



# Canterbury Tales

**The Monthly Newsletter of St. Thomas of Canterbury**

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Lent 2011

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## **UPCOMING:**

**Going Away Party:  
Jennifer Lang  
February 5 @ Noon**

**Shrove Tuesday  
Pancake Supper  
Feb. 21 @ 6:30 p.m.**

**Ash Wednesday  
Holy Communion  
Feb. 22 @ Noon  
Choral Service  
7:30 p.m.**

**Youth Group  
Valentine's Dinner  
Dance & Auction  
Feb. 18 @ 6:30 p.m.  
Reservations \$10.00**



## **2012 ANNUAL MEETING**

**February 12, 2012  
Parish Luncheon @ Noon**

- Rector and Warden's Reports
- Election of 3 Vestry Members
- Election of 1 Trustee
- 2011 Financial Reports
- 2012 Budget
- Designation of Sr. Warden
- Update on Land listing & Parking Lot
- Vestry Organization & Election of Officers
- Reports on ministries
- Tax letters for giving available
- New telephone directory

# What is Lent?

Lent is the most solemn season of the Church Year. It originated in the fourth century and by the fifth century was a universal observance of the undivided church.

Lent spans 40 weekdays and begins on Ash Wednesday. Lent concludes with Holy Week: Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Saturday before Easter, sometimes called “Holy Saturday”, but it is called “Easter Eve” in the Anglican Tradition..

Lent is to be understood a penitential time of preparation for Easter. For communicants of the church it was a time of reflection, penitence, prayer and fasting. In the Early Church it was also time of intense preparation of those who were to be baptized (called catechumens) during the Easter Vigil and also a time for those who had been separated from the Church by excommunication to repent and prepare to be re-admitted to communion and fellowship in Church.

Since Sundays celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, the six Sundays that occur during Lent are not counted as part of the 40 days of Lent, and are referred to as the Sundays “in Lent.” The number 40 is associated with Lent. This number is connected with many biblical events, such as the 40 days of the flood and the 40 years Israel wandered in Sinai, but especially with the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness preparing for His ministry by facing the temptations that could lead him to abandon his mission and calling. Christians today use this period of time for introspection, self examination, and repentance. Along with Advent, which precedes Christmas, Lent is thus called a “penitential” season.

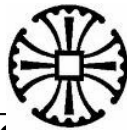
Lent has traditionally been marked by penitential prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

Many Christians observe a rigid schedule of fasting on certain days during Lent, especially the giving up of meat, alcohol, sweets, and other types of food as a reminder of our Lord's fast.

Many Protestants abandoned Lent at the time of the Reformation, but it has been gradually re-discovered as a useful spiritual tool. Anglicans, along with Lutherans, Methodists, Reformed Churches, Roman Catholics and adherents of Eastern Orthodoxy have always observed Lent in some form. Many others have rediscovered it.

Most Christian churches that observe Lent focus on it as a time of prayer, and repentance for failures and for sin as a way to focus on the need for God's grace. It is really a preparation to celebrate God's marvelous redemption at Easter, and the resurrected and redeemed life that we live, and hope for, as Christians.

Fr. Payne+



## Calendar- Feb 2012

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
<b>Jan. 29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>Feb. 1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
					Rector @ Cranmer House	Rector @ Cranmer House
<b>5</b> <b>Septuagesima</b> 8:00 – HC 9:15-10:15 SS 10:30 – HC & CC Noon: Reception for Jennifer Lang	<b>6</b> Church Office Closed	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>  Bible Study 7:30	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	
<b>12</b> <b>Sexagesima</b> 8:00 – HC 9:15-10:15 SS 10:30 –MP & CC  Luncheon & Annual Parish Meeting: Noon	<b>13</b>  Church Office Closed	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>  Church Growth Seminar: St. Matthias 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.	<b>17</b>  Church Growth Seminar: St. Matthias 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b> <b>Quinquagesima</b> 8:00 – HC 9:15-10:15 SS 10:30 – HC & CC	<b>20</b> Men's night prep for pancake supper- 6:00	<b>21</b>  Pancake Supper 630	<b>22</b> <b>Ash Wed</b> HC – Noon 7:30 P.M.	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> <b>Feast of St. Matthias</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> <b>Lent 1</b> 8:00 – HC 9:15-10:15 SS 10:30 –MP & CC	<b>27</b>  Church Office <b>Closed</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>  HC- Noon Bible Study 7:30	March 1 <sup>st</sup>	<b>2</b>  Rector @ Cranmer House	<b>3</b>  Rector @ Cranmer House

### Abbreviations:

HC= Holy Communion  
EP= Evening Prayer  
AC= Ante-Communion  
Lit= Litany

### Altar Flowers and Easter Lilies

Easter lilies for adorning the sanctuary and nave may be ordered in the Canterbury Shop beginning March 13. The cost for sponsoring lilies is \$10.00 for each plant. Altar flowers remain available for several Sundays. Please reserve dates and note any memorial or celebration on the flower calendar in Teel Hall. The suggested donation is \$50.00 for each Sunday.



## **Anglican Polity 101**

When used in the church, the word “polity” means “government”. There are various forms of governance found in churches.

Roman Catholic churches and Methodist churches are hierarchical. The Bishop/Superintendent rules, the priest/minister administers, the people support this leadership.

Baptist churches are congregationalist, in that every decision is made by popular vote.

Presbyterian Churches are run by various types of elderships (preaching, teaching, ruling presbyters) and operate in a system of committees (“courts”) under what is called a presbytery.

Anglican churches have their own system of polity. And parishes in America have their own variation of this polity. In the Reformed Episcopal Church, this polity is as follows:

### **The Rector**

Sacramental worship, preaching, teaching and pastoral care are fully vested in the parish rector (or the vicar, who is appointed by the bishop in a mission) under the spiritual direction of the Bishop Ordinary. The authority and conduct of the clergy is fully defined by the Constitution and Canons of the General Council, the Diocese and the By-Laws. By canon law, the Rector presides at meetings of the Vestry. All assistant clergy report to the Rector.

### **The Sr. Warden**

The Sr. Warden is the chief lay leader of a parish or mission. In a parish, the Sr. Warden is nominated by the Rector, subject only to a concurrence by a simple majority of the Annual Parish Meeting, to serve a one year term. Any communicant in good standing may be appointed. The Sr. Warden is the chief operating officer of the parish, and also represents the rector's interests to the Vestry and the Vestry's interests to the Rector. In the Rector's absence, the Sr. Warden presides at Vestry meetings and may call a Vestry meeting as needed..

### **The Jr. Warden**

The Junior is elected by the Vestry each year after the Senior Warden is chosen. The Jr. Warden must be a member of the Vestry. The Junior Warden is responsible for the upkeep of the parish property, including making certain of adequate insurance coverage and all maintenance issues. In addition, the Jr. Warden is charged with representing the “people's” interests to the Vestry and to the Rector. The Jr. Warden presides at Vestry meetings if the Rector and Sr. Warden are absent. The Jr. Warden may also request a Vestry Meeting.

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## **The Treasurer**

**The Treasurer is elected by the Vestry at its first meeting and charged with keeping the financial records of the parish including the bank accounts. The Treasurer is not required to be an elected member of the Vestry, but always has “voice” if not vote as a non-member..**

## **The Secretary**

**The Secretary is also elected by the Vestry and is charged with keeping an accurate set of minutes of its meetings and also acting as recording secretary of the Annual Parish Meeting. The Secretary is also not required to be an elected member of the Vestry.**

## **The Vestry**

**General Temporal Authority (supervision over finances, the buying and selling of property, maintenance of the physical plant, etc) is assigned to the Vestry. This may have from 3-12 members, who are elected at an “Annual Parish Meeting” for over-lapping 3 year terms. They have no individual authority, but collectively function as a 'board of directors’.**

**The Vestry represents the entire membership of the parish. The Vestry prepares the annual budget, approves all salaries, contracts, insurance, and other corporate affairs of the parish. If there is a pastoral vacancy, the Vestry acts as a search committee and works with the Bishop to call a new Rector. (Note: Rectors are NOT chosen by congregational vote.)**

**The Vestry should be composed of spiritual individuals, but is not a spiritual body. It has no authority over the ministry, sacraments, teaching/preaching or pastoral administration beyond its control of the “purse strings”**

**In addition to the Vestry there are certain committees such as “Finance”, Christian Education” and “Compensation” that function in the parish. Under the direction of the Rector and wardens other committees may also be appointed as needed.**

## **The Parish Council**

**Finally, there is the Parish Council, which consists of the Rector and the two Wardens. This committee functions in matters where the spiritual oversight of the parish needs input by the lay leadership. Within the bounds of pastoral discretion and confidentiality it's advice may be sought by the Rector**

**This is the basic “polity” of parishes in the Reformed Episcopal Church. It is a system that allows for “checks and balances”. In the event that any issue cannot be resolved, the Rector, Vestry and/or the Wardens may ask to have the Bishop exercise his spiritual authority as chief pastor of the parish. Some issues may involve the Standing Committee, chaired by the Bishop, and made up of both clergy and laity.**

## English Tea

### St. Thomas of Canterbury

St. Thomas of Canterbury will be hosting our second annual "English Tea" this April. Please contact Cheryl Tengram if you would like to help with this project.



### Daughters of the Holy Cross

The Daughters will be dedicated to the ministry of prayer in the coming year as well as working with the clergy in ministry to the sick and shut ins. If you would like to be a part of their ministry, please contact Kim Fortenbach or speak to the rector.

### Editors Retire

After many years of dedicated service, Betty Lou Rip, Abby Benton and Garry Smith have stepped down from their duties in producing and distribution the Canterbury Tales Newsletter.

The parish is deeply grateful for their faithful service over the years.

This month's issue is an interim production by the rector as we begin a general review parish communications in the electronic age.

John McDonald, our web master, will continue his duties of "proofing" the newsletter and Debbie Payne will assist in the distribution.

Due to every rising postage costs we hope to reduce the physical mailing list to only those who do not have email.

Watch for additional developments in coming months.

## Parish News:

### New Acolyte Order of St. Vincent.

Under the direction of Colonel Key, we are blessed with a dedicated group of acolytes who assist the clergy in Divine Worship. Angel Connolly is our newest acolyte and will be installed upon receipt of her certificate and medal.



### Choir News

Under the direction of Stephanie Biffle, our talented choir is busy preparing for the Lenten and Easter seasons -including several mid-week services. In addition to offering the time and talent each Lord's Day, the choir is scheduled to sing at the 7:30 p.m. services of Holy Communion on Ash Wed. (February 22 ) at and Maundy Thursday (April 5) as well as each Sunday. Their efforts greatly enhance our worship



### Garden Workday

The date of the spring garden workday is still pending, but will likely be in mid to late March.

After the winter is passed, the garden is always in need of some "TLC" as we prepare for Holy Week and Easter. We need workers for this half-day project. Green thumbs are not required.

For over a decade Jennifer Lang has organized the spring and fall workdays. Her dedication will be sorely missed.

However, we are blessed with the decision of Linda Culbreth to assume the duties of chairperson for the Gardening Committee.

Because Linda worships at the 8:00 service, we are in need of an assistant chairperson who attends the 10:30 service so as to better coordinate the gardening activities

Please see the rector if you would like to help..

**14007 South Freeway  
Houston, Texas 77047**

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## **The Collect for Lent**

**ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all those who are penitent; Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.***

***¶ This Collect is to be read every day in Lent, after the Collect appointed for the day.***

***The Book of Common Prayer (1928)***