiritual discipline fails now and then. Just let Jesus help you get upright once more, and keep paddling!

—adapted from Carlos Wilton, in *Homiletics*



The Prayer List is found in the notebook marked "Prayer Lists" on the usher's table in the narthex of the church. Names may be added at any time by writing them in the notebook or calling the church office after requesting permission of those for whom prayer is requested. The Prayer List is read aloud weekly at Sunday services. Contact the church office if you wish to have a name added, re-listed, or taken off the list.

**Prayer List**

Janice  
Frankie  
Elizabeth  
Norma,  
Jeremy  
Bill & Nita  
Lucia,  
Jackie

**Birthdays**

7 ~ Kemp  
13 ~ Henry  
14 ~ Sarah  
17 ~ Garron  
19 ~ Will  
29 ~ Margaret  
30 ~ Lori



**Church of the Advent**

*Founded 1850*

**The Rev. Connie Connelly, Priest in Charge**  
Sunday-Tuesday, 9:30 a. m. –3:30 p. m.

**Lucia Peel, Senior Warden**  
**Don Beach, Junior Warden**

**Joe Jernigan, Parish Administrator**  
**Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 12 noon**

**Brandon Woody, Organist/Choir Master**

**124 West Church Street**  
**P. O. Box 463**

**Williamston, NC 27892**  
**Telephone: 252.792.2244**

**Email: [advent1850@gmail.com](mailto:advent1850@gmail.com)**  
**[www.williamstonepiscopalchurch.com](http://www.williamstonepiscopalchurch.com)**

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

March 7 Morning Prayer 11:00 am  
March 8 Vestry Meeting 5:30 pm  
March 10 Evening Prayer 6:00 pm  
March 14 Holy Eucharist 11:00 am  
March 21 Holy Eucharist 11:00 am  
March 28 Holy Eucharist/Palm Sunday 11:00 am  
April 1 Maundy Thursday 6:00 pm  
April 4 Holy Eucharist/Easter Sunday 11:00 am  
April 11 Morning Prayer 11:00 am  
April 12 Vestry Meeting 5:30 pm  
April 14 Evening Prayer 6:00 pm  
April 18 Holy Eucharist 11:00 am  
April 25 Holy Eucharist 11:00 am

*The Church of the Advent is a nurturing, vibrant, and inclusive community inviting spiritual growth through liturgical worship, outreach, and fellowship.*

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# **Church of the Advent**

## **March 2021**

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### **Lay Schedule**

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	<b>7</b> <b>3 Lent</b> <b>MP I</b> <b>11:00 A.M.</b>	<b>14</b> <b>4 Lent</b> <b>HE I</b> <b>11:00 A.M.</b>	<b>21</b> <b>5 Lent</b> <b>HE I</b> <b>11:00 A.M.</b>	<b>28</b> <b>Palm Sunday</b> <b>HE II</b> <b>11:00 A.M.</b>
<b>MP Leader</b>	John Price			
<b>Lector</b>	Jane Jernigan	Chuck Cohen	Michael Biondi	Kit Reddick
<b>Intercessor</b>		Catherine Cohen	Lucia Peel	Kit Reddick
<b>Chalice Bearer</b>				
<b>Acolytes</b>				
<b>Altar Guild</b>	Mary Anne Crowe			
<b>Ushers</b>	Johnny Miller Joe Jernigan			