



*From the Office of the Senior Pastor
Bishop W. James Thomas, II, D. Min.*

**BISHOP'S MISSIVE #199
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Greetings, CBC Family & Friends,

As we enter into another season of Lent, please let us not do this casually. I understand that many are not accustomed to celebrating the various seasons of the Church, but they are given to us for a reason, and because of that, we should enter them prayerfully, intentionally, and most of all, together.

Lent is a sacred journey. It is forty days that invite us to slow down in a world that keeps speeding up. It is an invitation to examine our hearts in a culture that prioritizes appearances. It is a call to repentance, renewal, and realignment with God.

We know what it means to walk through seasons of testing. We know what it means to carry crosses. And yet, we also know something else — that God is with us. God sustains us in the struggle and strengthens us in suffering.

As a congregation shaped by resilience and rooted in hope, this is a season for us to do three things:
Fast — not just from food, but from bitterness, distraction, and spiritual complacency.
Pray — not just for personal blessings, but for justice, healing in our communities.
Reflect — not only on Christ's suffering, but on how we participate in redemptive work in the world.

Lent prepares us for resurrection living. It prepares us to confront systems that dehumanize. It prepares us to love when it is easier to withdraw. It prepares us to speak truth when silence feels safer.

In a time when we continue to wrestle with inequity, violence, economic disparity, and spiritual fatigue, we must not allow Lent to become a ritual without transformation. We are not observing a season simply because tradition demands it. We are embracing a discipline because our souls require it.

Finally, as we observe the beginning of Lent – Ash Wednesday – remember, we are dust, but that dust is never the end of the story. The same God who formed humanity from the dust also breathed life into it. The same God still breathes life into us now. Lent leads to the cross. The cross leads to the tomb. And the tomb leads to victory.

With pastoral love and expectation,

 *W. James Thomas, II*

Bishop W. James Thomas, II, D.Min., Senior Pastor



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