



CHURCH
OF THE
ASCENSION

2020 Lenten Program

Sundays in March beginning with lunch at 12:45 p.m. & ending by 2:00 p.m.

March 1 - "*Broken Icons: The Damaged Goods of Lenten Practice*" Led by Christopher Poore

For many of us, Lent begins with a renewed commitment to various spiritual practices—fasting, prayer, and almsgiving. But is our theology expansive enough to account for how these practices can go terribly wrong? We'll explore how Anglican theologians grapple with the fact that promised spiritual goods can sometimes inflict unexpected harm, and we'll discuss how accounting for these harms can actually help us to practice Lent with greater mindfulness and honesty.



Christopher Poore is a Regenstein Fellow at the University of Chicago Divinity School, where he is pursuing an MA in Theology. He began attending the Church of the Ascension in 2018, often with friends from Hyde Park and with his wife, the poet Gina Franco. He is an associate poetry editor for Narrative Magazine, and his own writing has appeared in America Magazine, St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly, and Denver Quarterly.

March 8 - "*Forgiveness, Christian and Otherwise*" Led by Joseph 'Joey' Keegin

What does it mean to forgive? How does the forgiveness demanded of us by Christ differ from that of other religious and philosophical traditions? Why is forgiveness so important in Christian tradition? I can't resolve these questions exhaustively ~ but by sharing a story about a time when I learned something essential about our need for forgiveness, perhaps I can help make room for God to show us the answers.



Joey's exploration of forgiveness arose from personal experience and need and contributed to his embrace of the Christian faith as an adult. Joey holds a Liberal Arts MA from St. John's College, Annapolis, and has worked as German language tutor, cook, music columnist and more. His published writings include features on 'fanzines,' music-fan-based magazines, book reviews and short fiction.

March 15 - "*Naught Else But the Yearning of the Soul: Image & Imagination in Early Women's Devotional Practices*" - Clare Kemmerer

The late medieval Church restricted women from priesthood, the altar, and other sacred spaces; women's devotion and spirituality was lived out in the home and the convent. In private, practices of imagination and image flourished: women developed elaborate meditations and artistic practices that brought them close to the Body of Christ and the Virgin Mother. This presentation will grapple with the centrality of image to early women's spiritual practices, before leading listeners in a brief Lenten image meditation and discussion exploring the gendered life of imagination, icons and iconoclasm.

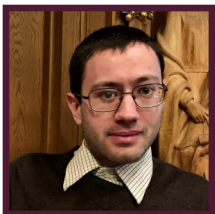


Clare Kemmerer is a fourth-year undergraduate at the University of Chicago, where she studies Art History & Religious Studies. Her research focuses on the visual culture of medieval convents, with a particular emphasis on private devotional practices, textiles, and the socio-political climate of the Lueneberg Heath.

Continued ...

March 22 - *“Fear & Idols”* - William Pounds

This will largely be a discussion-based program centering on biblical fear (particularly in 1st Peter). Opening remarks will examine the role of fear in direct worship and move to consider its role in interaction with the world. We will consider fear's relationship to the virtue of constancy, the revealing of idols, and bearing suffering. Particularly at issue will be how fear and the emotional life can revive us, draw us in greater unity, and communicate the life of the church. The program is designed for those who wish to grow in the emotional life of the church and in exile and hopes to strengthen our understanding of emotions more broadly.



An alumnus of Kenyon College (philosophy) and AmeriCorps WV, William Pounds explains that he *“was raised by a small family in a tiny Eastern Iowa town.”* In 2019 William moved to an intentional community in Chicago’s Little Village neighborhood, joining 8 other adults, 3 kids, and 4 pets. He soon found and became part of the Church of Ascension community as well. William’s hobbies include writing poetry, reading theology, and working at small farms and gardens.

March 29 - *“Suffering, Love, & Surrender”* - Taylor Zimmerman

Despite our sometimes overly optimistic views on love, to open oneself to another in love often means embracing uncertainty, discomfort, and, more often than not, pain. In a world marked by violence, 'hurt people hurt people' (as the saying goes) and living into Christ's commandment to love our neighbors often involves a level of suffering on their behalf. In this talk, we will explore together the nature of suffering and what it might look like for suffering to be redemptive within the Christian life. What are the theological, biblical, and philosophical elements to help us understand suffering? How does redemptive suffering differ from masochism—allowing another to dominate our lives? And how might suffering extend beyond our interpersonal lives to extend to our communities at large?



Taylor Zimmerman, a native of Panama City, Florida, holds an MDiv degree from Asbury Theological Seminary in Kentucky and is now pursuing further graduate studies at the University of Chicago. Keeping mind and body in balance, he has worked as a personal trainer and fitness instructor. A favorite Scripture is 1 Peter 5:7: *“Cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.”*



The Rev. Dr. Robert ‘Bob’ Petite, an assisting priest at Church of the Ascension, has devoted decades of his ministry to chaplaincy and leadership of chaplaincy training programs, focusing on group processes, faith development and organizational vitality. He has kindly agreed to support, mentor and help organize our Lenten program presenters as they develop their presentations.

All programs begin at 12:45 with a simple lunch,
served in St. Michael’s Hall.

All are welcome!