

## What Is Lent and How Is It Observed?



On the Christian calendar, Lent is the 40-day period from Ash Wednesday to Easter. When it was first observed in the fourth century, its focus was on self-examination and self-denial in preparation for Easter, and Christians used *fasting* (abstaining from eating food) in the early years as a visible demonstration of this process.

Over the centuries, Catholics have relaxed some of the strict fasting rules. Today, only Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and all Fridays during Lent are considered fasting days. On these days, Catholics over the age of 14 are to refrain from eating meat. (Historically, this practice was meant to help unify people who could afford meat with poor people who couldn't.) In addition, on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, those between the ages of 18 and 59 are to eat only one full meal and two smaller meals and aren't to eat between meals.

Orthodox Christians are far more rigorous in their observance of fasting during Lent, believing that regular fasting is a crucially important discipline for one's spiritual growth. Meat, dairy products, and eggs (which historically were considered more luxury foods than ordinary breads) aren't allowed, with some additional restrictions on certain days. They can only eat fish (which was historically considered less of a luxury than red meat) on the feasts of the Annunciation and Palm Sunday.

In addition to refraining from eating, Lent is often a time when Christians give up something pleasurable (furthering the focus on self-denial), be it chocolate, meat or — shudder the thought! — coffee.

Some Protestant denominations (such as Anglican and Episcopalian) observe Lent, but many Protestant churches attach less significance to the Lenten season than to the individual holy days leading up to Easter.



CO-PASTOR DEBRA A. CROMWELL · BISHOP OLLEO L. CROMWELL II · LEAD PASTOR OLLEO L. CROMWELL III  
1023 Deep Creek Blvd. · Chesapeake, Virginia 23323 · Phone: (757) 485-9824  
Visit us online: [www.faithdiamond.org](http://www.faithdiamond.org) · Visit us on Facebook: Trinity Faith Diamond

**Bishop Dr. O.L. Cromwell, II** is the pastor of Trinity Faith Diamond Church in Chesapeake, Virginia. Believing that a man's footsteps are ordered by the Lord; Bishop Cromwell heeded the call to Pastor Trinity Baptist Church (Trinity Faith Diamond) in 1989. Since his pastorate, Trinity Faith Diamond has increased to more than 4,000 members.

**Co-Pastor Debra Cromwell**, wife to Bishop Cromwell, is a graduate of Crestwood High School, Chesapeake, Virginia; Norfolk State University, Norfolk, Virginia, where she received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Elementary Education; and she later received her Masters Degree in Early Childhood Education as well as a Masters Degree in Counseling from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia.

**Lead Pastor O.L. Cromwell, III**, son of Bishop and Co-Pastor, is an honor graduate of Granby High School and Norfolk State University, Norfolk, Virginia, and Regent University, Virginia Beach, Virginia, where he received his Masters Degree in Divinity. He is currently pursuing a Doctorate in Church Administration with an anticipated date of com-

### *From Bishop's Desk ...*




This Lent season has been a true blessing to the body of Christ in that it has provided the opportunity to set aside additional time to reflect on Jesus' death and resurrection.

Since we know that grace is "the gift of righteousness" and cannot be earned, we recognize that this period of fasting and prayer is not a way to attain God's blessing; rather, the objective is to focus on repenting of sin and consecrating ourselves to God... something that we should purpose to do every day.

Remember that this is not a time of boasting of our sacrifice or trying to earn God's favor or increasing His love. The magnitude of God's love for us could never be any greater than it already is. The goal is to strengthen the faith and spiritual disciplines of the body and develop a closer relationship with God.

## OUR ANOINTED SHEPHERDS

# March 2024 Upcoming Events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 Communion HIS PEACE Grief Support Ministry 2:00 - 3:30pm	4	5 Line Dancing Class 6:00 - 7:00pm	6 Mid-day Inspirational Hour 11:30am Wednesday Night Live Bible Study 7:00pm	7	8	9
10 HIS PEACE Grief Support Ministry 2:00 - 3:30pm	11	12 Line Dancing Class 6:00 - 7:00pm	13 Mid-day Inspirational Hour 11:30am Wednesday Night Live Bible Study 7:00pm	14	15	16
17 HIS PEACE Grief Support Ministry 2:00 - 3:30pm	18	19 Line Dancing Class 6:00 - 7:00pm	20 Mid-day Inspirational Hour 11:30am Officials Ministry Meeting 6:00pm Deaconess Ministry Meeting 6:00pm Power Team Meetings 7:00pm Deliverance Service 7:45pm	21	22	23
24 Diaper Give-away HIS PEACE Grief Support Ministry 2:00 - 3:30pm PALM SUNDAY 	25	26 Line Dancing Class 6:00 - 7:00pm	27 Mid-day Inspirational Hour 11:30am Wednesday Night Live Bible Study 7:00pm	28	29  GOOD FRIDAY	30
31  RESURRECTION SUNDAY CELEBRATE THE SAVIOR						