

The Messenger

Church of the Incarnation
Great Falls, Montana



Lent and Holy Week 2025 Schedule:

- March 4 - Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper at 5:30 pm*
- March 5 - Ash Wednesday Service at 8am and 6pm*
- March 12, 19, 26/April 2, 9 - Compline on Zoom at 8pm*
- April 16 - Stations of the Cross at TBD*
- April 17 - Maundy Thursday at 5:30 (Dinner) and 6:30pm (Service)*
- April 18 - Good Friday at 6:30pm*
- April 19 - Great Vigil at 7:00pm followed by a Reception*
- April 20 - Easter Sunday Service at 10am*

The Cross

Join us on Sundays during Lent when we will reflect on the Cross of Jesus during the sermon time each week.

The Practice of Lent

On February 5th, Ash Wednesday, we enter again into the liturgical season of Lent. Lent is 40 days in which we as Christians are called to focus on our faith and make disciplined changes in our lives. Ones that prepare us to walk with Jesus through his passion, death, and resurrection. Christians traditionally have observed Lent with 3 primary disciplines: *prayer*, *fasting*, and *almsgiving*. These disciplines are in no way meant to be self-punishment or self-improvement, rather they are meant to lead us back to the grace we received from God in our baptisms.

Prayer

Prayer is central to our Christian lives. It is how we live in and maintain our relationship with God. The liturgical season of Lent calls us to renew this practice and to pray daily. Prayer calls us to ponder Jesus' sacrifice, pray for our neighbors, and cultivate our own relationship with God. If prayer is not a regular part of your life, Lent offers an opportunity to start praying every day. A short prayer in the morning or before bed is a simple way to get a routine in place. This is how spiritual habits are formed, by doing. And if you already have an established practice of daily prayer, consider changing it up for Lent. Try new forms prayer, add an additional prayer at a different time of day, or focus your prayer on passages from the Gospels or Psalms. Use Lent as a time of renewal and focus for your relationship with God.

Fasting

Fasting is an ancient discipline Christians use, just as Jesus did, to lead us back to the commitments of our baptism when we put on Christ and promised to follow Him. Our fasting reminds us to be more Christ-like in our everyday lives. "By denying ourselves food at certain times, we recall the reality of hunger, the needs of the poor, and our citizenship in the heavenly kingdom by moving ourselves away from an unhealthy focus on material goods and their consumption and intentionally changing our body's focus."

Almsgiving

Almsgiving or giving to or for the sake of those in need, helps us focus on the needs of others instead of our own. Lent is not just a personal spiritual workout; it is a communal experience of renewal and a recommitment to our faith and mission as God's church. A life characterized by generosity and concern for others (alms) is more than just giving money; it is a matter of the heart. Are you concern for those in genuine need all around us. The Bible speaks of almsgiving as a God given duty, that we should carry out freely and joyfully, but also with a sense of responsibility. Jesus encourages a quiet and sincere concern for others who need our help and warns against acts of charity performed to gain the approval of God and others.

As we enter into Lent, I encourage you to engage in these ancient disciplines of the church and prepare to walk with Jesus from death to resurrection life.

Peace be with you,
Pastor Ryan

A Message from the Senior Warden

Good News!

Pastor Lori was talking to us one day last year about developing our spirituality and to help us do that, she suggested we write ourselves a letter. Guidelines for the letter were outlined as follows:

1. Address the letter to yourself
2. Write down what you want to do to walk closer with Jesus.
3. How will you treat others?
4. How will you keep Jesus in front of you at all times?
5. How will you show gratitude to Jesus for your blessings?
6. How will you live your love?

Post this letter where you can read it frequently to keep track of your progress. And amazingly, it works!! -Barb Eliason



“Welcome back to the Cascade Quartet”

The renowned Cascade Quartet presented its second concert in our beautiful sanctuary on the evening of Tuesday, February 18. Their repertoire was lovely and ended with a love song in which the audience participated. Afterwards the quartet joined the reception in the parish hall.

Stories of the Saints: Peter Jennings **(Interview by Jerry Jennings)**

Born in Burlington, VT to Gerry and Chuck Jennings, the third of four children, Peter has always been busy with projects, not the least of which has been the physical building housing the Church of the Incarnation. His early years found him in VT for three years, remembering lots of snow and snow activity, two years in Lawton, OK, with memories of bison and people getting too close, and a year in Charlottesville, VA, where there was a kite competition. He was focused on the kites without understanding that Lady Bird Johnson was presiding over the contest.

On to Great Falls in 1974. Not knowing a soul anywhere within hundreds of miles, his family was welcomed by his Dad's two partners' families who had kids Peter's and his siblings' ages. What a difference that made! His recollections of Meadowlark School were good teachers, carrying his baritone horn home over a neighbor's fence, and taking piano lessons from Mrs. Cogswell in the morning before the start of school. He loved the recitals and the competitions she planned for her students. Junior High at West presented challenges when he missed the bus, which was fairly frequent. "If he missed it, he walked," said his Mom. He loved being in the band, and in 9th grade he joined the choir as well.

Childhood memories of Incarnation are many as Peter reflected on Sunday school, Junior Choir with conductor Margaret Utter, who was very good at redirecting the "messing around," and Junior EYC with good instruction and weekend retreats. As one can imagine, the "Bible part" of EYC wasn't memorable, but the girls, food and fun were.

Boy Scouts were an important part of the junior high scene. He loved the campouts, which were frequent, as well as the first-aid oriented activities. Besides his Dad who was Scoutmaster, there were several doctor dads in the troop. His Eagle Scout project was fixing up the rooms at the DeMolay Center as they transformed it to a Youth Center.

High School at CMR brought different activities including German language, swim team, student council, speech and debate, Junior Bank board, after which they were given money for an unchaperoned lunch downtown with friends. He also got into bike racing with his friend, John Melvin, whose family were also members of Incarnation.

Dartmouth College called in 1986. Peter was ready to leave GF. At that point “it was not the right place for me and many others of my age.” He majored in Anthropology and the cultural relativism it engrained in him. He joined his Dad in doing medical work in Pakistan and also spent a semester in Sienna, Italy. He questioned the absolute truths encapsulated in many religions and rather enjoyed learning about their spiritual beliefs. And let’s not forget their temple architecture.

When he returned to GF after graduating, he worked with the CC Historical Society where he researched historic buildings. Does anyone wonder why he chose to renovate the oldest commercial building in GF twenty years later? In the meanwhile, he moved to Missoula where he renovated a home for his rent-free living. He studied pre-med (vet) at U of MT where he met his wife, Elizabeth. They spent four years at University of Oregon College of Veterinary Medicine. With baby Seamus they moved to Vermont where they both practiced for three years and added daughter, Ruby, to the family.

Eventually GF called and the family moved with 2 kids, 4 dogs and one cat to Sun Prairie in 2005. In 2011 Peter was informed that the city was preparing to demolish the Arvon Block. He had been renovating apartments and figured he could continue with his vet practice as he renovated the Arvon. In 2019 he retired and has dedicated full time to the operation of the pub and hotel. This has been his capstone achievement and greatest challenge. It combines his interest in buildings and culture and his origins in this isolated place that has grown on him. He likes seeing people enjoying themselves in a place where they can meet family and friends. Peter was called back to the church after years of absence by needs of the building going unmet and to sing in the choir. Since then he has served three years as junior warden and as many as senior warden.

Updates from ECW

February was a quiet month for us, and we are gearing up for a wonderful busy March and April (Lent/Easter season). However, there are a few fun projects that we are in the middle of! The toddler area is cleansed and improved thanks to Neil, ECW, and Barb! We now have a new youth area being brought in to being as well, thanks to Tristan, Peter, Neil, and the ECW.

I will also be announcing when we start another thousand crane project. This one will do to hang in our own parish Hall. I think everybody who's been helping with our receptions and coffee hours. Special thanks to Dick Dorhman for his wonderful donation to ECW to facilitate the coffee hours. Remember if you do volunteer to do a coffee hour and you buy food, please turn the receipts in the ECW so we can reimburse you.

Please let me know, any ideas that you have that you would like ECW to participate in. Also, if you are interested in doing any community volunteering or donating, let me know and I can help you find a good fit for you. Our ECW has a long tradition of helping our church and also helping our community. I look forward to continuing this wonderful ministry. Our next meeting will be March 20th at noon in the guild room, bring a sack lunch if you wish!

Also I will be gone the bulk of April, on a theatrical job(makeup and wig design) in California, so I am looking for help with filming and uploading services. I will miss you all!

Blessings, Sara

Diocesan Youth Weekend

Church of the Incarnation will once again host the Diocese Youth Gathering.

The youth from the dioceses will be coming to our parish
March 14, 15, 16th.

They will help lead our worship that weekend!