



Why Lent?

By B.J. Hutto, Senior Pastor

Friends,

I can't believe it, but Ash Wednesday is just around the corner, arriving on February 14. Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent, and—in the Church's calendar—Lent is tied to Easter; therefore, since Easter is almost as early as it can possibly be this year, Ash Wednesday is, too!

As I said, Lent is anchored to Easter weekend. As a season, Lent is forty days long and runs between Ash Wednesday and Good Friday...but, if you look at your phone calendar, you'll see that that's not actually forty days! It's forty-six! To square the math, you have to know that the Sundays between Ash Wednesday and Good Friday aren't considered a part of Lent. This is because Lent is a penitential season, and Sundays—as, themselves, tiny Easters—are always days of celebration. *You never fast on a Sunday; you feast, because Christ is risen!*

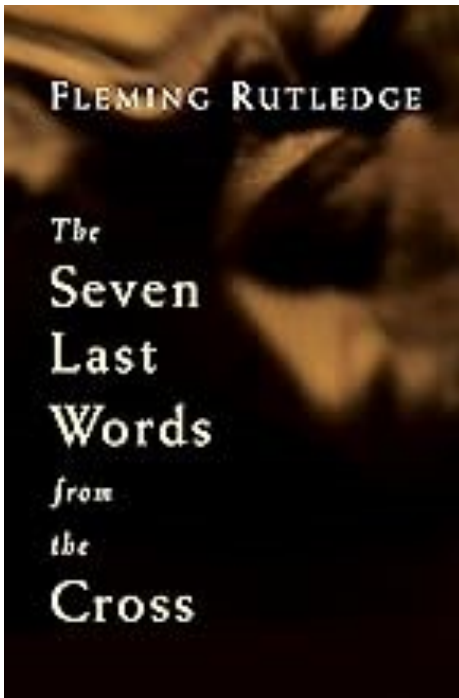
Historically, the Lenten season is rooted in the ancient Church's practice of performing baptisms primarily on Easter. Lent was the season of study, self-denial, and preparation before the initiate entered into the baptismal waters. Hence its color: purple. Purple has long been associated symbolically with penitence. Today, churches like ours don't follow this practice of baptizing only on Easter, but observing the season of Lent continues to be an important time of reassessment and renewal. To that end, I want to offer you the following passage, as a concise but solid understanding of how Lent might be understood by us today:

*Briefly put, Lent is like an ellipse: It is a single entity with a double focus. The Forty Days are (1) a time for a probing consideration of our human condition, including sin and its deadly consequences for both individuals and society, and (2) a time for an equally intense consideration of the new possibilities offered to us in Jesus Christ...in a sense, our Lenten journey takes us through the ellipse lengthwise. At the start of Lent (whose tone is set by Ash Wednesday), we are more fully aware of disobedience as our focus. By the close of the Forty Days (whose tone is set by Palm Sunday, Holy Week, and the approach of Easter), we are more keenly attuned to the benefits of divine redemption. **We begin by stressing penitence: an acknowledgement of our rebellion against God and our alienation from God's whole creation. We move on to the fruits of repentance: the amendment of life that results when we turn around and by God's grace head in a new direction.**¹*

As we begin this season together, as we—with Christ—turn our faces towards Jerusalem, let us keep in mind the sure and certain hope that we will celebrate on Easter Sunday...and let us reflect upon the reason(s) that that sure and certain hope needed to be accomplished on our behalf and offered to us out of love.

Kind regards,
 B.J.

¹Slightly edited, from Laurence Hull Stookey's *Calendar: Christ's Time for the Church*.



Wednesday Lenten Study
February 21, 28, & March 13
6:15-6:55 p.m. in the chapel
Led by B.J. Hutto

The Seven Last Words from the Cross
by Fleming Rutledge

Contemplating the seven sayings of Jesus from the cross (“I thirst,” “It is finished,” etc.) has been a traditional Lenten practice for centuries. Rutledge is one of the most faithful, thoughtful preachers of her generation, and reflecting on her short book as a church family is a perfect way to prepare ourselves for the sadness and triumph of Easter weekend.

The book is available at the following link—
amzn.to/423LIDa — or by scanning this QR code:



Mission: Possible

By Debbie Crumb, Mission & Witness Committee Chair

You are probably familiar with the *Mission: Impossible* TV series and action spy films with its famous line “Your mission, if you choose to accept it, is _____.” In Hollywood films, the mission is something that is considered impossible. However, **our mission at HAB is not impossible, but possible:** the mission to share the gospel of Jesus Christ through word and deed.

Stay tuned here every month to get updates on mission activities, including actions by the Mission and Witness Committee, individual members, and our mission partners.

First, I hope that everyone has heard that the **Spread the Light Banquet** was a wonderful time of food and fellowship! I know that you are all anxious to find out about the financial success of the banquet in raising funds for our local missions. “Stay tuned” as we get all the data together.

In the meantime, the Mission and Witness Committee has now started the work of reviewing HAB’s current missional commitments to evaluate and prioritize our community partners and internal mission activities and funding. Stay tuned!

In the meantime, what can you do to help?

Safe Havens Ministry has an urgent need for bedroom dressers. As you know, Safe Havens gathers gently used home furniture and furnishings and redirects them to needy families. Many of these families are legal refugees who have come to the United States with few or no possessions. There are currently 16 families waiting hopefully for furniture, but Safe Havens has no more bedroom dressers or chests of drawers. If you or someone you know has a gently used dresser or chest (scratches are ok but drawers must be working), please consider donating it. Safe Havens will come pick up the furniture, but you must have someone there to help load it on the trailer. As an alternative, \$90 to Safe Havens would enable them to purchase a used dresser from a thrift store. To make a donation or for further information, text (preferred) or call Lynn Bledsoe at 904-654-4772.





Senior Adult Luncheon "Those Were the Days!"

**Sunday, February 25
12:15 p.m. in the fellowship hall**

Come ready to reminisce, laugh, sing, and DANCE. Yes, there will be dance floor! Enjoy a delicious meal that will warm your soul: *fried chicken, mashed potatoes & gravy, broccoli casserole, Watergate salad, and Coke cake.*

Join us for fun and fellowship with a short program honoring a special HAB member...and a few surprises!

The meal is free, but reservations are due by Tuesday, February 20, by contacting Laraine at laraine@habchurch.com or 904-396-7745, ext. 103.



Sponsored by your HAB Deacons



**Art Reception
Thursday,
February 8
6:00-7:30 p.m.
in the narthex**

**Come meet the artist, Doug Johnson,
hear him talk
about his art,
and enjoy
refreshments!**



Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, February 14

6:30 p.m.

Sanctuary



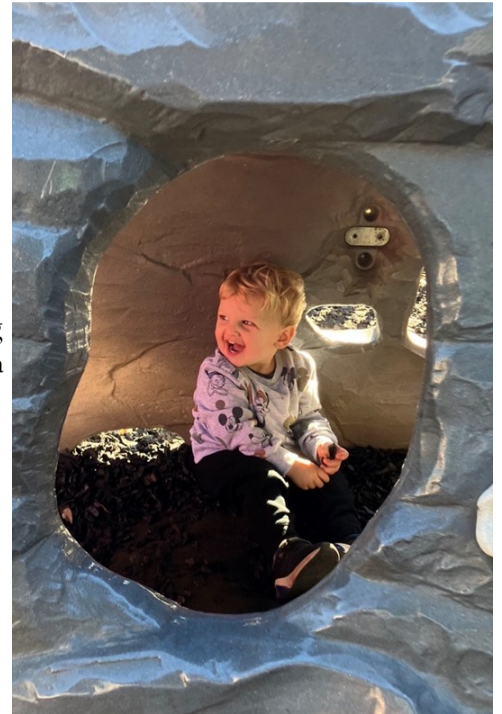
Little Friends Preschool Is Cool!

By Chelsea Weise, Principal, Little Friends Preschool

Little Friends went back to school on Wednesday, January 10, after a much-needed couple weeks off for Christmas break. Parents were eager to drop off their

kids Wednesday morning! We want to take a minute and give a huge thank you to **Dora Orr** and **Genni Jett** for volunteering their time to come help when they are able. The children adore them, and they work so well with our staff. We love having HAB people with us! If you ever want to come volunteer, please reach out to Chelsea at principal@littlefriendsathab.com.

We are proud to announce that six out of ten children who were given an award this past fall at Hendricks Avenue Elementary (HAE) were Little Friends Alumni! News came from a current Little Friends dad who has a child at HAE as well. He said, "I am not surprised that most awards went to those who graduated from Little Friends." This is just a testament to our amazing teachers and the program that we have. I am so grateful for the dedication and support from HAB and our teachers. We have an amazing team and the best kids in town!



Wednesday Night Kids

February—Creation

6:15-7:00 in the STEAM Lab

February 7: Birds & Fish

February 14: Ash Wednesday Service

February 21: Animals & People

February 28: Rest (Yoga night)

CHILDRENS@HABCHURCH.COM

HAB KIDS CALENDAR

WINTER/SPRING
2024

2/23 FAMILY PIZZA MAKING DINNER - FELLOWSHIP HALL

3/30 EASTER EGGSTRAVAGANZA

5/5 CINCO DE MAYO PARTY - FELLOWSHIP HALL

5/12 MUFFINS WITH MOMS

6/16 DONUTS WITH DADS



Sympathy to...

...Ann Carter and family in the death of Ann's son, Bruce Carter, on Saturday, December 16, 2023. The service will be Monday, February 19, at 10:00 a.m. in our sanctuary, followed by a reception in the fellowship hall.

...Sharon Timmerman in the death of her mother Thursday, January 11, 2024, in South Carolina.

Congratulations to...

...Elizabeth Duvall Sims & Cody Sims on the birth of their son, Logan John Sims, on Tuesday, December 19. Proud grandmother is Rebekah Duvall! Logan weighed in at 4 lbs. 15 oz. and was 18 inches long. He did earn himself a stay in the NICU, because he was born at 34 weeks.

Thank you...

We would like to thank our HAB family for your prayers and many expressions of love and comfort shown to our family over the loss of our father, Don Steere. He loved HAB. Our dad always had a smile on his face and a kind word to everyone. He will be missed, and we take comfort in the many memories we hold in our hearts.—Love, Karen & Joe Martin and Wendy & John Braendle



By Margaret Douglass, New Member Team

Willy & Martine Matonsi

Welcome to the Matonsi family! Willy and Martine (along with their daughter Myriam) joined HAB on Sunday, January 7, after worshipping with us for several weeks. Willy and Martine came to the U.S. from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Myriam was born in Jacksonville. Their friend, Samuel Nzau, recommended our church to the family.

Martine's family fled the DRC in search of safety and security. Martine joined them in 2006 after being granted asylum for the same reasons. Willy followed years later and has been here for ten years.

Martine works for Johnson and Johnson as a product release specialist. She is part of the team who assures that contacts that go to market are without defect. In her spare time, she enjoys meeting new people, spending time with God, and traveling. Singapore and Thailand are on her bucket list. The family will be going to Ireland for a family wedding later in the year. Another joy is singing heartily to praise songs as she is driving her car.

Willy was a well-respected judge in his native country for twenty years. He has a law degree and a degree in theology. He has been a pastor since 1994. On Wednesdays and Saturdays, he is pastoring a local Congolese church. Monday through Friday, from 6:00-7:00 a.m., he and Martine lead a teaching and prayer conference via phone that reaches to Canada, Europe, and the USA. The number is 605-313-5106, and the pin is 150967#.

Samuel Nzau & Sergine Epanya

We also welcome Samuel and Sergine Epanya, who joined HAB on Sunday, January 7. Stay tuned for next month's *Herald* to find out more about them!

Pulpit Exchange with the Temple



From the Church Mouse

Hi there, fellow HAB friends! This is your lowly Church Mouse with all the news that's fit to print in the February *Hendricks Herald*! And this month, that's not a lot. Somebody's not keeping their eyes on what's going on...or just forgot to let me know! I surely can't get around to many places besides the church, so I have to depend on you folks to email me with the good news! But here's what I have heard:

Mark Scott was inducted into the **Florida Music**



Educator's Hall of Fame in January. His presentation was made by **Andre Thomas**. This is a very significant honor. Several of Mark's family members were able to join them for the presentation. Great going, Mark!

Jonas and Henry Wilson received their varsity letters at **Wolfson High School** for cross country in their first semester of high school. This speaks so highly of these freshmen who earned such recognition.

Carolyn Hinckley and **Caroline Welkley** participated in the "A Time for Change



Movement's Fifth Annual Christmas Eve Outreach Celebration. For the fifth year, over 100 women and men who live on the streets of Jacksonville gathered downtown to receive food and gifts.

Drew Shapard was in the **All-State Reading Choir** at the **Florida Music Educator's Association** meeting. Have you heard **Drew** sing? He recently sang a solo in our 11:00 service. He is quite the singer, and I found him a



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(Church Mouse, *continued*)

treat to listen to from my Sunday morning lookout behind a leg of the piano. I hope I don't scare **Laraine Humbert** if she looks down and sees me!

Julie Babcock got a chance to fly to Madrid, Spain, to see her son, his wife, and the youngest grandchildren for Epiphany. That's a long flight for a few days. She was able to go with the family for a light show at the Madrid Arboretum. She said that there were bugs everywhere, and that show was the highlight of the trip!

Well, that's about it for now! Maybe I'll get more good news to report this next month. Meanwhile, you might leave me a tiny bit of cheese by one of the piano legs. I get a little hungry if our services go on past noon. Bye—and be sure to say your prayers like I do.

If you know of events that need to be celebrated (yours or others'), please e-mail the Church Mouse at churchmouse@habchurch.com so your church family can rejoice in these milestones and special recognitions!

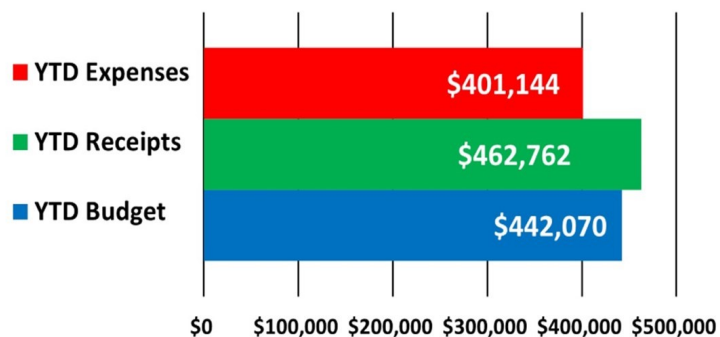


HELP NEEDED

We need a couple more people who would be willing to serve on our Tellers Team. The tellers count the offering on Sunday mornings

following the 11:00 service. You would be scheduled to count only once every six months. If you are willing, please contact Eleanor Rogers at eleanor.rogers04@gmail.com or 904-910-4452.

Budget Year-to-Date at 01/19/2024



MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS NOW FOR OUR WEDNESDAY NIGHT MEAL

RSVP to laraine@habchurch.com or 904-396-7754, ext. 103, each week by Monday.



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HAB

a place of grace

VISIT habchurch.com
for more information.

As we travel throughout the year, let's remember that the work of HAB will continue. Please take advantage of online giving to continue supporting our ministries. Or, **before you go, set up a recurring gift** so that you won't have to remember! It's easy!

Go to bit.ly/HABGiving or scan this QR code—



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