

*Eternal Lord of Love, behold your Church walking once more the pilgrim way of Lent.
Led by your cloud by day, by night your fire.
Moved by your love and toward your presence bent
Far off yet near the joy of all desire.*

Dear Friends in Christ,

This Lent as I have in each of the past two Lents I am spending this entire season with one of our parishes. As bishop this practice gives me the opportunity to know one congregation more deeply and to provide help to a congregation at a critical point in their life. It also allows the congregation to get to know me in another way than as a bi-annual visitor for the episcopal visitation. It also allows me to experience Lent in a new way each year.

Two years ago I spent the season with the people of St. Anskar's, Hartland as their vicar Peter Floyd began his ministry among them. Last year I spent the season with the congregation of St. Bartholomew's, Pewaukee accompanied by members of the program staff who shared preaching and presiding duties with me. This year I am spending the Sundays of Lent at St. Luke's, Racine a parish in transition which is home to a vibrant outreach ministry, The Hospitality Center.

It is the custom of St. Luke's to use Rite I in the season of Lent with Healy Willan's setting of the Eucharist, a setting familiar to those of us who remember the 1928 Book of Common Prayer and the Hymnal 1940. I and many of the congregation are enjoying this return to something that touches what I can best describe as our sacred memory. For me sacred memory is a reminder that what we do in liturgy connects us with the whole people of God those in the Church here on earth and those who are now in God's nearer presence. And, because God is Lord of all time, it connects us with the Church of the future, as well.

I invite you in this holy season to pay attention to the sacred memories your Lenten journey touches in you. See them as an invitation to hear and see the familiar in old and new ways.

Yours in Christ Jesus,

+Steven

The Rt. Rev. Steven Andrew Miller
Bishop