

WEEKDAY WORDS

Thursday, March 16, 2023

LENTEN FASTING

As the season of Lent approaches, we can almost hear Tevye (from *Fiddler on the Roof*) raising a hand, finger pointed to the sky, exclaiming, “Tradition! Tradition!” This journey from the wilderness of temptation to the cruelty of a cross to the holy silence of a Saturday (the day before all hope breaks loose) calls us to observe, well, traditions.

A traditional observance of Lent moves some folks to give something up. One of my friends usually gives up sweets. This year, another friend gave up going to Coffee Mania every morning. As a kid, during Lent, my school always served fish on Friday because my friends who were Catholic could not eat meat on Friday.

Why keep such traditions? Does God really care about a sacrifice of chocolate or dessert or a coffee stop or the keeping of the Lenten menu of mac-n-cheese and fish? The answer is probably no and yes! These “fasts” unto themselves do not reflect the definition found in Micah 6:6-8...UNLESS... Unless the person uses the time or the resources for another purpose. Example: my friend who gave up stopping at Coffee Mania is, instead, giving the money that would have been spent to charity. My friend who gave up sweets uses that sacrifice to, instead, engage in prayer. That’s the part of the tradition that makes it holy. One gives something up not simply to show God a measure of discipline; rather, to intentionally grow closer to God.

This season of Lent, I have been inviting us to fast and to feast. If you have been able to be a part of worship (in person or online), you have seen the invitations:

Lent 1: Let us fast from words that hurt and feast on words that heal.

Lent 2: Let us fast from holding grudges and feast on forgiveness.

Lent 3: Let us fast from meanness and feast on kindness.

These weekly invitations are meant to provide another means of growing closer to God. They encourage each of us to slow down enough to make decisions of the fasts, opting instead for feasting on something more reflective of God’s way revealed in Jesus’ life.

So how is it going? I wonder if a different fast/feast each week has helped you or if you will cling to one in particular and practice it throughout the forty days of Lent? Whatever tradition you choose to follow, may your practices bring you closer to our God. As a person of faith, may you find yourself saturated in hope, always hope.

LAST SUNDAY WRAP-UP

Rev. Barb Wright saved the day, again. With little notice, she stepped in to cover while the Burtson household dealt with Covid. Alex spent time with the children considering Jesus’ practice of taking naps – even when the boat was rocking and the wind was blowing. Afterward, the choir provided special music. During Barb’s sermon, it was clear that she remembers just enough Hebrew (from seminary) to assure us that Moses spoke to God face-to-face. These days, we visit with God heart-to-heart and our lives are transformed forever. Many thanks to the entire worship and technology team for their flexibility and care. And special thanks to Barb Wright for sharing her extraordinary gifts.

THIS SATURDAY

The Raffle Quilt Group will be meeting in the Russell Fellowship Room on Saturday from 10 to 1. If you cannot attend, please drop blocks off in the RFR or in Kate Toole's mailbox at 91 N. Main Street in Homer.

THIS SUNDAY

Please bring donations of supplies for the Easter Basket give-away on April 1.

Faith Formation classes begin at 9:30. Our younger children will talk about Good Friday and our older children will learn about Solomon, the ambitious son. Carrie Scheibner will, again, lead the *Starting Point* discussion for adults.

During 10:30 worship, we get to hear Anelia Corbin play her trumpet. I can't wait! Her mom, Carol Costell Corbin is the Deacon of the Day. Pastor Vicki will focus on the story told in I Samuel 16:1-13 in which God looks for the content of our character over any of our outward appearances. Nursery care is available. Find our live-stream service on Facebook, YouTube or at www.homercc.com.

NEXT WEEK'S SCHEDULE

Sunday, March 26

Please bring donations of refrigerator rolls for Easter Dinner boxes.

Following worship, the Outreach Team will meet.

Tuesday, March 28

The Church Council will meet at 6:30 PM.

All chairs of all committees are part of our Church Council.

AND...

A sign-up sheet for hosting coffee hour is on the Resource Table in the RFR. Everyone loves the chance to visit following worship, so tap a friend or two and sign up. Make it simple...store-bought cookies and juice. We have the coffee. All you need to do is make it, set things out and clean up afterward. Keep it simple!

PRAYER CONCERNS:

When you pray, please include prayers for:

- ...Matthew and his family.
- ...those who are traveling.
- ...those who continue the journey of grief.
- ...those who are healing in body or soul.
- ...those who face fear and war, even in their own homes.
- ...those of our family of faith who are currently homebound. You are missed.

THANKS

Belinda and I are so grateful for the care and support we received during these last two weeks. While we quarantined at home, you dropped off soup, cold care tea, and other goodies. You offered to run errands or get groceries and we know that you prayed for us. Thank you for being such a caring family of faith. God's presence was felt through you.