



A Lenten Journey

*What deeper
reflection
are we called to
in our time?
Why?*

Ash Wednesday
February 25, 2009

*Announce to my people their rebellion,
to the house of Jacob their sins.
Yet day after day they seek me
and delight to know my ways,
as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness
and did not forsake the ordinance of their God;
they ask of me righteous judgments,
they delight to draw near to God.
Why do we fast, but you do not see?
Why humble ourselves,
But you do not notice?*

*Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day...
you fast only to quarrel and to fight
and to strike with a wicked fist.
Such fasting as you do today
Will not make your voice heard on high...*

*Is not this the fast that I choose:
To loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
And bring the homeless poor into your house
When you see the naked, to cover them,
And not to hide yourself from your own kin?
-Isaiah 58: 1b-4, 6-7*

Since early in the fourth century, Christians have set aside the season of Lent as a time of fasting and penitence to prepare for the feast of Easter. But the words of the prophet Isaiah remind us that our fasting must not become empty ritual disconnected from meaningful change in the way we live our daily lives. As we begin our reflection on both the beauty and brokenness we see in our world, consider how your daily living is part of that beauty and brokenness. How can the disciplines of this 40-day series help you make long-lasting changes in your life?

Act for Change

Christians gather for worship to seek God's forgiveness, to lament, to rejoice and to give thanks for God's grace and power to transform us. Worship is one of the ways people of faith "act for change"! Consider gathering with others for a time of devotion each week during Lent—[HERE](#) you'll find today's order for worship from the resource Creation

Waits With Eager Longing.

Be Aware

Check out the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's (ELCA) social statement, [*Caring For Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice*](#) to learn more about God's vision for creation, and our part in it.

The ELCA also produces resources on the environment and the church's engagement in environmental policy. You can find these [resources](#) on the ELCA Web site —use them to learn more about many of the issues that will be covered in this series over the next six weeks.

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God's work. Our hands.

