

Happy Valentine's Day!



February 14, 2018

Dear Friends of Second Church,

Today marks the beginning of Lent, the 40 day period of spiritual preparation and self-discipline that leads to the great celebration of Easter.

For many people, it is the spiritual equivalent of the big diet before swimsuit season.

To me, that's a shame for a few reasons.

First, it suggests that getting closer to God is no fun, even if it has great benefits in the long run. It saddens me that there are still people who go to church even though they don't enjoy it, because they think God does and they're determined to keep God "happy." It's as if they worship a God who never laughs.

Second, it's a shame because it can make such an idol of self-discipline, which is an all-too-American flaw. The Gospel is so powerful because it offers us a different account of who we are than the world at large does, reminding us always that we are made in the image of God and infinitely precious to God, despite our imperfections. Yes, God invites us to work on those. But that's as a way of inviting us to find deeper roots in the divine ground. It's not so we can show our grit — for whom? God? **Really?**

Finally, it's a shame because it often ends up "baptizing" things we think we're inclined to do for entirely non-spiritual reasons. To put it bluntly, the Church did not come up with Lent way back when so that we'd all look fabulous for Easter—thinner, better rested, less boozy in the jowls, or what have you. Lent isn't God's solution to help us "conquer stress." By all means, let's do those things, and for their own sake. But let's not say that we're doing things "for God" when we aren't. I bet that God isn't fooled.

So what should we do?

Earlier this week, I saw some wonderful suggestions attributed to Pope Francis, inviting us to give up a very different set of behaviors than the usual list. In that spirit, then, here is mine:

What if we tried giving up things like impatience? Sarcasm? Eye-rolling?

What if we tried giving up nit-picking, nagging, sulking, resentment, or self-pity?

What if we tried giving up saying things behind someone's back, or needing to have the last word?

Lent is a time to focus on what matters most—a time to work on whatever it is that interferes with the joy we experience in loving God and neighbor. The more we do, the more deeply we experience the miracle at the heart of Easter — the more we know that Easter isn't just an Alleluia we proclaim, but one God invites us to live and encounter again each day.

What do you need to do to accept that invitation? Make that the heart of your Lent this year. And may Lent lead you straight to the heart of God.



See you in church,

Max

If you would like to hear past Sermons you can find them on our website: 2cc.org

There will be no Bible Study tonight but please join us for Prayer Group tomorrow at 11:00 as usual.

This Sunday, February 18, we will have a guest soloist performing during our 10:30 a.m. service, join us!



Coffee Hour Hosts Needed:

Please email Stacey Brown with a date that you are available to help out. Thank you!

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a smartphone. The person is wearing a watch on their left wrist. The text "Upcoming" is written in a large, white, cursive font, and "EVENTS" is written in a smaller, white, bold, sans-serif font inside a white rectangular box below it.

Upcoming
EVENTS

Join us for our 16th Annual Valentine Gala
Benefitting Heart Care International
Saturday, February 24, 2018

All You Need is Love

Gathering Reception at 6:00 p.m.

- Concert features Love Songs from the 60's, 70's & 80's sung by our Men's Chorus & directed by Alexander Constantine
- Special Guest Stars
- Concert is complimentary for Ladies & \$50 for Gentlemen (to be paid at the door)
- Gourmet Dinner before the concert & dessert reception to follow

RSVP to Gloria@2cc.org

In case of a major snowstorm on Saturday the concert & a luncheon will take place after the 10:30 service on Sunday, February 25

Details can be found at 2cc.org

[Click here to RSVP for Valentine Gala](#)

Women's Fellowship Cos Cob Crawl

Tuesday, March 13, 2018 starting at 10:00 a.m.

Lorca
coffee bar

During this outing we will visit each of the shops displayed here together as a group and "crawl" from one to the other through the morning.

Est. 2004
FLEISHERS
CRAFT BUTCHERY

Fairfield
Greenwich
Cheese
COMPANY


THE DRAWING ROOM

FJORD
FISH MARKET

The shops are looking forward to having us and they are excited to share their wealth of knowledge! We will have time to browse and each shop is willing to hold our purchases for later pick up.

COAST
GLOBAL SEAFOOD

We will have lunch at Coast Global Seafood which offers a 3 course prix fixe lunch for \$25

Please meet at 9:50 a.m. in the parking lot behind the shops or in case of rain, we can meet in the atrium by CVS.

Please contact: Leah Marmon for reservations:
lmarmor4@aol.com

Have you been curious about the quaint shops along the strip in Cos Cob? Now's your chance to see what they're all about!

We will "crawl" our way into the butchery, a fish market and a cheese shop - each specializing in what they offer. They will share their wealth of knowledge with us! Need a caffeine fix? Lorca Coffee Bar has a fine selection of coffees and baked goods as well! For art and craft lovers, the Drawing Room is nearby!

We will enjoy lunch at Coast Seafood Restaurant & Bar, just across the street in the Mill Pond Shopping Center, for a delicious 3-course prix fixe lunch for \$25.

Click here to RSVP & reserve your spot
(limited to 20 participants)

Stewardship Update

We've reached our 2017 Stewardship goals!

Click here to see the latest update & donate online if you haven't done so already.

We have achieved our stewardship goals for this year's campaign and have raised \$701,240 from 112 pledges. The success of the campaign will allow us to provide the support of our ministry and programs for 2018.

Thank you very much for your continued commitment to support our church ministry through your pledges for 2018.

*Bob Willett
2017-2018 Stewardship Chair*

Women's Fellowship Scholarship Program for Graduating High School Seniors

The Women's Fellowship of Second Church has established a Scholarship Program to honor and acknowledge the young people who have been involved in the life of the church.

High school graduating seniors who will be attending college in the fall of 2018 are encouraged to apply. Contact Gloria in the church office at 203.869.9311 or email womensfellowship@2cc.org, and we will email you an application



All applications due by March 30, 2018



[Click here to download 2018 scholarship application](#)



Sign Up for
Vacation Bible
School (VBS)
June 25-29

[Click here](#) to find
out more!

Do you "Like" us?



Are you following us on social media? No? You're missing out on a lot of inspiration & fun!

If you take pictures during the service(s) or on church grounds at any of our events please be sure to share the love on social media by tagging @2ccGreenwich on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) & [Instagram](#)

Around Town...



February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month

Community Partners:



You're invited to attend...

Looking In Theatre

An Interactive Exploration of Teen Relationships

Tuesday, February 27, 6:30 – 8:30 pm
YWCA Greenwich • 259 East Putnam Ave • Greenwich

Teen actors will perform dramatic scenes to explore:

- healthy vs. unhealthy relationships
- boundaries
- social media
- and other topics teens face in their relationships

Our goal is to present realistic situations that young people may find themselves in.

For high school and college youth, parents, and service providers who specialize in young adult issues.

This event is Free / pizza and refreshments will be served

Reserve your spot at
www.ywcagreenwich.org/lookingintheatre

For more information, contact Joan Mockler at 203-869-6501, ext 104 or j.mockler@ywcagreenwich.org

Looking In Theatre is a program of the Greater Hartford Academy of Arts and the Capitol Region Educational Council and is recipient of the 2017 Katherine Hepburn Award given by the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities.



For more information & reservations, click the following link:

<https://www.ywcagreenwich.org/civicrm/event/register?reset=1&id=83>