

Bishops Post April/May 2025

*Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me."
(Matthew 16,24)*

Lent is a season of preparation—a journey that calls believers to turn their hearts toward God. This forty-day period, reflecting Jesus' time in the wilderness, is a time of fasting, prayer, repentance, and renewal. It invites us to strip away distractions, quiet the noise of the world, and seek a deeper relationship with God.

Jesus' words in Matthew 16 remind us that following Him requires surrender. To deny oneself is not just about temporarily giving up certain comforts but about yielding our entire lives to Christ. It is a call to trust in Him completely, even when the journey is difficult.

The season of Lent allows us to reflect on what it means that Jesus has conquered death. He has removed everything that separates us from God and from one another—envy, hatred, fear, doubt, and the feeling of never having enough. Ultimately, death has been defeated, and the way to God is open—free and clear. This is what we celebrate at Easter, and it is the path we walk toward during Lent.

Yet, as we look at the world around us, we see unrest, suffering, and death—in the Congo, Sudan, Mozambique, Palestine and Israel, Ukraine, here in South Africa and so many other places. It is easy to feel discouraged and to lose hope. However, the Passion of Christ reminds us that the Son of God came into this world as one of us. He lived among us, suffered for us, and understands our pain, sorrow, and struggles. But above all, it reminds us that in the end, life triumphs. Christ has overcome death!

As followers of Christ, we walk through this season with the assurance that God's grace is sufficient. Lent is not merely about sacrifice; it is about opening our hearts to His transforming love. It is a season to remember that Christ has already won the victory. Through Him, there is forgiveness, renewal, and everlasting life.

May this Lenten journey be one of deep reflection, renewed faith, and a closer walk with Christ

News from NELCSA

In John 17:21, Jesus prays for unity among His followers, reflecting His perfect relationship with the Father. This unity is not just outward agreement but a spiritual oneness that testifies to His divine mission. Despite differences in traditions and theology, all believers share a common foundation in Christ's saving work. Diversity should not divide but enrich the Church, offering multiple perspectives that strengthen faith. With this calling, the church councils of ELCSA, NELCSA, and ELCSA (Cape Church) met on February 9–10, 2025, to discuss shared interests and strengthen cooperation. May God bless this and future meetings as we witness together to Christ's calling.

The bishops of the Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa (LUCSA) gathered in Bonaero Park (February 24–27, 2025) for a conference on peacebuilding. LUCSA represents 15 Lutheran churches and two million Christians across 10 Southern African countries.

We give thanks for the election of Pastor Susanne Liechti Lauchenauer to serve the Kempton Park congregation part-time. May her ministry be blessed.

We celebrate our theology students: Rutendo Gora and Pascal Pienaar passed their first oral theological examination and will begin internships. Hermann Düvel passed his second theological examination and will serve in the Kroondal congregation. PJ Hanekom completed his first internship year in New Germany and will continue at UELC. May God guide them in their calling.

Congratulations to Hermannsburg School on appointing Ms. Joan Gerber as Executive Head, starting April 1, 2025. May her leadership be a blessing to the school community.

