

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS



Volume I, Issue I

PILGRIM CHURCH A UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST CONGREGATION

March 1st, 2020

Letting Go for Lent

By Pastor Paul Eknes-Tucker

Christians around the globe have begun the *Season of Lent* with us. It is an old Christian tradition that is observed in a variety of ways. From “giving up a bad habit, or two, to fasting for 40 days”. Lent has been observed by Christians as a yearly **“re-set button.”**

For Progressive Christians, Lent is less about reminding ourselves *“how sinful we are”* and more about having an opportunity to *“try on”* something new. The promise of Easter is sure. We will celebrate new life, have resurrection hope and the fulfillment of God’s presence. ***How we get there is up to us.***

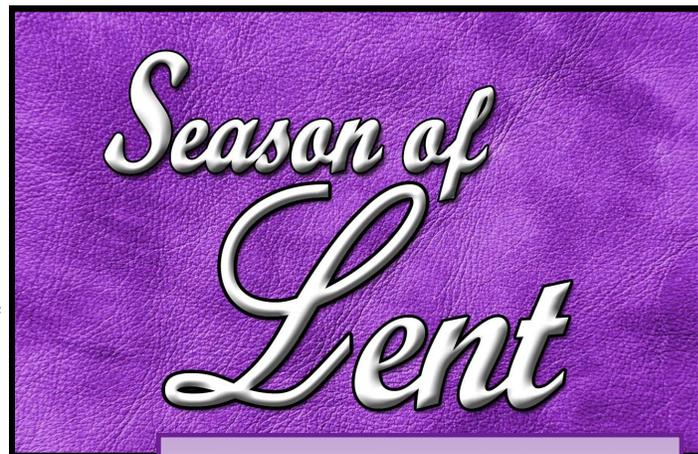
I find Lent to be a good time to deal with my **“white knuckle”** tendencies. You know the ones we’re talking about, right? Those ideas or practices or assumptions that we’ve owned for so long that the thought of letting them go produces resistance and fear. We like to think we are open to new ideas but find our intellectual and spiritual knuckles *“white with resistance”*. It happens to all of us, so let’s use those insights to trust God’s grace once again.

One of the easiest ways to discover one’s own **“white knuckle”** tendencies is to follow our unwillingness to consider something new. It is an old spiritual principle that can help us here: When something new makes us want to “dig in” instead of listening, we might be **“white knuckling”**. We say we trust God’s grace to guide us in all things... **“Let’s put it in practice.”**

For example, how do we participate in perpetuating racist systems in our world, when we abhor the idea of how racism robs all of us of our

humanity? We are aware of the systemic nature that makes some winners and others losers. We are aware that wealth, race, gender, culture, accessibility and so many other privileges are used as weapons. We have recognized ways we have participated in those systemic structures in previous times. We want to be on the right side of history. We want to be the **“good guys”** in this struggle.

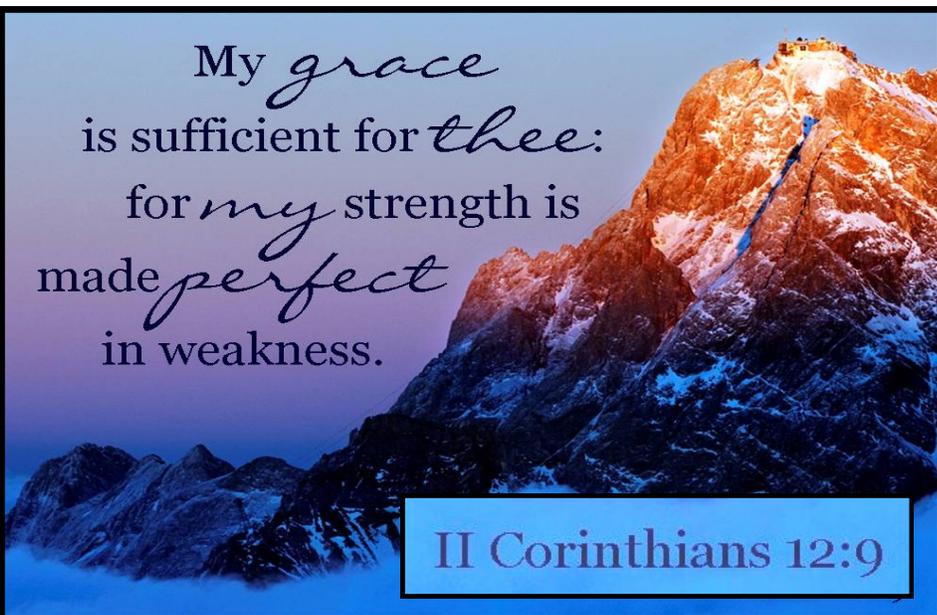
Peeling back another layer is almost always painful, but God’s grace has moved us to healing before. There is no reason to assume that this grace won’t sustain us with any new discovery. ***So, give it a try this Lent. It is only 40 days. Try it on. Give yourself permission to be wrong. Assume there is***



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Isn’t it time to give our spiritual knuckles a rest?



A Pastor's Prayer Life by Pastor J.R.

By Pastor J.R. Finney, II



come to model my current prayer life based on the “Daily Office” that offers at least 4 scripture readings and discipline prayer times but also has a time for personal daily prayer with God.

There have been other things that greatly aided my personal prayer life; but the point is that a healthy prayer life does not remain the same throughout one's life. As you learn new things about prayer, use them to develop your prayer life and relationship with God. Use them in a way that will encourage you to pray regularly not just for others or for things you need, but to grow your relationship with God.

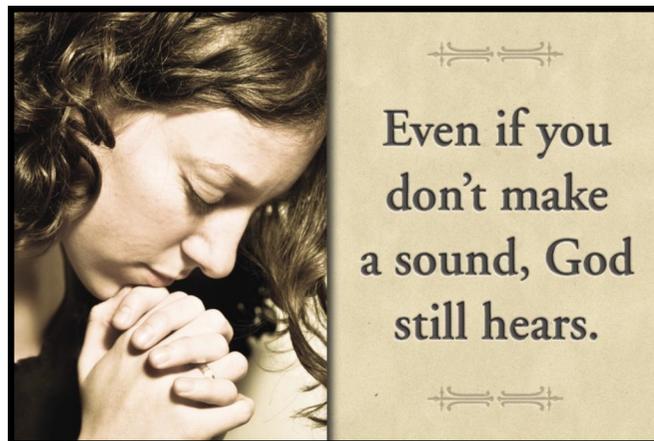
It's very common to hear the Pastor talk about the need for every Christian to have an ongoing prayer life. Yet, what about the Pastor's prayer life. Well, I thought I would just share what my prayer is like for me.

As a Pastor, I'm always praying. Just this past week, I must have prayer special prayers with and for others and the church 20 or more times. However, I must confess that I get busy like everyone else and, if I'm not careful, I will find myself forgetting to have my own personal prayer time for me. When I miss the mark, as I did on an occasion this past week, I don't beat myself up. I ask God to forgive me and continue on in my prayer life.

There have been many things that have greatly aided my on-going prayer life. I want to share just two of them with you. The first encounter was in the late 1970s with Rosalind Rinker and then reading her

book, “Prayer, Conversing With God.” This encounter with this wonderful lady and then reading her book taught me to think of God as my best friend and treat prayer as a conversation with that best friend.

The second came as Pastor of Covenant. In my first few months here, I was invited to a Wednesday morning prayer group at Grace Episcopal Church that I still attend in 2014. They used the Episcopal Prayer Book for a discipline manner of prayer that, at first, seemed to be the same every week. Over the years, I came to be blessed by praying prayers that saints before me had prayed for centuries. It was here that I was introduced to the “Daily Office” which has scripture readings and special prayers for every day. I have



“I pray this little look at a Pastor's Prayer Life will help you grow your prayer life as well.”

Aunt Louise's Old Fashioned Red Velvet Cake

By Jennifer Lyles

Cake

½ Cup Shortening or Butter (I use Butter)
 1 ½ Cups Sugar
 2 Eggs
 2 oz. Red Food Coloring
 1 Teaspoon of Vanilla
 2 Teaspoons of Cocoa (Don't Skimp)
 1 Teaspoon of Salt
 1 Cup of Buttermilk
 2 1/4 Cups Flour (Plain)
 1 Teaspoon Baking Soda
 1 Teaspoon Vinegar

Mix Vinegar and Soda and set aside. Cream the Butter and Sugar well, then add Eggs and blend well. Make a paste of Food Coloring and Cocoa, then add Flour, Salt, Vanilla and Buttermilk to recipe and blend well. Add Coloring and Cocoa Paste mixture, then add Vinegar and Soda mixture and blend well. Grease and flour dust

two eight inch round cake pans. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes (NOTE: Check at 25 minutes so not to overcook.) Let cool before frosting.

Inside Filling

1 8oz Package of Cream Cheese
 1 Stick Butter or Margarine
 1 Box Powdered Sugar
 1 Cup Chopped Pecans
 1 Teaspoon Vanilla

Cut layers in half, making 4 layers, mix all ingredients together and put between 3 layers.

Outside frosting

3 Tablespoons Flour
 1 Cup Milk
 1 Cup Powdered Sugar
 1 Cup Butter
 1 Teaspoon Vanilla
 1 Cup Nuts (optional)

Add 3 Tablespoons of Flour and Milk over low heat to a thick paste, continually stirring and let cool. Cream the Butter, Sugar and Mixed Paste with it, then vanilla, mix until smooth and fluffy. Put in the fridge to cool, for covering the cake later.



UNITED CHURCH CENTER'S ART SHOW OPENING MARCH 6th 5:30 ~ 7:30 PM

Featuring

Chris & Lori Frank



PLEASE JOIN US FOR AN OPENING NIGHT RECEPTION
FROM 5:30 ~ 7:30 PM! EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

He Maketh No Mistake

By A. M. Overton

My Father's way may twist & turn,
 My heart may throb and ache,
 But in my soul I'm glad I know,
 He Maketh No Mistake.

My cherished plans may go astray,
 My hopes may fade away,
 But still I'll trust my Lord to lead,
 For He doth know the way.

Tho' night be dark and it may seem,
 That day will never break;
 I'll pin my faith, my all in Him,
 He maketh No mistake.

There's so much now I cannot see,
 My eyesight's far too dim;
 But come what may, I'll simply trust,
 And leave it all to Him.

For by and by the mist will lift,
 And plain it all He'll make.
 Through all the way, tho' dark to me,
 He Maketh No Mistake!

Poetry, Recipes, Life Experiences,
 Art, or even how Pilgrim has
 changed your life...

Please submit ALL entries to
 Tammy Webb, Jennifer Lyles or
 Pastor Paul at
pilgrimucbham@bellsouth.net

We would love to see you
 in PRINT!

WEEKLY OPPORTUNITIES:**Friday**

5:30PM Race Matters

Thursday

12 Noon 12 Step Meeting

Sunday

8:45AM Pilgrim Singers Practice

9AM Book Club

9AM Sunday School

10AM Worship Service

6PM Steele City Men's Chorus

MONTHLY MINISTRY MEETINGS:

**1st Sunday of Each Month is
Birthday Cake Sunday
ALL Birthdays**

**1st Friday of each Month Bring
Food for the
GBM Food Drive**

**2nd Friday of Each Month is
Firehouse Shelter Cook
& Serve Dinner
from 6:15 to 8:15 PM**

UPCOMING EVENTS:

**March 6th ~
Art Show
5:30-7:30 PM**

**March 8th ~
Baby Shower After Service
Lea & Bobby Skelton**

**March 15th ~
Congregational Meeting
After Service**

MONTHLY QUOTE:

**"For years it has been part of
my own quest so to
understand the religion of
Jesus that interest in his way of
life could be developed and
sustained by intelligent men
and women who were at the
same time deeply
victimized by the Christian
Church's betrayal of his faith."**

**By Howard Thurman
Jesus and the Disinherited**

**MOVE CLOSER**

By Jennifer Lyles & Tammy Webb

Not long ago I heard a story about a young man and an old preacher. The young man had lost his job and didn't know which way to turn. So he went to see the old preacher. Pacing about the preacher's study, the young man ranted about his problem.

Finally he clenched his fist and shouted, "I've begged God to say something to help me, preacher, why doesn't God answer?"

The old preacher, who sat across the room, spoke something in reply, something so hushed it was indistinguishable. The young man stepped across the room. "What did you say?" he asked. The preacher repeated himself, but again in a tone as soft as a whisper. So the young man moved closer until he was leaning on the preacher's chair.

"Sorry," he said. "I still didn't hear you." With their heads bent together, the old preacher spoke once more. "God sometimes whispers," he said, "So we will move closer to hear Him." This time the young man heard and understood.

We all want God's voice to thunder through the air with the answer to our problem. But God is the still, small voice... the gentle whisper. Perhaps there's a reason.

Nothing draws human focus quite like a whisper. God's whisper means I must stop my ranting and move closer to Him, until my head is bent together with His. And then, as I listen, I will find my answer. Better still, I find myself closer to God.

THE WOMAN IN THE GLASS

By Tammy Webb

When you get what you want in your struggle for self
Just go to a mirror and look at yourself
And see what the woman in you has to say,
When the world makes you queen for a day.

It's not mom, dad, the preacher or teacher
Or the person you face taking your picture
Whose judgment upon you must pass,
It's the one staring back at you from the glass.

Some people might think you're unique and cool
But when you look into the eyes of a stubborn mule
Their praises and love all seem to defy
If you can't look yourself straight in the eye.

She's the person to please, never mind all the rest,
When she stands face to face she must pass the test
For she's stuck with herself all the way to the end,
The woman in the glass is her very best friend.

She may fool the whole world throughout the years
But there is one who knows all of her fears,
When she looks at her reflection that's cast
She knows she can never cheat, the woman in the glass.

PILGRIM BIRTHDAYS**FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH**

Steve Lavender ~ March 2nd
Caleb Holloway March 4th
Susan Levine ~ March 4th
Jim Austin ~ March 8th
Norton Owen ~ March 10th
Becky McDaniel ~ March 19th

PILGRIM ANNIVERSARIES**FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH**

Pastor Paul & Bill Eknes-Tucker
March 1st

**IF WE HAVE MISSED YOUR BIRTHDAY, WE APOLOGIZE!
PLEASE LET US KNOW & WE WILL GLADLY ADD IT!**