

## PASTOR'S ARTICLE

---



“The earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it...” Psalm 24

Traditionally in agrarian societies spring was the leanest time of the year. It was the time when most people who lived off the land had the least amount of food to sustain themselves. The stores that had been preserved over the winter were dwindling and the springtime planting began. So it makes sense that the church made use of the cycles of people’s daily lives to inform their spiritual lives. On Shrove Tuesday, over at Trinity Lutheran this year, we will use up the last of our stores, so to speak, in party style - use up the fat in the larder, the meat, etc., and we will begin our wait, our Lent, as we move toward a new season of planting, of regrowth and rebirth.

Most of us have been long disconnected from the cycles of the land; planting, waiting and harvesting. But these cycles are important to recall and remember, I would venture to say more so now than ever, as we remind ourselves of the importance of the land and the stress it is under from human activity.

At our Synod Assembly in June of last year, a motion came to the floor to limit or eliminate the use of single use plastics in our worship life and daily life. The motion passed. It came before us because we have slowly realized that while we fell in love with plastic - its use and convenience, its durability - we have discovered that we are literally drowning in it. Plastic containers and water bottles dot our landscape, fill our landfill sites, and swirl into huge plastic islands in our oceans. The time is of the essence to remember the land that we are all dependent upon, the land that belongs to God, and our care for it.

So as a congregation we will try a couple of new things during this Lenten season. The first is that instead of ordering palm fronds to come from Florida, California, or Guatemala, using up fossil fuel in transportation and adding to Redeemer’s carbon footprint, our Worship and Music Committee has boldly decided that we will use what we have locally to usher in Holy Week and to greet the Lord as he comes to us as Messiah. When our ancestors in faith welcomed Jesus into the city of Jerusalem they used what they had around them - grabbing loose palm branches and throwing down their coats to show him honour. We will do the same - only this time we will use local cedar branches to welcome Jesus. Perhaps, too, we shall throw down a few coats!

The second thing we will try is to replace our single use plastic communion cups with cups that are compostable, or at the very least, recyclable. I have been looking into what is available for us from our suppliers - what can be added onto our compost heap or what can be recycled in the city of London.

These are two simple efforts to remind us that the land is not ours - it belongs to God and to future generations. We can take concrete steps and make daily choices that help us live out our baptismal calling of justice, our love for God and neighbour, and our care for this good earth.

Pastor Katherine