

## Lent: a journey in pursuit of goodness

Lent is a six-week trek into the wilderness, spiritually speaking. It is a season of fasting in preparation for the great feast of Easter. It begins on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 10 this year, and runs until sunrise on Easter morning: March 27.

The word Lent comes from the ancient Saxon meaning: Spring. It's like spring cleaning.

It's a time to give up the consumptions that consume us. For some of us it is the food we are addicted to, or the compulsive behaviours such as playing computer games or shopping.

These are the kinds of things that distract us from goodness in ourselves, in each other, and in all of creation.

Whether you are a Christian or not, whether you believe in God or not, Lent is a good time for all of us to resolve ourselves to pursue goodness with all our being.

The same way that practising a sport such as hockey or yoga makes us better, Lenten practices make us better human beings.

The Hebrew Scriptures talks about what a good fast looks like. The writer of Isaiah, speaking to the readers as if speaking for God:

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 the yoke?

Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,

And bring the homeless poor into your house;

When you the naked to cover them?

Isaiah 58:6-7

Whatever fast you choose to partake in this Lenten season, may it encourage you to be a goodness provocateur and a full participant in God's purpose for the world; may we all be in solidarity for the sake of God's proclaimed fast to stand with those on the edges, the hungry, the oppressed, the homeless, the stranger.

The sanctuary will be open every Wednesday at noon for a time of personal prayer and meditation.

Submitted by Lynn Watson

Minister, St. Paul's United Church