

PASTOR'S PEN

LENT

I often think of Lent as a time of simplicity. As we consider Jesus heading towards the cross, there is a call to be stripped of those things that hinder our ability to follow his example. In a world in which our lives seem to be heading in an increasingly complicated manner, Lent can serve to help us focus on simple things that God has for us. I invite you to practice one or more of the following practices during this month of March in order to simplify your life. The goal, however, is not simplicity but being able to hear and encounter God.

One simple thing is to tune out and learn to become okay with silence. There are numerous ways to do this. When in the car, turn the radio off. Do not replace it with your phone. Skip watching the news for a few days and in its place ask God to speak to you. Every time your mind drifts, gently remind yourself to listen for God.

Pray for another person each day for the rest of the month. Specifically choose to pray for a person who annoys or aggravates you. On some days, ask God to help your attitude toward that person. On other days, ask God to bless that person and to make God's grace real in their lives.

Once a week, take the time to express your gratitude for another person. It can either be for things he/she has done for you, or the way you have seen them set a positive example for others to follow. Choose someone outside your family. Take the time to write a note and use the old fashioned postal service.

Finally, do one thing to clean out an area in your house that represents clutter or those things you have been procrastinating. Do not decide too quickly, but give thought to what this should be for you.....not a family member. (suggestions are not allowed) Use whatever method works for you but commit yourself to complete the task by the end of March. If it is helpful, tell another person of your goal to help hold you accountable.

In all of the above, invite God to strip away from you that which needs to go, so that you are better able to take up your cross and follow Jesus.

Pastor Randy

(Pastor Randy did not write this month. This is an article he wrote several years ago, with some helpful suggestions - also see more suggestions in the Prayer Corner.)

BIRTHDAYS

Russ Pride	3/9
Pam Moyer	3/15
Tiyanna Landes	3/16
Phillip Zeo	3/17
Karen Fennell	3/18
Grace Brenneman	3/28
Randy Heacock	3/30
Louise Beyer	4/2

ANNIVERSARIES

Jon & KrisAnne Swartley	3/13
Ronald & Robin Miller	3/26
Charles & Grace Snyder	4/3

KAREN'S PLACE

The 18th Annual Blues-Rock Madness Month

Saturday, March 16, Basic Connection

Saturday, April 6, Bob Stanhope. With Special Guests Paul and Mary Good

FROM THE PRAYER CORNER

Lent is a time traditionally associated with repentance, fasting, and remembering the journey Jesus took to the cross. We remember the humanity of Jesus and the way he entered into the experience of human suffering. It can be a time to focus on a practice that helps you to grow in your relationship with Jesus. Having a prayer practice that is different can bring a fresh awareness of God's presence.

Here are some ideas:

* Choose a time each day to meditate on a phrase of scripture that God brings to you, may-

be from our Lenten devotional. Maybe this meditation could be connected to another routine that you do daily, such as walking the dog, brushing your teeth, opening up your e-mail, etc.

*Take our church yearbook and choose a person each day to bless in your prayers.

*Write down a neighbor's name each week and ask God how you can bless them that week.

*Choose a hymn or worship song to sing while driving or working around the house. Many are words spoken to God and can become our prayer.

*Memorize a verse or two during Lent that you sense the Holy Spirit wants to impress on your heart.

*Check out the new titles on prayer in our Prayer Rooms, [52 Creative Ways to Pray](#), or [Pray the Word](#).

May we find meaningful ways to rest in God's love and grace during the Lenten season.

Sandy Landes, Prayer Minister

REPORT FROM THE CARE TEAM

The Care Team met on Monday, February 25 with Freida, Robin and Sandy participating. Kendrick and Randy were unable to join us. We opened with testimony of ways we experienced God's presence in our day, and gave praise and thanks to God for the ways we sense God working through giving wisdom, peace and stillness. We discussed an article, "How to Lead without being Toxic" which highlighted the value of empowering others, rather than carrying all the weight of the work we may need to do. This can be a challenge, as it causes us to stop back at times and surrender the outcome as Jesus himself did.

We prayed for several individuals and families within our congregation, waiting on God to show us how to pray, and asking God what he wants for them.

The Care Team remains available to pray with anyone who feels the need for discernment and wisdom in a transition or concern they have. We also are open to participating in helping to meet needs as they arise for individuals or families within our congregation. Please reach out to any member of the Care Team with any questions or concerns.

The next Care Team meeting is planned for Monday, March 25, 2019 at 7:30 PM

Sandy Landes for the Care Team, Randy Heacock, Freida Myers, Robin Miller and Kendrick Garrido

SECOND SUNDAY SENSATION

February 10 was an exciting day in the primary department. Many children and their parents came to enjoy a presentation by Jesse Rothacker from the Forgotten Friend Reptile Sanctuary in Lancaster, Pa.

Now they're looking forward to seeing Rick Mikula, The Butterfly Guy, on March 10. He raises the butterflies and promised to bring some live ones with him.

Susie Church Mouse writes:

It gets exciting around here on the Second Sunday. There was a big crowd here to see the reptiles. I'm glad the big snake didn't get loose or I'd be gone. I wouldn't feel safe around that big iguana either. I'm not so worried about those



From the Library

The following books were recently added to the library:

Hutterite Diaries, Wisdom from My Prairie Community by Linda Maendel. This book provides a peak into Hutterite community life. Donald B. Kraybill says, "Like the Amish, Hutterites have wisdom aplenty for the rest of us." (Amish, Mennonite category)

Everything Happens for a Reason and Other Lies I've Loved by Kate Bowler. The author studied prosperity gospel. When she is diagnosed with cancer, she wonders what it means to die in a society that insists everything happens for a reason. She is stripped of this certainty only to discover that without it, life is hard but beautiful in a way it never has been before. Appendix I lists things one should never say to people experiencing extreme difficulty. Appendix II provides words and actions to take when a friend is diagnosed with cancer or other serious illness. (Biography)

The Bible Unwrapped Making Sense of Scripture Today by Meghan Larissa Good. In the forward, Gregory Boyd says, "Reading this book intensified my own love of Scripture precisely because it helped me better see the Savior whom I love through it." (Bible study)

Escape Routes for people who feel trapped in life's hells, by Johann Christoph Arnold. (2002) This book is "A humble and thoughtful offering...with stories and personal anecdotes that gently urge readers to a more meaningful life." He ends by asking "Will we choose to love, or not? Everything else pales beside this crucial question." (Spiritual life).

Please contact me if you have a book to suggest or donate to the library. Did you know there is a section for men? And also for Women? Besides children, youth and fiction, there are books on prayer, Bible study, spiritual life, death, dying and grieving, family, community involvement, Anabaptist history/Amish; hobbies and special interests, biographical, retirement and aging with confidence.

Freida Myers

WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

The spring session begins Thursday, March 14, 1:30-3:00 pm a Louise Beyer's home in Hilltown and continues on Thursdays March 28, April 22 and 25 and May 9 and 23. There will also be a group meeting on Sunday mornings on March 17, 24 and 31, April 7, 14 and 28, and May 5, 12, 19 and 26 during Sunday School in Room 201. The book club will read and discuss the book, "The Dream of You" by Jo Saxton, a child of Nigerian immigrants. She knows how the world can cause us to doubt our identity. Walk with her through scripture and prayer to discover God's dream of you.

Contact the church office at 215-345-6377 to let them know which group you want to join. Books will be provided by the church.

DEADLINE: for submitting items for the April News & Views: March 26, 2019

PARTING THOUGHT:

“See! The winter is past; the rains are over and gone. Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing has come, the cooing of doves is heard in our land.” Song of Solomon 2:12

(Spring IS coming.)

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