

March 2007

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Sunday
Schedule

9:45am
Hymn Sing

10:00am
Worship

11:15am
Fellowship

11:30-12:30pm
Sunday School
for all ages



Birthdays In March

- 1 Debbie Ingamells
- 8 Phillip Bittman Jr
- 11 Bob Maat
- 14 Tom Deshler
- 17 Colleen Roden
- 17 Gwen Shearer
- 18 Barbara MacKinnon
- 24 Vernon Souders
- 26 Matthew Webb
- 26 Taylor Webb

March Anniversaries

- 18 Janice & Phil Armstrong
- 24 Cindy & Chris Babikoff



World Day of Prayer — March 2, 2007

Daylight-Saving Time begins — March 11, 2007



St. Patrick's Day — March 17, 2007



First Day of Spring — March 21, 2007



Lent reminds us that being a Christian is about more than saying we're Christians.

Perception is as much about **tuning out** as it is about **taking in**.

PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Why Lent?

On Ash Wednesday, the Springwater Presbyterian and Colton Lutheran congregations gathered together to mark the beginning of Lent. Pastor Jana Deiss of Colton Lutheran prepared us to receive the ashes by proclaiming the gospel with *experiences* rather than words.

This wasn't an accident that she chose to *do* something as we began the period of intentional Christian *practice* of centering on the meaning of faith. As we meditated on scripture's invitations to us, we poured and sipped cool water, lighted a candle, wrote on a reminder stone, made plans to engage in a particular practices during this time.

Because, Lent reminds us that being a Christian is about more than *saying* we're Christians. The apostle Paul calls this, "confess with your mouth." That's part of being a Christian, but Lent reminds us that **our bodies are also part of our faith**.

In fact, "believe" comes from the old word "by life." To **confess** our faith is to say **what we think**. But to **believe** means **what our body does**. That's why for centuries, Christians have prepared to celebrate and understand the resurrection with their bodies. Fasting. Serving. Training. Denying or taking on *practices*.

What's to Not Love?

My friend Carrie is hearing impaired. She could hear quite well as a child, but due to a congenital condition, her hearing deteriorated, so that she made use of two cochlear implants. These are gizmos placed inside her skull which transmit sound waves to the hearing apparatus inside her ear. A sophisticated but really tiny computer processor, held against her skull by a magnet, translates the waves into something the bones, eardrum and nerves can send to the brain as meaningful sound.

Recently, Carrie got an upgrade. Like any technological wonder, she had to be re-educated to the new system. And the system had to be reprogrammed and tuned.

As Carrie explained, hearing is about more than taking in sound waves. A whole lot of processing has to take place before the air's vibrations can be translated into words or baby's cries or sirens or birds. Part of that processing is filtering out what is *not* necessary; part of that processing is re-learning what parts of the sound spectrum are meaningful. Otherwise she would not be able to tune out the bird's chirp, the sound of the toaster clicking, the timer on the stove going off, the television in the other room, and the airplane overhead, in order to *only* hear her daughter's recounting of her school day.

Perception is as much about **tuning out** as it is about **taking in**.

Being Positive By Being Negative

And that's what Lenten **practice** does. My doctor claims not to do

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cures. Her job, she says, is to **make room** for my body to do what it was designed to do, namely return to health. My body, she says, does all the hard work. She just **eliminates the distractions**—like pain and invading organisms.

Adopting a Lenten practice—for the full 40 days, for a week, even for a day—helps us **make room** as well. If our practice is to forego the afternoon chocolate bar, we are doing what my friend's new hearing processor does. By tuning out our longing for some habitual thing, we are reminded of distractions. One less chocolate bar; one more invitation to **tune in what's important.** Carrie wants to be able to hear her daughter's soft voice. Christians want to hear the One Voice that leads to Resurrection Life.

Maybe this Lent you can fine-tune your processor. See you in church.



LECTIONARY READINGS

Look closely, and you will see a pattern in the "lectionary" readings listed below. Luke 8:40-56 shows up every week during Lent. As in previous Lents, we will take one scripture passage and explore it in depth. This year's story is really two: the healing of Jairus' daughter, the interruption of Jesus on his way to Jairus' house to heal another woman. Or maybe it's all part of the same story.

Wholeness is God's intention for us, and sometimes it takes a little healing to get to that place. In fact, **it is the human condition to need healing** to get to the place of God's wholeness. Because **wholeness** requires our spiritual, emotional, physical, and relational selves, healing needs to come to all those parts of our selves as well.

March 4 EMOTIONAL HEALING (communion): Luke 8:40-56; Matthew 11:25-30; Psalm 30.

March 11 YOUTH LEADERSHIP: Luke 8:40-56; Psalm 63:1-8.

March 18 PHYSICAL HEALING: Luke 8:40-56; 2 Corinthians 5:1-10; Psalm 32.

March 25 RELATIONAL HEALING: Luke 8:40-56; Isaiah 58:6-11; Psalm 126.

April 1 PALM/PASSION SUNDAY (Communion): Luke 19:28-40; Luke 22:14-23:56; Isaiah 50:4-9a; Philippians 2:5-11; Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 or Psalm 31:9-16

April 5 MAUNDY THURSDAY (Communion)

April 6 GOOD FRIDAY

One great hour of sharing

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

Every year, Session authorizes our participation in a One Great Hour of Sharing offering, dedicated at Easter. Lent is the time for educating ourselves as to where exactly our money to this offering goes. For one thing, a portion stays right here for local mission outreach.

This year's denominational promotion uses the story of the Good Samaritan, prompted by the lawyer's anxious question about being religiously correct: "Who is my neighbor?" Since God requires us to love God with our whole being (mind/body/spirit). The relational parts of us are also required to love God. That gets translated as, "Love your neighbor as yourself."

The lawyer often gets dinged as a negative straight man in this episode. But he has access to Jesus. He might have been one of the folks Jesus sent out earlier in Luke—one of the 70 sent in his name who returned excited by the power he had given them to subdue evil. If that's so, he had already put more on the line than most of us. Maybe he assumed this meant he had an inside track to heaven.

But by answering, "The road to life goes through your neighbor," Jesus tells the lawyer (and us) that our salvation is not a private peace to negotiate with God. It requires our being involved with one another. And in this story, he makes it clear that "one another" does not just mean the people who shop at the same stores we do. It means whoever is in need.

For many of us, One Great Hour of Sharing is one of the ways in which we do reach beyond our own experience to the needs of others, needs we may never have seen firsthand. Surely it is one of the ways we share the love of God with others. But what do we get out of this transaction? Do we get our passport stamped so we can go straight to heaven?

It seems that when Jesus said, "Do this and you will live," he meant something more. He probably meant that our separation from our neighbor, especially the neighbor we don't really want to approach, is one of the things that separates us from true life. It is in recognizing our own face in that of our neighbor that we can see the face of God. It is in recognizing our common need and our common humanity with all of those we may be tempted to think of as *them* that we can open ourselves up to God.

In giving to One Great Hour of Sharing, let us thank God for the opportunities to encounter those neighbors through the mission of this offering, and ask God to open us more and more to recognize the unacknowledged neighbors in our lives.



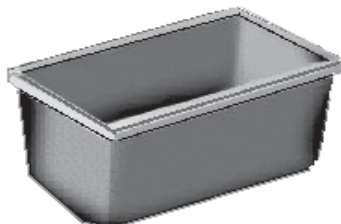
TOGETHER WE MAKE A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE



A friend who worked in the days of apartheid in South Africa put in words what I have heard from Christians in other places of danger and oppression. He said, "We oppose evil because it is contrary to God's will and is already defeated. We may suffer and even be killed, but we know we are never defeated." This is powerful knowledge! We know the wrenching story of Jesus' passion—and know it ends in resurrection! We know the wrenching passion of the human story—and know it ends in a new heaven and a new earth! We know God—and know God is good!

Our Lenten preparations are not a fearful struggle. In preparation for Lent we harmonize the discordant notes of our human daily lives with the deep reality of God's goodness, grace, and loving power. Thanks be to God!

[From the Mission Yearbook for Ash Wednesday, the Rev. Will Browne, associate director, Ecumenical Relations]



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PLEDGING MY COMMITMENT OF TIME AND TALENT

On February 18, we dedicated our pledges of commitment of time and talent. If you were not in worship that day, you were mailed a copy of the pledge form. Please spend some time prayerfully considering where God is calling *you* to commit to giving your time and talents. Then, be sure to get your completed pledge form to the church as soon as possible.

Filling The Red Tub

Do you walk into church on Sunday and say to yourself, "Oh no, I forgot to bring food for the Estacada Food Bank?" Apparently, a lot of us do that. Not putting food into the red tub in the entry may mean that one of your neighbors will go hungry.

Lately, our contributions of food have been down, but our neighbor's needs have not gone away. There are still children who go to school in the morning without breakfast. There are still mothers and fathers who go to bed hungry because they only had enough food for dinner to feed their babies. Some of our neighbors look in their kitchen cupboards every day and wonder how they can find enough food to keep them going. Others can't go to work because they had to choose between feeding the family and buying gasoline for their vehicle.

We can feed them. We just need to set our priorities and focus on our mission. **BRING FOOD!**

Are You Short on Time?

Many people have found that contemplative prayer puts a certain order into their lives. As their minds become clearer and less cluttered, they are better able to choose their priorities. By giving time to contemplative prayer they actually have more time, because they stop doing things that before were useless or unnecessary. John of the Cross has this challenging saying, "If you find that you are working so much that you don't have enough time for your regular time of prayer, just double it!"

(Father Thomas Keating, *The Better Part*)

MIDWEEK SERVICES IN LENT

Join us on Wednesday evenings February 28, March 7, March 14, and March 21 for a contemplative/experiential worship service. We gather in a quiet, intimate setting to consider scripture, to hear and make music, to listen for God's invitation to wholeness. While all midweek services will invoke that invitation, the March 21 service will be a Service for Wholeness and Healing.

In the past, these services have been appropriate for school-aged children as well as adults. Please invite friends and neighbors who would benefit from prayers for healing.

Springwater Presbyterian Church

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Forward & Address Correction