

IT'S AN EARTH DAY CELEBRATION!

SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 10AM TO 12PM
MEET AT THE BEECH AVENUE ENTRANCE TO GLEN STEWART RAVINE

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HOLY WEEK
THE WEEK THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

Join us as we journey with Jesus from the cross to the resurrection.

Services include:

Maunder Thursday, April 18 @ 7:00 p.m. Jesus' Last Supper with his Disciples (Downstairs Hall)

Good Friday, April 19 @ 10:30 a.m. Laying our Burdens Down

Easter Sunday, April 21 @ 10:30 a.m. The Resurrection Story

www.fallingbrookpresbyterian.com

HOPE UNITED CHURCH

2550 Danforth Ave.
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HopeUnited.ca
416-691-9682

Sunday Services 11am

April Events at Hope United

April 17 Easter Messy Church
5:30-7pm

April 18 Holy Thursday Services
2pm & 7pm

April 19 Good Friday Service
2pm

April 21 Easter Sunday Breakfast Service
9am

April 21 Easter Sunday Service with Choir
11am

waverley road BAPTIST CHURCH

Come, bring your family & friends! There's a welcome here!

Lent Sunday Series begins March 10th @ 11^{am}

Good Friday Service - April 19th @ 10^{am}

Easter Sunday Service - April 21st @ 11^{am}

Coming this Spring - The Marriage Preparation Course

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wholly devoted - walking in wisdom - witness to our world - woven together - His workmanship

Open Doors: Spiritual Matters

What is Lent and why is it important?

REV. JEFF NOWERS
St. Aidan's Anglican Church

AS THE days become noticeably longer, Christian communities are in the thick of the 40-day season called Lent. The meaning of the word "Lent," which originated in Old English, has to do with "lengthening"—the incremental lengthening of daylight hours that leads to the celebration of Easter.

In medieval Christianity, Lent was an austere period of strict fasting and soul-searching, mirroring the 40 days that Jesus spent in the desert after his baptism. By the late Middle Ages, however, Lenten rigidity had begun to wane somewhat: fasting gave way to a restricted diet, such as not eating meat.

That practice has continued to evolve up to the present time. Individuals identify a certain food luxury or pleasure as something from which to abstain: chocolate, alcohol, sweets, social media (Lenten discipline isn't always food-related).

Sometimes, instead of giving something up, people take something on that isn't part of their usual routine, such as drinking more water, going to the gym regularly, or reading a passage of the Bible daily.

What's the point of these Lenten disciplines and practices?

One purpose is to allow Christians to prepare intentionally for the celebration of Easter—the mystery of Jesus' resurrection and triumph over death. In that preparation, we need to be reminded of the reality of death, our mortality, and the frailty and uncertainty of life. In order to do that, many of us abstain from certain pleasures that otherwise might shield us from a reality check.

Another purpose of observing Lent goes beyond the particulars of Christian faith. It has to do with identifying harmful temptations that the normal patterns of our lives might prevent us from discerning. One example of an insidious temptation that afflicts everyone

is single-use plastic. Cups and lids, straws, cutlery and utensils, packaging of produce and meat, bags of milk, shrink wrap—these have become a central part of our everyday lives.

Toronto has attempted to beef up its recycling program over the years, but far from everything put in a blue bin ends up recycled.

The temptation of single-use plastic is cost-efficiency and ease, but the effects on our planet are taking a drastic toll. Much of single-use plastic ends up in water streams that ultimately feed oceans. In the midst of the Pacific Ocean is a notorious gyre of plastic debris—what Angela Sun, in her documentary film *Plastic Paradise*, has described as "minestrone soup"—adding up to an area greater than the size of Texas. Plastic is getting into the fish we eat, the water we drink, and the salt we use.

This year at the outset of Lent I resolved to give up single-use plastic. It's been one of the toughest Lenten disciplines I've ever taken on. It's impacted my choice

of food to buy, how I eat, and where I shop. But it's also given me hope as I encounter many others who are reordering their consumption for the wellbeing of our world. I readily concede that I haven't been able to eliminate single-use plastic entirely from my life. What- ever unavoidable single-use plastic that I use now goes in a large bag that I'll assess carefully at the conclusion of Lent. More importantly, I don't intend to resign myself to single-use plastic after Easter.

Lent, though it is part of the Christian tradition, can be observed with integrity by anyone of any faith or no faith. It's a wonderful 40-day commitment to be reminded that our world is not as it should be, that we all in various degrees bear some responsibility for our collective woes, and that we can resolve with hope to live differently.

The Rev. Jeff Nowers is Associate Priest of St. Aidan's Anglican Church, located on Queen Street East at Silver Birch Avenue.

Dental Matters

Be an educated consumer of health info

DR. ALLAN KATCHKY
is a dentist who practises in the East End



IT SEEMS like every day we hear about something that is either 'good' for us or 'bad' for us. One day avocados are the new 'superfood', and the next day we are told that they are high in fat and should be avoided. How does the average person know what or who to believe?

The Internet, while relatively young at 30 years old, now has over 350 billion web pages. And while search engines and social media platforms have hundreds of 'editors' reviewing content, it is virtually impossible to filter out all the bad information out there. We therefore need to be smart consumers of information. Just as it makes sense to read labels at the supermarket before throwing an item in the shopping cart, it makes sense to spend a few minutes researching a claim on the internet. This is true of all information on electronic media, but especially when it

comes to health information.

As an example, a recent 'documentary' appeared on a popular streaming service, claiming that root canal treatment could cause a variety of negative health effects, including cancer. The content was available for viewing for approximately six weeks before the editors of the site determined that there were false or unsubstantiated claims and deleted the film from their website. At first blush, the documentary style of the film gave it an air of legitimacy. However, any viewer who took a few minutes to research either the claims or the legitimacy of the 'researchers' who were quoted quickly learned that the content was of dubious accuracy. Here are some tips to help sort out good information from misinformation regarding health content on the Internet.

1. Consider the source: Is the information from a respected medical journal or from someone's personal webpage? Journals such as the *New England Journal of Medicine*, the *Journal of the American Medical Association*

and the *Journal of the Canadian Dental Association* are peer-reviewed, meaning an article about cancer treatment has to be reviewed and approved by numerous other cancer researchers for validity of study design and methods

2. Check out the author: The author of isn't always named, and that can be a red flag. If the author is named, they can be checked for credentials on sites such as ResearchGate. Also check to see if the author is also selling a product or service online as this can certainly introduce bias.

3. Use fact-checking websites: There are numerous websites which exist to help sort out good information from false claims. In health care information, one example is Quackwatch.

4. Trust your own sensibilities: If information seems implausible or dubious, it might be worthwhile to spend time researching the information. Or ask your own health care provider for their opinion on information you have heard or read. In other words, be an educated consumer of health information.

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