

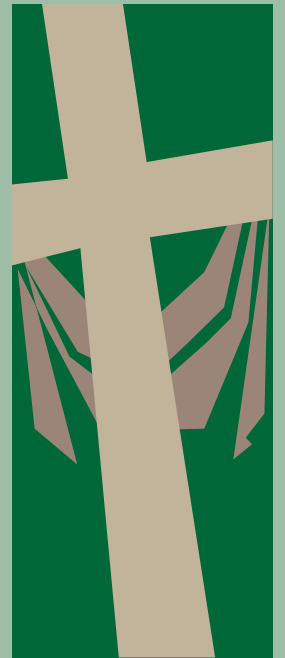
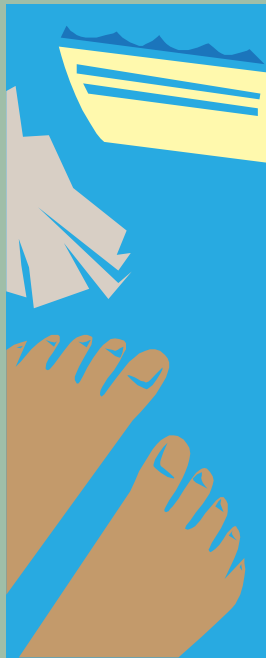
Faith Community United Church of Christ

Dialog

MARCH 2009



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Pastor Will Stuart, *Visiting Pastor* / Mel Barrios, *Certified Lay Minister* / B.J. Lord, *Editor-Secretary*



LENT

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by David Timms

HOPE INTERNATIONAL
UNIVERSITY
FULLERTON, CA

Many people, if they know of Lent at all, write it off as ritualistic, a relic of the medieval era when people had simpler lives structured around the church calendar. The church calendar barely gets a look these days, though the systematic process of re-living the gospel can be life-changing.

Lent belongs on that calendar, and the spiritual discipline of fasting, traditionally associated with Lent, has enormous value.

Lent represents an opportunity for us to fast collectively—not in a competitive spirit (who can give up the most or suffer the most?), but in a communal spirit (what might God be saying to us together?). As such it is not primarily a tradition but an opportunity.

Let's be clear. The spiritual disciplines—and fasting is one of them—do not earn reward points with the Father. He does not love us more nor love us less based on our participation in the disciplines. The disciplines do not guarantee our godliness. Nor do they obligate the Father to bless us with ecstatic visions or blessed insights.

Any decision to fast—be it from various foods, drink, television programs, movies, internet browsing, video games, driving (when you could walk), etc.—is *expressly for the purpose of creating space to encounter Christ afresh.*

The Lenten fast lasts the six and a half weeks leading up to Easter, and excludes Sundays since they are all “resurrection days.” It tests those of us who like to pamper ourselves or who have addictive personalities. (That covers us all, doesn't it?) But the Lord walks with us through this journey.

We ought not fast and complain. That simply betrays ingratitude and inattention to the Lord. Nor should we fast and boast. Be assured that the ancient Pharisees fasted more regularly and comprehensively than any of us will, and while they felt thoroughly proud of themselves, they remained (for the most part) spiritually deaf and blind to what God was doing.

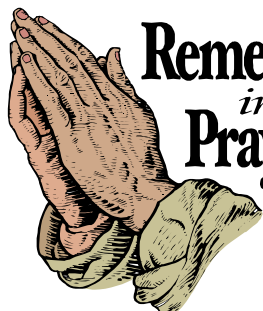
As we fast, we wait—humbly, attentively, patiently, and consistently.

The Lenten fast corresponds with the 40 days that Jesus spent in the wilderness. It will test us, too. Some of us will struggle with the self-control to maintain the fast; others may struggle with the apparent silence of God. The wilderness provides a good metaphor.

If you've never observed Lent, consider doing so this year. These small ways of denying ourselves and dying to ourselves can open doors to rich spiritual growth. One way forward is with a spiritual friend who can debrief with you every few days; perhaps someone who journeys with you for this experience.

May this Lent season deepen our walk with Christ.

David Timms serves in the Graduate Ministry Department at Hope International University in Fullerton, California. This article is from his “In Hope” e-publication. It is not an official publication of the University and the views expressed are not necessarily those of the Administrators or Board. Timms has been publishing “In Hope” since January, 2001.



Remember
in
Prayer

Elva Goudy
Carolyn O'Dell
(Judy Walle's
daughter)
Mary Pinkley
Ruth Farnsworth
Dick Bader
Millie Brooks

Jacques Rietzke
Helen Shearon
Rev. Jim Van
Brussel
Barbara Monhollen
(Daughter of Joe &
Dorothy Kowalski)

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|--|-----------|---|---|--|---|--|
| 1 9 a.m. – Sunday School 9:30 a.m. – Choral Practice 10 a.m. – Worship Service <i>Feed Your Neighbor</i> | 2 | 3 10 a.m. – Bible Study at Bigby's Coffee 6:30-7:30 p.m. – Block Watch | 4 | 5 9 a.m.- 12 p.m. Office Open | 6  | 7 |
| 8 Daylight Savings Time Begins 9 a.m. – Sunday School 9:30 a.m. – Choral Practice 10 a.m. – Worship Service | 9 | 10 10 a.m. – Bible Study at Bigby's Coffee 11:30 a.m. – The Good Bunch | 11 | 12 9 a.m.- 12 p.m. Office Open | 13 | 14 |
| 15 9 a.m. – Sunday School 9:30 a.m. – Choral Practice 10 a.m. – Worship Service | 16 | 17 St. Patrick's Day 10 a.m. – Bible Study at Bigby's Coffee | 18 | 19 9 a.m.- 12 p.m. Office Open <i>DIALOG Deadline</i> | 20 | 21 1:30 p.m. – Faith Council Meeting |
| 22 9 a.m. – Sunday School 9:30 a.m. – Choral Practice 10 a.m. – Worship Service | 23 | 24 10 a.m. – Bible Study at Bigby's Coffee | 25 | 26 9 a.m.- 12 p.m. Office Open | 27 | 28 |
| 29 9 a.m. – Sunday School 9:30 a.m. – Choral Practice 10 a.m. – Worship Service | 30 | 31 10 a.m. – Bible Study at Bigby's Coffee | <h1>March</h1>  | | | |



A good hymn for the Lenten season!

“Jesus, Lover of My Soul”

It would be hard to find a hymn that has made such an imprint on the heart of the Christian church as Charles Wesley’s “Jesus, Lover of My Soul.” From the time Wesley put pen to paper until today it has been treasured by Christians the world over—that is, all but his brother John.

It seems that John Wesley, who served as the editor of Charles’ hymns, felt that the imagery in this hymn was too intimate for use in mixed congregations, so it wasn’t included in the Methodist Hymnbook until nine years after his death. In light of the hymn’s overwhelming popularity it may seem that John’s assessment was too harsh, but his critiques were instrumental in dividing the wheat from the chaff of Charles’ 6500 hymns.

This hymn originally bore the heading “In Times of Danger and Temptation,” which leads many to believe that it was inspired by Charles’ near shipwreck on his return from America, where he spent a discouraging year as secretary to Governor Oglethorpe of Georgia. Other spurious stories exist about how the text came to be, like the one that says a sparrow being chased by a hawk sought refuge by flying into Wesley’s coat, which made him think about the way we seek refuge in God. Another tells of the night the Wesleys were chased from a revival meeting by an angry mob; while they were hiding in a spring house, Charles sharpened a piece of lead into a pencil and wrote down the immortal verses.

Colorful anecdotes exist not only about the hymn’s creation, but about the effect it has had on believers since it was written. Below is one of those stories as recounted in Amos R. Well’s *A Treasury of Hymn Stories*:

Another beautiful story is told of this hymn in connection with the Civil War. In a company of old soldiers, from the Union and Confederate armies, a former Confederate was telling how he had been detailed one night to shoot a certain exposed sentry of the opposing army. He had crept near and was about to fire with deadly aim when the sentry began to sing, “Jesus, Lover of My Soul.” He came to the words,

*Cover my defenseless head
With the shadow of Thy wing.*

The hidden Confederate lowered his gun and stole away. “I can’t kill that man,” said he, “though he were ten times my enemy.”

In the company was an old Union soldier who asked quickly,

“Was that in the Atlanta campaign of ’64?”

“Yes.”

“Then I was the Union sentry!”

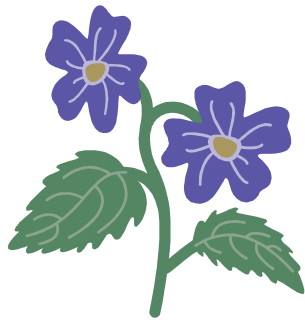
And he went on to tell how, on that night, knowing the danger of his post, he had been greatly depressed, and, to keep up his courage, had begun to hum that hymn. By the time he had finished, he was entirely calm and fearless. Through the song God had spoken to two souls.

Below is a frequently omitted third verse of “Jesus, Lover of My Soul”:

*Wilt Thou not regard my call?
Wilt Thou not accept my prayer?
Lo! I sink! I faint! I fall!
Lo! on Thee I cast my care:
Reach me out Thy gracious hand!
While I of Thy strength receive,
Hoping against hope I stand
Dying, and behold I live.*



Remember to set clocks ahead one hour before going to bed on Saturday night. Daylight Savings Time begins on Sunday, March 8.



March Birthdays and Anniversaries

Happy Birthday!

- Mar. 3 – Melissa Stroud
- Mar. 4 – Judy Walle
- Mar. 6 – Peggy Walters
- Mar. 8 – Matthew Phillis
Charlene Reese
- Mar. 19 – Catherine Garvin
- Mar. 22 – Darlene Stark
- Mar. 24 – Joe Kowalski
- Mar. 25 – Erin Cole
- Mar. 27 – Amanda Hammack
- Mar. 30 – William Stark
- Mar. 31 – Don Amsden

Happy Anniversary!

- Mar. 7 – John and Inez Reichard

Missing from the Annual Report

The following report was missing from the 2008 Annual Report. Our apologies are extended to the congregation.

Memorials and History

Honoring all and in memory of the following faithful, monies were given to Faith Memorial Fund in 2008:

- Florence Heinig
- Dorothy Van Brussel
- Pete Hummel
- Robert Shufelt

Acknowledgements were sent to all generous givers and cards with names of donors were sent to family or friends of the departed dear ones.

The faithful continued to pray and support Faith in 2008.

Respectfully submitted,
Peg Knapp
Chairperson



Tuesday
March 10
Chowder 'n More
Airport Highway

The Good Bunch will meet on Tuesday, March 10, at 11:30 p.m. at Chowder 'n More on Airport Highway. The event will be hosted by the Creswells and the Hadleys. Sign up on the sheet on the bulletin board in the hallway if you are able to attend.



Worship Leaders

The Worship Leaders for March are..

- Mar. 1 Peg Knapp
- Mar. 8 Jacqui Adams
- Mar. 15 Mary Anderson
- Mar. 22 Mel Barrios
- Mar. 29 Gloria Parker



"After St. Patrick drove all the snakes out of Ireland, what did he use to scare girls?"



Lenten Humor

An Irishman moves into a tiny hamlet in County Kerry, walks into the pub and promptly orders three beers.

The bartender raises his eyebrows, but serves the man three beers, which he drinks quietly at a table, alone.

An hour later, the man has finished the three beers and orders three more.

This happens yet again.

The next evening the man again orders and drinks three beers at a time, several times. Soon the entire town is whispering about the Man Who Orders Three Beers.

Finally, a week later, the bartender broaches the subject on behalf of the town. "I don't mean to pry, but folks around here are wondering why you always order three beers?"

"Tis odd, isn't it?" the man replies, "You see, I have two brothers, and one went to America, and the other to Australia. We promised each other that we would always order an extra two beers whenever we drank as a way of keeping up the family bond."

The bartender and the whole town was pleased with this answer, and soon the Man Who Orders Three Beers became a local celebrity and source of pride to the hamlet, even to the extent that out-of-towners would come to watch him drink.

Then, one day, the man comes in and orders only two beers. The bartender pours them with a heavy heart. This continues for the rest of the evening — he orders only two beers. The word flies around town. Prayers are offered for the soul of one of the brothers.

The next day, the bartender says to the man, "Folks around here, me first of all, want to offer condolences to you for the death of your brother. You know-the two beers and all..."

The man ponders this for a moment, then replies, "You'll be happy to hear that my two brothers are alive and well.

It's just that I, meself, have decided to give up drinking for Lent."



Tulips,
Hyacinth,
or
Daffodil

Decorate the sanctuary for Easter morning by purchasing a potted Easter Lily, Hyacinth, Tulip, or Daffodil as a memorial or to honor a loved one. Take home after the service. **Cost \$6.00 per pot.**

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Easter Lily | <input type="checkbox"/> Hyacinth | <input type="checkbox"/> Daffodil |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Blue | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tulip | <input type="checkbox"/> White | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Pink | |

Name: _____

Memorial or Tribute: _____

Please fill out a separate form for each plant purchased. Order forms will be available in the weekly bulletins and in the narthex throughout March. **Deadline for ordering is Palm Sunday, April 5.**

Please fold the order form around your check or cash and place in the collection plate on Sunday mornings, leave in the basket in the church office, or mail to the church before the deadline.

*For more information,
call Gloria Parker at 419-893-9528.*

Lenten Salad

Separate yolks and whites of four "hard-boiled" eggs. Chop whites finely, marinate with French Dressing, and arrange on lettuce leaves. Force yolks through a potato ricer and pile on the centre of whites. Serve with French Dressing.



The Good Bunch
celebrate
Mardi Gras
at
H.J.'s Prime
Feb. 10, 2009





Mission Giving Opportunities at Faith UCC

Faith Community United Church of Christ has several mission-giving projects:

POP TABS are collected to benefit the *Ronald McDonald House*.

CAMPBELL SOUP LABELS are recycled to benefit *Crossroads* in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

FEED YOUR NEIGHBOR program collects food once a month to *feed the hungry* in our own neighborhood.

BOXTOPS FOR EDUCATION are collected to benefit *Crossroads*.

USED GLASSES are collected to benefit the *Sight Center of Northwest Ohio*.

New! USED PILL BOTTLES are collected to benefit the *victims of Hurricane Katrina*.

PENNIES FOR BACK BAY are collected to benefit the *Back Bay Mission*.

USED GREETING CARDS are collected for donation to *local nursing homes*.

New! CANCELLED POSTAGE STAMPS are collected to benefit the *Heifer Project*.

USED LASER AND INK CARTRIDGES are collected to benefit the *general fund at Faith Community*.



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