

Justin Morrill, Temple House Church witness, Symbolic Centrum,
Sunday, March 4, 1973

A TIME OF WEEPING

As a Protestant I had always understood Lent to begin on Ash Wednesday. When I learned that the Anglicans pushed the Seasonal beginnings back three weeks ahead of Lent, I began to brook on why they felt that was necessary. I came to the conclusion that Lent is an intentional time; and for the style, the model, and the work of Lent you have to have time to prepare for it.

Lent is a time of weeping. We need time to prepare for our weeping to be sure we weep about the right thing. All of us show up weeping. We cannot go down a hall without seeing weeping going on. Probably, however, that is not the weeping of ~~Lent~~. The weeping I seek of is the weeping of repentance.

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this quarter at a Temple Houses Church
George Holcombe began ~~that quarter~~/by saying that it was going to be a hard

quarter. It has been a hard quarter. And we have come to the time of the

discontinuous month. I used to have a different image of discontinuous months

than I have ~~has~~ had lately. I thought that it meant that ^{you} ~~that~~ ~~was~~ did not get up
~~in the morning~~

in the morning and that you had week/~~is~~ off. I have become clear that "discontinuous"

means different and more intense. We have the priors in; we have the Local Church

Training School; we have serious planning for the Summer. And it is interesting

that this year that that month begins at just about the same that Lent begins.

I grew up as a Protestant and I ~~understood~~ ^{understood} that Lent began on Ash ~~Monday~~

Wednesday; and indeed it does. But I have since learned, ~~especially~~ especially when I got

involved a little with Anglicans that they ^{pushed} ~~pushed~~ it back for about three weeks

~~ahead~~ ahead of lent, and did something---that they have some strange Latin words for

that mean numbers, which I can never pronounce, which are before Lent. And I am

quite not/sure why they did ~~that~~, but I have decided why they did that. They decided

that Lent is an intentional time and that in order to ~~prepare~~ ~~yourself~~ prepare yourself

~~of~~ ^{of} ~~had~~ ^{had}
for ~~the~~ the style and the model and the work/~~was~~ Lent you ~~had~~ ^{would} have time to
prepare for it. And I/~~like~~ ^{would} to put it this way/~~Lent~~ ^{that} ~~is~~ ^a time of weeping.

And we need time ahead of that to prepare for/~~weeping~~, to be sure that ~~we~~ ^{our} weep

~~about~~ ^{all} all of us keep about the right thing. Now/~~we~~ ~~are~~ ~~showing~~ ~~up~~ ~~weeping~~. You cannot go down

a hall here without seeing weeping going on. That is not what I mean by the

weeping of Lent, probably, that it is a time of repentance. ~~It~~ It is a time the

when the church has decided that ~~this~~ is the season in which we are the ones who
 decisionally weep and be penitent, ^{some kind of} not/weeping over my ~~a~~ failure to ~~see~~ come off,
 not weeping over my situation, not weeping over my inadequacy, but being the ones
 who decide in this season to ~~a~~ sorrow for our failure to love God, sorrow for our
 failure to seize opportunity~~s~~. Now that kind of activity is always/~~backward~~, not
 backward~~s~~-directed; but it is a time of reflecting on ~~all~~ the occasions when there
 was the possibility that I lost and to project, or in that experience to come to
 terms with how it is that as I move toward the resurrection I shall become the ~~one~~
 one who discerns in my experience how to seize the day. I am not sure what
 penitence and repentance looks like in a time of resurgence, in the light of
 sanctification; but penitence ~~this~~ having to do with failure to seize the possibility
 speaks to me because it is a time when we are overwhelmed by the possible. And
^{is} the opportunity/of discerning where to move and when to move in order to respond
 and act out the love of God is an ~~horrifying~~ event. It took me a long time
 under justification to discover that all life is open, or that openness figure
 of speech in that is the most terrifying. I thought that that was really swinging
 that the future was open until I experienced/~~my~~ grace, I guess; and then I
 realized that it was open and that I had the possibility of walking ~~me~~ into that
 unknown. It is something like that in sanctification. The terror,~~of~~ the possibilities
 the terror of
 of our time. An experience in Japan where we had been putting off/the hierarchy
 seeing
~~this~~ of the church because we ~~we~~ were clear that, we thought that we were clear
 that we had a big block there. Only to find that for three months the bishop of
 the Anglican church in the ~~west~~ north had been waiting to see us in order that he

could sponsor and be part of the spirit movement, and the terror of that possibility
 ----I froze inside, being aware ~~at~~ that that opportunity at that time had been lost.

It is a time of weeping, not for ourselves and not individually. ~~It is a~~
~~time~~ time when we weep for the order as we move into the future, as we learn
 to seize the day. It is a time that we act out penitence ~~on~~ behalf ~~of~~ the
 entire church. It is a time that we act ~~our~~ penitence on behalf of the entire
 world. I know that our cultures ~~have~~ that have really---I think of the
 Philippines, and you can look at the perversions of their Lenten celebration,
 but they have a model for Lent. They have a way in which they dramatize what
 preparing
 it means to be the penitent ones/~~making~~ for the future. We need ~~a~~ to build
 who
 those models, individually and corporately, what it means to be the ones, not
 only symbolically but actually, are so passionate for God that we find that kind
 of weeping going on. I am reminded ~~a~~ of a woman in Hong Kong who ~~a~~ was in
 really service
 charge of a/rather fantastic social/~~center~~ center and when you got there, you thought,
 "My ~~God~~ Lord, this organization is doing a phenomen~~a~~ job." And you stood
 on the third floor looking out over Hong Kong with this woman and celebrating verbally
 with her what a fantastic job they were doing/~~meeting~~ ministering to the needs of that community.
 And she stands there looking ~~a~~ out the window at Hong Kong and she is crying
 while you ~~was~~ talking to her; and she says, "But, my God, there is so much more
 to do and so many other opportunities that we have not seized." It is something
 that
 like that /~~which~~ is the decisional mood of the Lenten Season. It is the time to,

in that light, to examine our models, for we sometimes need to be the ones who repent that our models have blocked the opportunity. I think of Jesus---he and his disciples & decided to take a discontinuous weekend; and they went out of their arena where their models/~~were~~ laid up and they went off on a retreat.

was

And a Phonetician ~~Phonetician~~ woman knocked at ~~their~~ their door, and one of the disciples said, "this is a discontinuous weekend; the Master can't see you."

and said, "But I've got to see him," and she got in there. But she kept knocking/~~and kept knocking~~

And he said, "But My model does not include working in this arena." And she said something about, "Even those of us who fall outside of the area of your gridding, we can eat what the dogs ~~do~~ would take." In that moment an illumination of the scope, an expanded scope of his mission, ~~was~~ ~~broken~~ broke loose in his life and in the life of his disciples. Perhaps Lent and the time of weeping, the time of not only seeing the fast but examining those models personally in our families, in the order and in the church that will break open and allow us to seize the day in ~~an~~ order that we may be the ones who in ever, ever situation act out and are able to respond and act out our love of God.

In the Name of The Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. Amen.