

EPISCOPAL CHURCH of the
HEAVENLY REST

God's Love. For All.



Lay Reader

LENT · VOLUME 14, ISSUE 2 · ABILENE, TEXAS

From The Rector



Snow Day(s) and Awe

David Romanik

For as long as I can remember, people have told me that Abilene endures its worst winter weather between the last week of January and the second week of February. While I tend to be skeptical about such local truisms, this one certainly seemed to be confirmed a few weeks ago when the Big Country was hit by Winter Storm Fern just as the last week of January was beginning. Winter weather in Texas is different from what I grew up with. In

New England, individuals and communities are equipped with snow plows, snow blowers, shovels, and vehicles that can navigate icy roads. After the snow event, streets are plowed, driveways are cleared, cars are freed from snowdrifts, and everything goes back to normal within a day (two at the most). By contrast, winter storms in Texas are far more disruptive. Few people own snow shovels, and local authorities do not have the personnel or equipment to treat and plow roads. Moreover, our frozen precipitation generally takes the form of ice, which is far harder to clear than snow and far more treacherous to traverse. Thus, instead of going back to normal within a day or two, we are left to wait for the sun to shine and the temperature to increase. Instead of returning to the way things were before the storm, we are forced to adjust our routines to the reality that the world has changed around us.



A few days before the storm arrived, we welcomed JD Stillwater to the campus for an evening cosponsored by the Abilene Interfaith Council. A “science ambassador,” Stillwater offered a riveting presentation about the scientific dimensions of awe. Dictionaries tell us that awe is a combination of dread, veneration, and wonder that is inspired by something overwhelming. According to Stillwater, scientific studies have demonstrated that the experience of awe can lead to positive health effects in human beings. When we experience awe, our blood pressure decreases, our bodies relax, and we have a sense of increased well-being (the word that Stillwater used was “eudaemonia,” which literally means “good spirit”). Being a good scientist, Stillwater did not speculate about the reason for the health effects of awe. He did, however, observe that part of what awe requires of us is accommodation: we must accommodate our previously held understanding of the world to what we have experienced. We must accommodate the reality that the world has changed around us in some significant way.

On Ash Wednesday, we are reminded that “the first Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord’s passion and resurrection.” To put it another way, the early Church tried to recapture the awe that the first disciples experienced when they bore witness to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In response to this experience of awe, our ancestors in the faith sought to accommodate the reality of the resurrection by reordering and recalibrating their lives in light of the fact that God has the power to raise the dead to life. They did this through the disciplines of fasting, self-denial, meditating on God’s holy word, and seeking to apprehend the presence of God in the life of the Christian community. They disrupted their routines in light of what God had done and was doing in the life of the world. They worked to accommodate the fact that, through the resurrection, the world around them had fundamentally changed.

Of course, this “season of accommodation” eventually became known as Lent. Over the years, Lent became a time for personal holiness, when we put the “self” in “self-denial.” If we take its origins seriously, however, Lent ought to be a time for reorienting ourselves to the resurrection. Whatever fasts we choose, whatever disciplines or practices we take on should disrupt our routines and help us accommodate the reality that God has the power to raise the dead to life.



You Are Dust

Ashley Powers

Ash Wednesday marks the start of a new season across the church. With the imposition of ashes on our foreheads, we will signal to each other and the world that Lent has begun. We will, as Christ did, turn our faces towards Jerusalem, even as we turn our hearts inward to prepare for our holiest days.

It seems like an obvious conclusion that Ash Wednesday would be named after the ashes themselves, but it is not obvious *why we use ashes to begin with? What are the ashes composed of, and what does it represent?*

Starting in Genesis chapter 2, we see the first reference to dust in scripture as “the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.” The story of the creation of humankind begins in the dust of the earth and it is God who breathes life into the dust. Remembering that we are dust means remembering that God created us from dust and breathed life into us.

Throughout the Old and New Testaments, there are numerous references to dust and ashes as the humanity God created is faced with grief, sorrow, frailty, uncertainty, mortality, and the overwhelming reality of the power of God. In Job, Job’s friends are shocked at the calamity of their friend. In their distress, they weep for him tearing their clothes and throwing dust upon their heads. Jeremiah (6:26) tells the people of Israel to “put on sackcloth, and roll in ashes” in mourning and lamenting for their impending suffering. In a similar way, Daniel uses sackcloth and ashes to plead for God’s mercy, asking God to keep the covenant and steadfast love God has already established with God’s people. Finally, in the Gospels, Jesus uses sackcloth and ashes as a symbol of repentance (see Matthew 11:20). Dust and ash in scripture are used to represent fragility, mourning, repentance, and pleading with God for mercy.

Early Christians continued the practice of using ashes as a sign of mourning and repentance. Beginning in the eighth century, Christians in Rome marked the start of Lent by singing an antiphon that referred to the practice of putting on sackcloth and ashes, suggesting a mostly spiritual practice. The use of real ashes, however, was not widespread until 1091 when a North Italian council ordered everyone to receive ashes on the first day of Lent. Eventually the first day of Lent became Ash Wednesday as Christians used ash to ritually and liturgically signify the start of a season of repentance, reflection, mourning, prayer, and fasting.

Traditionally, the ashes used on Ash Wednesday are made from the burning of the palms from Palm Sunday of the previous year. This connects the beginning of Lent with the end. More importantly, Laurence Stookey highlights the very human reality that “our joyous acclamations of ‘Hosanna’ wither and die like cut greenery; even our best intentions ultimately require the mercy of a compassionate God.” The ashes made from palms remind us that just as our bodies return to the dust from which God formed us, so too do our praises to God waste away throughout our lives. Thus we find ourselves returning, asking the same God to breathe new life into the ashes of our souls. This is why nothing but ash in the shape of a cross can be used. No other material and shape can contain within itself the physical and spiritual demand of Ash Wednesday: to remind us of our creation and mortality, our need to both mourn and repent, our pleas for God to restore and sustain us. Ash Wednesday reminds us of God’s promise to show us mercy and compassion by way of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord.

As you bear your ashes on Ash Wednesday, remember all that those ashes represent. “You will die. You cannot change that. But you can die in Christ, whose death transforms your own demise. Meanwhile, live in Christ and discover Christ’s new life, which conquers death.” (Laurence Stookey)

Ash Wednesday at Heavenly Rest

We encourage you to join us for one of our Ash Wednesday services at Heavenly Rest on February 18, 2026.

7:30 a.m. - Holy Eucharist (Chapel)

12:00 p.m. - Holy Eucharist with Hymns (Nave)

5:30 p.m. - Children’s Ash Wednesday Service (Courtyard)

7:00 p.m. - Holy Eucharist with Choir and Hymns (Nave)



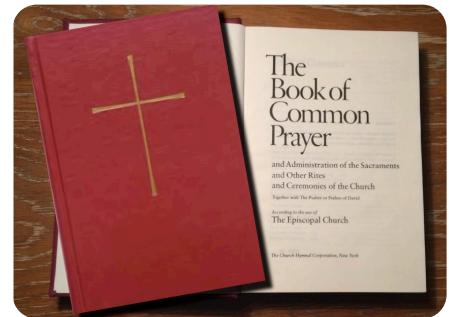
Collect for Purity

Amanda Watson

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that we may perfectly love you and magnify your Holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen

The Collect for Purity is an ancient prayer possibly originating with Alcuin of York, 8th century churchman and scholar in the court of Charlemagne. Originally a private, preparatory prayer for priests,

Thomas Cranmer translated it into English and placed it at the start of the Communion service in the 1549 Book of Common Prayer. The collect first acknowledges that God knows the secrets of our hearts. It then asks for our hearts to be cleansed by the Holy Spirit. This echoes Psalm 51, which we will say in the Ash Wednesday liturgy: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." In the Sermon on the mount, Jesus clearly links purity of heart with God's vision: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." (Matthew 5:8) Thomas Cranmer thoughtfully placed the purity of heart at the beginning of the Communion service, for it is through communion that we see Christ by faith. This opening reference to purity of heart comes full circle as we are instructed to "feed on Christ in our hearts by faith, with thanksgiving."



Inspired by the Holy Spirit, our open, exposed hearts are made clean so "that we may perfectly love God and worthily magnify God's holy Name." Cleansing by the Holy Spirit, in other words, is what we most fundamentally need to stand before the God who is love itself. Remember, when Jesus was asked which commandment in the law is the greatest, he quoted Deuteronomy: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment."

This collect is a fitting preparation for Lent, maybe even a definition of the great 40 days of Lent. I am in great wonder and thankfulness that God knows me. I am even more astounded that God loves me when God sees my open heart: that God sees what C. S. Lewis calls, "all the self-conceit and self-will that we have been training ourselves into for thousands of years." Oh, how I want an open heart, open to receive all people easily and genuinely, open to offer and receive love indiscriminately to and from all.

God knows all my desires including those desires that obscure God's call to love God and my neighbor: those desires to be the best, to be hailed as great and wonderful that hide in the bottom of my heart so deep that I, myself, do not recognize them. God sees all those secrets, ego and self-aggrandizement. With open hearts we stand exposed before God; there is nothing we need to hide from the God who created and redeemed us. Lent begins with all our sins marked on our foreheads even as we expect to be made clean by the "inspiration of the Holy Spirit." The Holy Spirit cleanses us not by the scrubbing away of our sins, but by exposing us to the love of God through the Holy Spirit.

Thus our cleansed hearts are not empty but prepared to love perfectly. Just as God loves us with our scars and ugliness, we are prepared to love others the same way. And that is Lent. Forty days to be quiet in the presence of a loving God who sees and knows us. Forty days to welcome the Holy Spirit to cleanse us with God's love. Forty days to be inspired by God to keep a Holy Lent. Lent is a holy time to let go of ego and to be who God called us to be. Lent is a time to be inspired by the Holy Spirit to open our hearts to one another and to worthily magnify God's holy Name.



Lift High the Cross

Joe Biles

In my fifteen-odd years as an Episcopalian, one Holy Week tradition I've heard of but have yet to see in the wild is the Three Hours' Devotion—180 minutes of preaching on the Seven Last Words of Christ from the Cross. The reinvigoration of the full Paschal Triduum (Maundy Thursday-Good Friday-Easter Vigil) in our 1979 Book of Common Prayer contributed to a decline in the Three Hours' Devotion, which even before then was somewhat of a niche Anglo-Catholic observance. Yet, I find something admirably countercultural in the concept. In a world of 30 second social media *Reels*, 10-13 minute sermons, and conspicuous silence around death and dying, it is still a bold thing to proclaim that our God died.

I've preached in Advent and Chrismastide that Christ's Incarnation is central to our redemption—that we err when we make Easter the sole salvific apex of the church year and domesticate Christmas into a Hallmark holiday. It was in the Incarnation that God condescended to take our nature upon him. "Mild he lays his glory by" rightly draws tears every Christmas. But the Incarnation was a journey, not an event—otherwise the gospels would end with the Annunciation.

In being born and raised by Mary and Joseph, Christ hallows childhood. In his baptism in the Jordan, Jesus (though without sin) identifies himself with our sins, hallows the gift of water, and shows us how to repent. In dying, he shows us how to take up our own cross (Matt. 16:24) and die to sin (Rom. 6:11). He shows us how to embrace the renewed life promised by God and reject the disordered clinging to this present life that lies beneath so much so much sin and sadness.

A core conviction of the early church's teaching about the life and work of Christ was the notion that (quoting St. Gregory of Nazianzus) "What is not assumed is not healed." Those aspects of the human condition Jesus came to redeem, he had to experience them. And so the author of Hebrews tells us, "Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might [...] free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death."

Lent and particularly our meditation on the cross is a time to confront this fear of death. It can be easy sometimes to retreat into squeamishness around Good Friday—to treat the crucifixion as simply an unfortunate thing that happened along the way to Jesus's resurrection and ascension. But the manner of Jesus's death matters. On a recent episode of the Queen of the Sciences podcast, hosts Sarah Hinlicky Wilson and Paul R. Hinlicky ask the provocative question: "What difference would it make if Jesus had died of a heart attack, hauling in a catch of fish from the Sea of Galilee?" A great difference, indeed.

Do humans scapegoat others? The judge of the nations died for us, a scapegoat (John 11:50).

Do humans die from callous indifference? The one who took the form of a slave in solidarity with us (Phil. 2:7) died abandoned by his friends.

Do humans kill in the name of God? Then God condescended to be murdered by the religious leaders of the day.

In the ritual economy of the Old Testament Law, uncleanness and impurity spread by contact. Touching a leper, a corpse, or someone with a hemorrhage makes one unclean. Yet theologians have noted that when Jesus touches the unclean—or when they touch him—the direction is reversed. Instead of impurity flowing into Jesus, healing and holiness flow out from him. In the life of Jesus, the leper is cleansed, the excluded are restored, and the dead are raised. That which he assumed, he also healed. And so, may our prayer ever be, in the words of the old Fanny J. Crosby hymn, Jesus, keep me near the cross.



Lent for Children and Families

Carol Ann Weston

As we enter the season of Lent, there are many ways to be involved in this observance. Below are ways that families can include their children and youth in the experience of Lent.



Lent is a Time for Children and Their Families

Sunday School classes and Wednesday night programing will continue throughout Lent and will use either Godly Play or the Gospel readings to guide them through Lent. (Please note there will not be Sunday School on March 8th & 15th due to Spring Break.)

Fill the Ark is a family devotional from Heifer International with a focus on our blessings and a generous spirit of giving to our neighbors in need. Each week shares a scripture as the focus for reflection and study. Each day includes information about Heifer's work, animal gifts, resources, and approach. Daily giving challenges individuals and families to appreciate their abundance and collect change to help other families.

On February 18th, join us for an **Ash Wednesday Service** specifically for children and their families at 5:30 in the courtyard. This service is especially designed for children and their families, but ALL are welcome! The liturgy will be simpler than the other services, will not include Eucharist, and some of our elementary children will be lay readers. Everyone will have the opportunity to have ashes placed on their forehead as a reminder that they belong to God, and they are loved by God.

On Wednesday, April 1, we will move to the Nave at 6:30 following dinner for a **Holy Week Pilgrimage**. All ages will participate in a "pilgrimage" where we walk together and experience some of the major events of Holy Week using all of our senses and becoming a part of the story.

Mark Your Calendars:

Family Vacation Bible School (June 1-3, 6:30-8:30 p.m.) - Our Winnie-the Pooh inspired family VBS is coming! If you want to be involved in the planning process, please contact Carol Ann at cweston@heavenlyrestabilene.org or Amanda at astokes414@gmail.com.



NWTX Diocese Summer Camps for Children and Youth

Camp Quarterman: June 21-26 for those currently in 6-12th grade

Camp Quarterman Jr.: July 12-17 for those currently in grades 2-6

Registration details will be coming soon.

YOUTH NIGHTS AT-A-GLANCE SPRING 2026

DATE	LOCATION
FEBRUARY 15	GURLEYS LASAGNA SOUP
MAY 17	TBD
MARCH 22	GURLEYS TACO NIGHT
APRIL 19	GOOLSBYS HAMBURGERS/HOT DOGS
JUNE 14	

Common Prayers, Different Languages

Bikole Mulanda and Jen Rogers

The Collect for Grace appears in the liturgies for Morning Prayer in Rite I, II and the *Kitabu Cha Sala Kwa Watu Wote*, the *Book of Prayer for All People from the Anglican Diocese of the Congo*. While the words we use may differ based on the services we attend, we are connected with each other (and across the Anglican tradition) by the similarities of these prayers. Below you will find the three variations of the Collect for Grace and the Collect for Peace that use here at Heavenly Rest. Later this year, our 1 PM service will transition to the *Kituabu Kipywa Cha Ibada*, which is the Prayer Book for the Anglican Church of Kenya. A version of the Kenyan Prayer Book is available in English as *Our Modern Services*.

Sala Kwa Neema

Ee Bwana, Baba yetu ya mbinguni, Mungu Mwenyezi unayeishi milele, uliyetusaidia tuiione siku hii salama; utulinde leo kwa uwezo wako mukuu, tusianguke katika zambi, wala tusiingie katika hatari yo yote, lakini matendo yetu yote yaongozwe nawe, ili tuyatende siku zote yaliyo ya haki mbele yako, kwa Yesu Kristo, Bwana wetu. Amina.

Collect for Grace

Lord our heavenly Father, Almighty and ever living God, who has brought us safely to the beginning of this day. Protect us today with your mighty power, so that we do not fall into any sin, or meet any danger; but all our deeds may be directed by you, and that we may do every day what is good in your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Collect for Grace (Book of Common Prayer, Rite I)

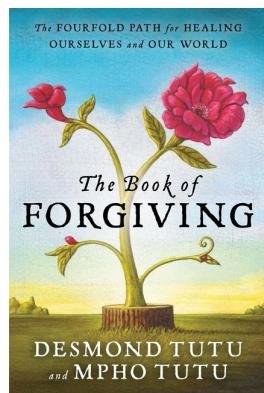
O Lord, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, who hast safely brought us to the beginning of this day: Defend us in the same with thy mighty power; and grant that this day we fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger; but that we, being ordered by thy governance, may do always what is righteous in thy sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Collect for Grace (Book of Common Prayer, Rite II)

Lord God, almighty and everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day: Preserve us with your mighty power, that we may not fall into sin, nor be overcome by adversity; and in all we do, direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lent Book Study

One could argue that the most challenging task of a faithful life is to forgive someone who has wronged you. It is also one of the most rewarding and fulfilling things one can do. Forgiveness frees us from resentment and ill-will. It repairs relationships and heals ruptures in the social fabric. Even if one wants to forgive, however, it can be hard to know how to approach the task. The late Archbishop of South Africa Desmond Tutu and his daughter Mpho are more acquainted than most with the power and potential of forgiveness. As chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa, Archbishop Tutu bore witness to the horrors of apartheid, but also saw how forgiveness could lay the groundwork for a new society. Based on this experience, as well as a lifetime of formation in the Church, Desmond and Mpho Tutu have written "The Book of Forgiving: The Fourfold Path for Healing Ourselves and Our World." Far from a vague paean to the need for forgiveness, "The Book of Forgiving" offers a practical and realistic guide to approaching this challenging and necessary element of our faith.



During the season of Lent, we will be reading "The Book of Forgiving" together on Wednesday evenings. Copies are now available. Join us for supper at 6:00 and the discussion at 6:30.



Eucharistic Prayer D and the Paschal Mystery

The liturgical year includes two major cycles organized around the Church's principal feasts: the Incarnation cycle, which includes Advent, Christmastide, Epiphany, and the season after the Epiphany; and the Paschal cycle, which incorporates Lent, Holy Week, Eastertide, and the Day of Pentecost. While there are some liturgical and musical changes that occur within these cycles, each is meant to be experienced as a liturgical whole. It is for this reason that at our 10:30 service, we tend to use the same Eucharistic Prayer throughout each cycle. During the Incarnation cycle, for instance, we have been using Eucharistic Prayer B, which contains a number of references to the "Word made flesh" and meditates on what it means for God to dwell among us. During the Paschal cycle, we will start using Eucharistic Prayer D at the 10:30 service.

Eucharistic Prayer D, which can be found beginning on page 372 of the Book of Common Prayer, is one of the most ancient prayers we have in our prayer book. It has been used for more than 1500 years in one form or another. Because of its age, it has some features that set it apart from the other Eucharistic prayers. Most conspicuously, it is quite long, clocking in at around 880 words. By contrast, the second longest Eucharistic prayer in our prayer book, Eucharistic Prayer 1, is around 750 words (we will use Eucharistic Prayer 1 at the 8:00 service during Lent). Prayer D's length can feel intimidating; it is not especially conducive to twenty-first century attention spans. There are, however, good reasons for its impressive word count. In the first place, Prayer D, unusually for Eucharistic prayers, includes the Prayers of the People. Shortly after the epiclesis (the invocation of the Holy Spirit), the Celebrant asks God to remember those who minister in the Church, those who are sick, and those who have died in the peace of Christ. There is something incredibly powerful about offering our prayers for the people around us at the altar: the heart of our common life.

Most of Prayer D's length can be accounted for in the section between the Sanctus ("Holy, Holy, Holy") and the Words of Institution ("On the night before he died for us..."). It is this section that makes Prayer D so appropriate for the Paschal cycle. It reminds us that we were formed in God's image; that even though we were disobedient to God's commandment, God did not abandon us to the power of death; that God's Son gave himself up to death; that he destroyed death and renewed creation by rising from the grave; and that God sent the Holy Spirit so that "we might live no longer for ourselves." In so many ways, this section of Prayer D traces the arc of the Paschal cycle: on Ash Wednesday, we remember that we have been created from the dust of the earth; throughout Lent, we reflect on the ways we have dishonored the image of God in ourselves and others; during Holy Week, we meditate on Christ's faithful obedience to death on the cross; throughout Eastertide, we rejoice in his victory over death; and on Pentecost, we consider how this victory might transform our relationship to the people and the world around us.

As we meditate on the Paschal mystery over the coming months, our hope is that Eucharistic Prayer D will be a companion and guide as it reminds us of our call to live "not only for ourselves, but for him who died and rose for us."

All May, None Must, Some Should

The Reconciliation of a Penitent is one of the most powerful services in the Book of Common Prayer. Known more colloquially as “Confession,” the Sacrament of Reconciliation, found beginning on page 447 of the prayer book, is an opportunity to identify and confess sins or sinful trends in one’s life and receive the promise of God’s forgiveness. While every service of Holy Eucharist includes a time of corporate confession, there is something especially powerful about identifying specific ways that one has dishonored the image of God in oneself and others. Participating in the Sacrament of Reconciliation is not a requirement, but it can be a source of particular comfort to those who are struggling with the reality of sin in their life. The Episcopal Church’s approach to the Sacrament of Reconciliation can be summarized succinctly: “all may; none must; some should.”

Lent is a season of self-examination, penitence, renewal. As such, it is a particularly good time to experience the Sacrament of Reconciliation. During the season of Lent, clergy will be available on Tuesdays at 12:30 pm in the chapel for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Clergy will also be available to hear confessions after the midday Eucharist Monday through Thursday during Holy Week (March 30 through April 2), and after the noon service until 3:00 on Good Friday (April 3). If you would like to have your confession heard, wait in the pews near the baptismal font and you will be brought to the chapel by a priest. At the beginning of the service, the priest will usually walk the penitent through the service. The Sacrament of Reconciliation rarely takes more than ten minutes. Matters discussed within the context of the Sacrament of Reconciliation are treated with the strictest confidentiality. We hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to experience a service that is rooted in a profound awareness of God’s grace.

Stations of the Cross

Join us for Stations of the Cross every Friday during Lent at 12:00 p.m. in the church. This time of prayer and reflection is a powerful way to deepen your faith and walk with Jesus on His journey to the cross. All are welcome to participate as we unite in meditation and prayer during this holy season



Pandora
Doug Thomas

Don't open that box Pandora:
there's a world of hurt inside;
and once it's free to roam about
there'll be no place to hide.

Just leave it shut Pandora:
it's much more than you can bear;
the beauty of its outward form
is nothing but a snare.

Please close your mind Pandora:
to the myths you would create;
of all the great and glorious good
that lies therein, in state.

Don't be so vain Pandora:
as to think that you deserve
protection from the consequence;
your freedom to preserve.

Although it's good to look upon
when just the outside's seen,
and visions wrought by the lustful
eye construe a lovely dream;
and though the pride of life
pervades all human action states,
to mold one's self to fit desire
condemns the soul to fate.

Don't open that box Pandora:
for the gods would tell you true;
to presume upon the gift of life
will be the death of you.

Holy Week at Heavenly Rest

March 29 - April 5

The Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday, March 29

8:00 a.m. - Holy Eucharist

10:30 a.m. - Liturgy of the Palms and Holy Eucharist (service begins in the Courtyard)
1:00 p.m. - Worship in Swahili

Monday in Holy Week, March 30

8:30 a.m. - Morning Prayer (Chapel)

12:00 p.m. - Holy Eucharist

Tuesday in Holy Week, March 31

8:30 a.m. - Morning Prayer (Chapel)

12:00 p.m. - Holy Eucharist

Wednesday in Holy Week, April 1

8:30 a.m. - Morning Prayer (Chapel)

12:00 p.m. - Holy Eucharist

6:00 p.m. - Agape Supper (Gerhart Hall)

6:30 p.m. - Holy Week Pilgrimage for Children and Families (Nave)

Maundy Thursday, April 2

8:30 a.m. - Morning Prayer (Chapel)

7:00 p.m. - Holy Eucharist with Footwashing and Stripping of the Altar

The Nave will remain open for meditation and prayer until midnight.

Good Friday, April 3

8:30 a.m. - Liturgy of Good Friday with Communion from the Reserved Sacrament

12:00 p.m. - Solemn Liturgy of Good Friday with Veneration of the Cross

5:00 p.m. - Stations of the Cross (Downtown Abilene - service begins at St. Paul United Methodist Church)

Holy Saturday, April 4

8:30 a.m. - Holy Saturday Liturgy

8:00 p.m. - The Great Vigil of Easter (service begins in the Columbarium)

Easter Day, April 5

8:00 a.m. - Holy Eucharist with Hymns

9:15 a.m. - Easter Brunch (Gerhart Hall)

10:00 a.m. - Easter Egg Hunt (Playground and East Lawn)

10:15 a.m. - Children and Youth Unbury the Alleluia Banner

10:30 a.m. - Festival Holy Eucharist with Flowering of the Cross

1:00 p.m. - Holy Eucharist in Swahili with Flowering of the Cross

3:00 p.m. - Easter Egg Hunt (Playground and East Lawn)

Unless otherwise noted, all Holy Week services will take place in the Nave.

Chamber Music Concert Series

Listening to Orpheus

Thomas Pavlechko



In preparation for the crucifixion and resurrection, Jesus withdrew from the ordinary world into the wilderness. Lent, in the liturgical calendar, is a season of introspection, sacrifice and preparation. The Ancient Greeks had a similar image, the *katabasis*, a descent from the mortal realm into Hades, or the Underworld. One of the most well-known figures of Greek mythology is the legendary musician Orpheus. His descent into the Underworld after the death of his wife Eurydice, illustrates the ways music is intimately connected with experiences of darkness and grief. This presentation begins with a short discussion of the psychological and musical implications of the myth of Orpheus, followed by a concert with pianist Rodney Waters and tenor Kenneth Gayle. The concert includes works specifically inspired by the myth of Orpheus, as well as additional music and texts that explore the themes of night, sleep, darkness and introspection.

Jungian psychoanalyst Rodney Waters trained at the International School of Analytical Psychology in Zurich, Switzerland. A professional pianist for over 40 years, he has performed internationally and curated numerous lecture-concerts for the Jung Center in Houston, Texas and The Esalen Institute in Big Sur, California. He is currently in private practice at The Center for Healing Arts and Sciences in Houston.



Tenor Kenneth Gayle performs in opera and concert throughout the United States. Recent highlights include the NYC premier of "PAX" by John Cornelius at Carnegie Hall. He serves as Director of Music and Fine Arts at Unity of Houston, and on the Board of Directors for the Apollo Chamber Players.



Confirmation 2026

On Sunday, February 8, Bishop Mayer visited Heavenly Rest and 27 individuals renewed their commitment to Christ through confirmation, reception or reaffirmation at the 10:30 service. Confirmation for the 1:00 service will take place later this spring.



Follow us online!
@heavenlyrestabilene
Office (325) 677-2091

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH
The Most Reverend Sean Rowe, *Presiding Bishop*

THE DIOCESE OF NORTHWEST TEXAS
The Right Reverend J. Scott Mayer, *Bishop*

PARISH STAFF

The Reverend David Romanik, *Rector*
The Reverend Ashley Powers, *Associate Rector*
The Reverend Amanda Watson, *Assistant Rector for Community Life*
The Reverend Karen Boyd, *Assisting Priest*
The Reverend Doug Thomas, *Priest in Residence*
The Reverend Dr. Russell Dickerson, *Deacon*
The Reverend Joe Biles, *Deacon and Pastoral Assistant*
Bikole Mulanda, *Swahili Minister*
Thomas Pavlechko, *Organist and Director of Music*
Elizabeth Knauer, *Music Assistant, Choristers*
Laura Dickson, *Music Assistant, Children's Choir*
Carol Ann Weston, *Director of Family Ministries*
Jen Rogers, *Director of Communications and Stewardship*
Lydia Hurt, *Parish Manager*
Brenda Fisher, *Parish Accountant*
Robert Becerra, *Sexton*
Dorothy Guerra, *Housekeeper*
Anne Jones, *Nursery Manager*

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