LENTEN THOUGHTS:

What do you need to do spiritually during the Lent? As Lent begins on Wednesday (02/22/2023), it is the time for reflection, for penitence and for self-examination. Now is the acceptable time. Search your own heart:

In what areas are you far from God?

Are there people from whom you need to seek forgiveness?

Are there people you need to forgive?

What needs to be made right in your life?

Let the ashes be your symbol of mourning those shortcomings and of repentance.

Have you been putting off God’s call to discipleship in some way?

Now is the acceptable time.

Make this Lenten season a time when you determine to make each day count. Resolve to follow some new path (for you) or renewed spiritual practice during the next six weeks, so that when you celebrate the resurrection, you will see that you have indeed changed between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday.

Now is the time to renew your prayer and meditative practices. Perhaps there is a devotional book that you wanted to read for some time now. Pick it up and get started. Set aside five minutes a day for spiritual reading, meditation, and prayer. Maybe the time will grow into something longer, but it is best not to set goals that are so high they lead quickly to failure. For once, set a goal you know you can accomplish, and move ahead with joy, rather than with a sense of desperate obligation.

Now is the time to renew your practices of service in the name of Christ, where you have sensed the call to serve others? Is there a place where the hungry are fed, the poor are clothed, the homeless are housed, the aged are cared for, the young are attended to, the sick are made well? What is God calling you to do? Now is the time.

Now is the time to attend to the poverty in your own soul. It is the time for searching, for self-examining, for letting God into the chambers of your heart that you prefer to keep hidden. Where have you not received or offered forgiveness? Where have you been hurtful, critical? In what ways have you disappointed yourself and God?

Now is the time for change, for reconciliation. As the season of Lent returns this year, let it return to you as a new opportunity for growth. Now is the acceptable time; now is the day of salvation. Let now be the time for you to be renewed in your faith. Amen.

Peace and Blessings!

Rev. Dr. Christopher Ponnuraj

Minister

West Center Congregational Church