

LENT

**Virginia Avenue
United Methodist Church**

**Reverend Terry Goodman, Pastor
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Second Sunday During Lent
March 4, 2007

Prelude

Lighting of the Altar Candles

Processional: "What Wondrous Love is This" All

♪ *What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul, what wondrous love is this, O my soul! What Wondrous love is that that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul, to bear the dreadful curse for my soul.* ♪

Call to Worship

Pastor: We gather this day to worship our God, whose words and ways challenge us.

People: God invites us to lose our selfishness to find ourselves

Pastor: God calls us to be fools in the world to show forth the wisdom of Christ.

People: God urges us to empty ourselves to discover life's fullness.

Pastor: God bids us to be obedient to a divine will so we might know true freedom.

People: We come to worship, seeking to have our faith challenged into growth.

Pastor: We root our faith in worship, seeking to find nourishment for our spirits in this growing season of Lent.

*Opening Hymn: "O For a Heart to Praise my God" No. 417

Extending the Hand of Fellowship, Welcome and Announcements

Prayer of Confession: *(in unison)*

God of compassion, you know how we rebel against you. You know how we doubt and fear and hold back, when you call us to freedom and to partnership in Jesus Christ.

God forgive us. Free us by the power of your cross, that we may serve you without fear. Grant us your peace, through Jesus Christ who was faithful to the end. Amen.

A Minute of Silent Prayer

Words of Assurance

Pastor: Hear the Good News! Though our sins are punishable, God forgives us as we confess our sins. Friends, believe the Good News.

All: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

Morning Prayer

Pastor

The Lord's Prayer *(as found at No. 895)*

Offering

* Doxology: "Praise God From Whom all Blessings Flow" No. 95

* Offertory Hymn: "O Sacred Head Now Wounded" No. 286

Children's Message

Rev. Goodman

Choral Praise: "You Are My All In All"
Destiny Carter—*soloist*

Children's Choir

Scripture:

Sermon:

Rev. Goodman

* Closing Hymn: "Lead On, O King Eternal"

No. 580

* Pastoral Benediction

* Indicates that you may stand, as you are able.

TODAY'S HOSTS

Pastor: Rev. Terry Goodman

Pianist: Debbie Dixon

Ushers: David Parris, Beverly Blalock
Jody Patton, David Alvis

Greeters: Norma Davis

Hospitality: Mary Ann Blankenship

Nursery: Becky Gillenwater

Children's Church: no class this week

CALENDAR

Today:

9:45 a.m. Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Worship & Children's Church
12:00 p.m. Fellowship Dinner

Wednesday:

12:00 p.m. Sarah Creasy Circle
6:00 p.m. Youth & Children's Classes
7:00 p.m. Choir

Thursday:

7:00 p.m. McGuire/Warden-Gill Circle

Birthdays

4 Jeff Johnson
5 Rousseline Rodene
8 Patty Douthat

Anniversaries

5 Shirley & Earl Erskine

Psalm 27

1 The LORD is my light and my salvation whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life of whom shall I be afraid?

2 When evil men advance against me to devour my flesh, when my enemies and my foes attack me, they will stumble and fall.

3 Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me, even then will I be confident.

4 One thing I ask of the LORD, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple.

5 For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his Tabernacle and set me high upon a rock.

6 Then my head will be exalted above the enemies who surround me; at his tabernacle will I sacrifice with shouts of joy; I will sing and make music to the LORD.

7 Hear my voice when I call, O LORD; be merciful to me and answer me.

8 My heart says of you, "Seek his face!" Your face, LORD, I will seek.

9 Do not hide your face from me, do not turn your servant away in anger; you have been my helper. Do not reject me or forsake me, O God my Savior.

10 Though my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will receive me.

11 Teach me your way, O LORD; lead me in a straight path because of my oppressors.

12 Do not turn me over to the desire of my foes, for false witnesses rise up against me, breathing out violence.

13 I am still confident of this: I will see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

14 Wait for the LORD; be

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

1 After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward. 2 But Abram said, "O Sovereign LORD, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?" 3 And Abram said, "You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir." 4 Then the word of the LORD came to him: "This man will not be your heir, but a son coming from your own body will be your heir." 5 He took him outside and said, "Look up at the heavens and count the stars—if indeed you can count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." 6 Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness. 7 He also said to him, "I am the LORD, who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land to take possession of it." 8 But Abram said, "O Sovereign LORD, how can I know that I will gain possession of it?" 9 So the LORD said to him, "Bring me a heifer, a goat and a ram, each three years old, along with a dove and a young pigeon." 10 Abram brought all these to him, cut them in two and arranged the halves opposite each other; the birds, however, he did not cut in half. 11 Then birds of prey came down on the carcasses, but Abram drove them away. 12 As the sun was setting, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a thick and dreadful darkness came over him.

17 When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, a smoking firepot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces. 18 On that day the LORD made a covenant with

Philippians 3:17-4:1

17 Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you. 18 For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things. 20 But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

1 Therefore, my brothers, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, that is how you should stand

Luke 13:31-35

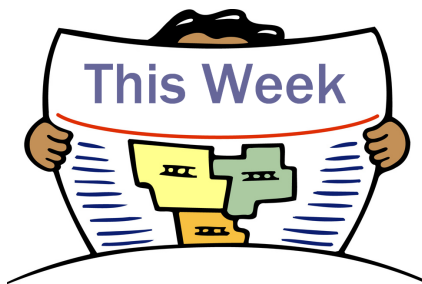
31 At that time some Pharisees came to Jesus and said to him, "Leave this place and go somewhere else. Herod wants to kill you." 32 He replied, "Go tell that fox, 'I will drive out demons and heal people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal.' 33 In any case, I must keep going today and tomorrow and the next day—for surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem! 34 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! 35 Look, your house is left to you desolate. I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the

Some Thoughts on Lent

Debra Farrington has authored the book, *Living Faith Day by Day: How the Sacred Rules of Monastic Traditions Can Help You Live Spiritually in the Modern World* (Perigee, 2000). She writes, "What most of us neglect — with more regularity than we might care to admit — is God," So Farrington suggests, "Don't give up chocolate for Lent this year. Or rather, give up chocolate — or whatever else you give up — if it helps you think about God more often. But if all it does is make you think about chocolate, then let me suggest some other Lenten practices to you.

Citing several ancient and modern monastic guides, she suggests the following:

- *"Have a heart-to-heart with God."* She suggests taking time for a long walk or going to a secluded place to simply converse with God, as you would with an old friend that you have neglected to share from the heart. "Don't forget to do some listening as well," she adds.
- *"Cut back on work."* According to one newscast, Americans, on average, added one week of work per year to their schedules in the 1990s. Rather than putting your work at the center of your life, Farrington suggests taking a break from working too hard this Lent and spend some of the newfound free time with God in prayer, reflection or spiritual reading.
- *"Sleep enough."* John Cassian, one of the desert fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries, recognized that having a good relationship with God takes energy and attentiveness. He recommended to his disciples that they get enough sleep so they could vigorously pursue their spiritual lives. Farrington writes, "Make Lent a time for getting rested so you, too, can attend to God without the heaviness of spirit that lack of sleep induces."
- *"Seek a spirit of detachment."* Most Americans own more things than we need. Often our sense of self-worth and confidence is centered on our possessions rather than on our relationship with God as beloved children. Farrington suggests taking a break from buying unnecessary things and give the money you save to an organization that serves the impoverished and marginalized.
- *"Take care of yourself,"* As the apostle Paul writes (1 Corinthians 3:16), our bodies are temples. So take steps to care for God's dwelling place during Lent. Exercise, eat better, take time for leisure and play, being aware than in doing so you are caring for one of God's great gifts.



On the Avenue

REMEMBER?

Set Your Clocks Ahead!

This year, Daylight Savings Time begins early. So when you go to bed next Saturday night, March 10th, please remember to set you clocks ahead one hour. Otherwise you just might miss church, and we wouldn't want that to happen!

47th Annual Lenten Luncheons

First Presbyterian Church
Downtown Bluefield
11:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m.
Wednesdays
March 7, 14, 21, 28
Cost \$7.00



Rev. Goodman invites you to reflect on the Gospel of John with him during the season of Lent. If you have internet access, you are encouraged to read the reflections online at <http://revtdg.wordpress.com>. If you don't have internet access, then copies will be made available for each week of Lent. Make sure to get a new copy each week.



Adorning the Chancel Area during Lent

Each Sunday during Lent, as we are approaching the cross we are going to have a different setting. Each week, the chancel area will reflect some of the scriptures associated with a different day during Holy Week. This Sunday is referred to as the **Day of Conflict**.

One side of the Cross there is a withered fig tree to reflect how Jesus, as he approached Jerusalem, cursed the fig tree and the disciples observed how quickly it had withered. (Mark 11:20) On the other side you will see a mother hen and some chicks that she is gathering under her wing. This is used to represent Jesus' desire to be able to treat Jerusalem with love, but they were not willing. (Matthew 23:37)



- Steve Alexander
 Martha Alvis
 Sue Barberly
 Christopher Bowen
 Bessie Brewer
 James Brown
 Martha Jane Chudina
 Bill Coon
 Jerry Connelly
 Randy Davis
 Glenda Estep
 Roscoe & Margaret Farmer
 Nell Fulcher
 Mary Beth Gills
 Shirley Helmondollar
 Vernon & Hop Hopkins
 Ronnie Houchins
 Earnest & Ruth Kirby
 Nancy Lester
 Juanita Maiuri
 Norma Morgan
 Thelma Moten
 Eddie Perdue
 Carter Richardson
 Janet Riffe
 Sydney Shepherd
 Wanda Stevenson
 Lloyd Walker
 George Walker
 Carlene Workman

Join us following church today for our monthly fellowship meal. We will gather in the fellowship downstairs and enjoy a time of fellowship.



March
Luncheon



It's not too early to begin thinking about how you can be involved in Vacation Bible School. We are just now beginning to form the leadership team, if you can assist either through teaching, or some other manner, please let us know in the church office.

Let us pray
in this season of Lent for the gift of integrity.

**Father of light,
in you is found no shadow of change
but only the fullness of life and limitless truth.**

**Open our hearts to the voice of your Word
and free us from the original darkness that shadows our vision.
Restore our sight that we may look upon your Son
who calls us to repentance and a change of heart,
for he lives and reigns with you for ever and ever.**



Prayer for Lent