

The Messenger

Lent, Holy Week, Eastertide 2019

The Church of the Messiah

114 North Third Street at Madison

Pulaski, Tennessee 38478

The Episcopal Diocese of Tennessee

John C. Bauerschmidt, Bishop

*The mission of the Church of the Messiah is to be a growing witness of
our Faith in Jesus Christ in the midst of the community
through worship and sacrament in the Episcopal tradition.*

Our leadership:

- ✠ The Rev. Jess Reeves, Priest-in-Charge
- ✠ Pat Woolard, Music Director
- ✠ Senior Warden, Dr. Grace Meier (20)
- ✠ Junior Warden, Patsy Bryant (21)
- ✠ Secretary to the Parish, Marqueda Forrester
- ✠ Clerk of the Vestry, Sandy Ring Hall
- ✠ Treasurer, Kristi Watson
- ✠ Vestry members: Pat Dunnivant (19), Angela Hallmark (19), Solon Holt (20),
Hatherine Steever (19), Andy Hoover (21).

What I've Learned by Fasting During Lent

First, giving up something allows me to make **a tangible sacrifice to the Lord**. Although certain sacrifices are already present in my life, they're sort of "built in" at this point, or should be, like giving to charity or faithfully attending worship. I don't often experience giving up something for God on a daily basis. The act of sacrifice reminds me of my commitment to God and my desire to make him first in my life.

Second, by giving up something I usually enjoy on a daily basis, I have sometimes found myself yearning for that thing. Frankly, I've been tempted to give up my Lenten fast at times; some years, I have gotten in touch with my weakness by recognizing my failure when I break my fast. I could easily argue that it's unnecessary (it is optional, after all) and certainly not mandated for everyone in Scripture. But, though I don't think my effort at fasting makes God love or bless me more, I do think **it raises my awareness of how much I depend on other things in life** rather than the Lord. I see how easy it is for me to set up all sorts of trivialities as little idols in my life. Fasting, in some way, helps me surrender those to God.

Third, when I give up something I like and then feel an unquenched yearning for it, I'm reminded of my neediness as a person. And neediness, I believe, is at the heart of true spirituality. Jesus said:

*"Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. . . .
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst
for righteousness, for they will be
filled."* Matthew 5:3, 6

Of course, feeling hungry for one of life's pleasures isn't the same as hungering and thirsting for righteousness.

However, when I feel my hunger, when I sense my neediness for some other thing, **I can use this to get in touch with my hunger and need for God**.

Fourth, as I continue with my Lenten fast, I find myself less eager for the thing I've given up. Ironically, this makes my fast easier. It's almost something I can take for granted; thus while dulling the spiritual impact of the fast it shows me, *you can do this*. But I'm also gratified to know that one of my little "idols" is being set aside in my heart, as I learn to depend more upon God. I'm experiencing a bit of freedom that makes me gladly thankful for God's grace at work in me.

Adding a Lenten Discipline

Instead of or in addition to fasting during Lent, you might add a spiritual exercise or discipline to your life. Hardly anyone will not be benefited by this. If church sponsors a Lenten Bible study, you might join this study. Or you may want to participate in some act of kindness, such as feeding people (RFD, meals on wheels, etc).

I like to add something that I can do every day. It needs to be realistic, given my nature and patterns of life. So, for example, it would be a bad idea if I decided to get up at 5:00 a.m. to pray for an hour each day of Lent. This would stretch me so far that I'd surely fail. But I could take on additional Bible reading. Some years I've read one chapter of a gospel each day of Lent, taking it in slowly and meditating upon it. Other years I've used a Lenten devotional to focus my thought.

If you have no idea what to do during Lent, try setting aside some time of quiet to ask the Lord what he wants you to do. See if the Spirit of God guides you to something. If nothing comes to mind,

then read a chapter of a Gospel each day. If you start with Luke, you'll have time to read all of it plus all of one other gospel during Lent.

So, as we enter the season of Lent, I am grateful for the saints who have gone before me, some of whom discovered the blessings of giving up something in Lent, while others grew in their faith by adding a Lenten discipline. No matter what you do during this Lenten season, I

Talk back to a noisy ego

For many Christians, the weeks leading up to Easter constitute a time of self-denial. Many fast. Last year I heard of people fasting from desserts, TV, following NFL draft projections, and chocolate.

Learning to say no to ourselves is a vital spiritual discipline, because the message of our culture is: You can have it all. You *should* have it all. You are entitled to have it all. You deserve that guilty pleasure. And that message is wrecking lives. Few things are more pitiful than a person whose life is falling apart because he can't say "no" to himself. Few things are more pathetic than people who think first with their emotion and subsequently are misguided and eventually forlorn.

Unlike our culture, Jesus said, "*If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.*" Matthew 16:24

While fasting from TV and chocolate can be good ideas, I'd like to suggest

pray that God will draw us closer to Him and prepare us for a fresh experience of Good Friday and Easter. May God's peace be with You!

Used and amended with permission

another kind of denial: starve your ego. Recently I had an experience that we all face regularly in which someone politely "slapped my hand." I made some changes to a piece of work that I learned afterward had crossed into someone else's territory. When the person e-mailed me about it, my first thought was *No problem*. My second thought was to feel a twinge of resentment and to justify myself. My ego started to raise its big head. Thankfully, I promptly recognized it for what it was and told my ego to drop dead. By the grace of God, I denied myself. [My ego is hardly dead, but at least it suffered a set-back to its hunger for total dominance.]

My suggestion to you is likewise to give up ego for Lent, or at least, try harder to deny its hegemony — and after Lent, too; better yet, forever. Every time your ego demands to be fed, say **no**. Each time your ego nags, *What about me! Me first! My way!* deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Jesus.

JLR

Messiah Ministries

- *Morning Prayer, Monday-Saturday, 7 a.m.*
- *Sunday, Holy Eucharist, 10 a.m.; refreshments following service*
- *Wednesday, 7 p.m., Holy Communion*
- *Seasonal Bible Study, Wednesday, 5:45 p.m.*
- *Vestry meeting, Second Monday of the month, 6:30 p.m.*
- *Luncheon, Second Sunday of the month, except special occasions*
- *Nursing Home Ministry: First Tuesday, NHC, 10:30 a.m.; Second Tuesday, Keestone. 10 a.m.; Third Wednesday, Ivy Crest, 10 a.m.; Fourth Wednesday, Meadowbrook, 10 a.m. Ref. the Hines.*
- *ECW First Thursday, 11:30 a.m., lunch at various locations.*
- *Monthly Adult Christian Book Club, First Sunday of the month, 4:30-5:30 p.m.*

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### **Camp Gailor-Maxon**

It's that time of year again. Camp Gailor-Maxon preparation time! Camp dates this summer are as follows:

Pre-camp (rising 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> graders with a parent), May 29 - June 1

Camp 1 (rising 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade) June 2 – June 8

Camp 2 (rising 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> grade) June 9 – June 15

Camp 3 (rising 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade) June 16 – June 22

If you are interested in attending camp this year please notify Angela Hallmark at [hallmark68@live.com](mailto:hallmark68@live.com). Registration may be done on-line at <https://dubose.wufoo.com>.

Be sure to list Church of the Messiah as your home church. No payment is necessary at the time of registration, just remember to notify Angela once you have registered. Early bird registration ends on March 15<sup>th</sup> which is a savings of \$25 per camper, so please try to register by this date. Final deadline for registration is May 15. AH

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Boston Butt Fundraiser

It's that time of year again. Registrations for Camp Gailor-Maxon have begun which means time to sell Boston Butts! The dates of the cooking are April 26th & 27th. Just as a reminder, the proceeds from the sale will go toward the expense for our youth to attend summer camp at Camp Gailor-Maxon at Dubose Conference Center in Monteagle, TN. The selling price of the pork butts will be \$35 each. Tickets will be available soon to purchase and/or to sell to your family, friends and neighbors. Energetic salespeople will be needed! A schedule of events for the week of the cooking will be available soon. So please put April 26th & 27th on your calendar! Let us all come together to make this event the best ever. PWD

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### **ECW 2019 Fundraisers...**

This year the ECW is focusing our efforts on two fundraisers, our annual bake sale and compiling a new church cookbook. A committee has been organized and will be meeting soon to begin the planning for the cookbook.

We have chosen October 26, 2019 for our sale date. Patsy Bryant will be heading up that fundraiser and more information will be provided closer to the event. HS

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RFD Schedule: March 21, Thursday, 6:00 p.m. sorting/repacking food, Sharp Annex; March 23, Saturday, 8:30 a.m., distribution, **Richland Elementary School, Lynnville**; April 18, Thursday, 6:00 p.m., sorting/repacking food, Sharp Annex; April 20, Saturday, 8:30 a.m., distribution, **Minor Hill School, Minor Hill**; May 16, Thursday, 6:00 p.m., sorting/repacking food, Sharp Annex; May 18, Saturday, 8:30 a.m., distribution, **Bodenham Head Start, Pulaski**.

Praying in Jesus Name

Anybody who attends an Anglican church service for the first time may be struck by the fact that so many of the prayers end with the words “through Jesus Christ our Lord.” This phrase introduces us to the concept of mediation (1 Tim 2:5). It declares that God the Father’s actions towards human beings have been taken not directly but indirectly through Jesus his Son; and that in consequence we must approach him through Jesus. To some this may seem puzzling because “it makes God seem so remote”, but it has been a fundamental conviction of Christians in every generation that we can know and approach God only through Jesus.

Despite appearances to the contrary, “through Jesus Christ” means access to God, not barriers to access. The phrase reveals that Jesus is the only bridge over an otherwise unbridgeable chasm—the gulf between God and human beings caused by our ignorance and by our sin. We not only lack the mental equipment to conceive God, we also lack the moral integrity to approach him. By ourselves, in our human finitude and self-centered rebellion, we can neither know God nor reach him. We need revelation and redemption, both of which are mediated by Jesus.

It is this glorious and unique person who became “flesh and blood” like us and tasted death for us (Heb. 2:9-18). He who was really God became really and truly human. Because he became human, we can understand him. Because he was also God, however, what we see displayed so powerfully in all the Gospels is nothing less than a disclosure of the being and purpose of God.

God’s revelation and redemption through Jesus are both complete. Thus, Christ was offered for our sins “once for all” (Heb. 7:27; see also Rom. 6:10; 1 Pet. 3:18), and the faith has been delivered to us “once for all” (Jude 3). Please do not misunderstand these affirmations. They do not mean that either our understanding of God or our relationship to God is perfect, but rather that what God has done to make these possible, namely his revelation and redemption through Jesus, are perfect. We have much more to learn, but God has no more to reveal than he has revealed in Jesus Christ. We have much more to receive, but God has no more to give than he has given in Jesus Christ.

Excerpts from Life in Christ by John Stott, to be re-published by Langham Publishing in 2019.

“Preach the gospel at all times; when necessary, use words.”

Surely, we all know by now that Francis of Assisi never said this, right? He was a man who took the command to “preach the gospel to all creation” so literally that he actually preached *to the birds*. Here’s Mark Galli explaining how this is apocryphal: This saying is carted out whenever someone wants to suggest that Christians *talk about* the gospel too much and *live* the gospel too little. Fair enough---that can be a problem. Much of the rhetorical power of the quotation comes from the assumption that Francis not only said it but lived it. The problem is that he did not say it. And those two contra-facts tell us something about the spirit of our age.

And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other **name** under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. Acts 4:12

SERVING OUR WORSHIP---=---THE CHURCH OF THE MESSIAH:
PLEASE CONTACT ME IF THIS ORDER IS INCONVENIENT OR MIGHT BENEFIT FROM
YOUR ADVICE. JLR

March 3: Acolyte: Jackson Hughes; Chalice bearer/reader: Rich Woolard;
Altar Guild: Catherine Dunnivant/Rebecca Billard; Greeter: Patsy Bryant; Flowers:
Mary & Allen Dubberley in thanksgiving of anniversary & Bennita Rouleau in
thanksgiving for Gregory.

March 10: Acolyte: Logan Dubberley; Chalice bearer/reader: John Hughes;
Altar Guild: Marqueda Forrester/Connie Baker; Greeter: Pat Dunnivant.

March 17: Acolyte: Calum Lavacot; Chalice bearer/reader: Cathy Roberts;
Altar Guild: Gay McKinney/John Davis; Greeter: Angela Hallmark.

March 24: Acolyte: Kenzie Tate; Chalice bearer/reader: Andy Hoover; Altar
Guild: Catherine Dunnivant/Rebecca Billard; Greeter: Solon Holt.

March 31: Acolyte: Jackson Hughes; Chalice bearer/reader: Teresa Hughes;
Altar Guild: Marqueda Forrester/Connie Baker; Greeter: Andy Hoover.

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April 7: Acolyte: Logan Dubberley; Chalice bearer/reader: Mary Dubberley;
Altar Guild: Gay McKinney/John Davis; Greeter: Grace Meier

April 14, PALM SUNDAY: Acolyte: Jackson Hughes; Reader: Mary
Dubberley; Chalice bearer: TBA; Altar Guild: Catherine Dunnivant/Rebecca Billard;
Greeter: Hatherine Steever; Palm Arrangement: Father Jess Reeves.

**Holy Week: Sunday, April 14, Palm Sunday, 10 a.m.; Wednesday, 7 p.m.
Holy Communion; Maundy Thursday, 7 p.m. communion, stripping after
service; Vigil; Good Friday, noon & 7 pm; Easter Day: 10:00 festal
Eucharist.**

April 21, EASTER SUNDAY: Acolyte: Jackson Hughes, Calum Lavacot,
Kenzie Tate; Chalice bearer/reader: Andy Hoover; Altar Guild: Marqueda
Forrester/Connie Baker; Greeter: Patsy Bryant; Flowers: Grace Meier

April 28: Acolyte: Calum Lavacot; Chalice bearer/reader: John Hughes; Altar
Guild: Gay McKinney/John Davis; Greeter: Pat Dunnivant; Flowers: Charly Wood

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May 5: Acolyte: Logan Dubberley; Chalice bearer/reader: Rich Woolard;
Altar Guild: Catherine Dunnivant/Rebecca Billard; Greeter: Angela Hallmark; Flowers:
Marqueda Forrester in loving memory of Bettye Dunnivant & Bennita Rouleau in
thanksgiving of Brenda.

May 12: Acolyte: Jackson Hughes; Chalice bearer/reader: Teresa Hughes;
Altar Guild: Marqueda Forrester/Connie Baker; Greeter: Solon Holt; Flowers: Bob &
Patsy Bryant in thanksgiving of Amy's birthday.

May 19: Acolyte: Kenzie Tate; Chalice bearer/reader: Mary Dubberley; Altar
Guild: Gay McKinney/John Davis; Greeter: Andy Hoover; Flowers: Robin Meier in
celebration of Grace's birthday.

May 26: Acolyte: Calum Lavacot; Chalice bearer/reader: Cathy Roberts;
Altar Guild: Catherine Dunnivant/Rebecca Billard; Greeter: Grace Meier; Flowers:
Brandon & Hatherine Steever in thanksgiving of Emerson's birthday.

REFRESHMENT SERVERS:**March**

3	Allen Dubberley & Gene Hines
10	Luncheon
17	Donny & Samantha Muth
24	John Davis & John Hughes
31	Rich Woolard & Rebecca Billard

April

7	Andy Hoover
14, Palm Sunday	Pat Dunnavant & Kelly Hallmark
21, Easter Sunday	Reception
28	Ken Vickers

May

5	Allen Dubberley & Gene Hines
12	Donny & Samantha Muth
19	Reception for graduate
26	Rich Woolard & Rebecca Billard

ALTAR FLOWERS:

March 3	Allen & Mary Dubberley & Bennita Rouleau
March 10 thru April 7	No flowers during Lent
April 14, Palm Sunday	Father Jess Reeves
April 21, Easter Sunday	Grace Meier
April 28	Charly Wood
May 5	Marqueda Forrester & Bennita Rouleau
May 12	Bob & Patsy Bryant
May 19	Robin Meier
May 26	Brandon & Hatherine Steever

The Coming Feast (or why I need Rite One in Lent)

It is of value to consider how we approach the upcoming Paschal Feast, Easter, for how we come to it will have very much to do with what we gain from it. For example, contrast the openings of the two forms of confession prescribed in our Prayer Book: *Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, maker of all things, judge of all men* (page 331) vs. *Most merciful God*. While I incline to the later, that may be because I default to its being all about me. The second version is shorter, more convenient, and I come at it depending on God's mercy, true enough. But there are more and other reasons we might tend to avoid the older form in lieu of the newer, leaner language.

To begin with I don't like having my nose rubbed in it! To reiterate, *bewail our manifold sins and wickedness* is a bit much for my self-esteem, really. And conjuring God's *wrath and indignation against us* is all rather primitive, now isn't it? Insult is added to injury if I go on to say the Prayer of Humble Access, page 337, where I am *not worthy to gather up the crumbs under thy table*. That sounds indecently unsettling; I would rather spare my tender sensibilities!

Sin by in large is overtly verifiable. The newspapers and web are full of it; everyone seems to think being bad is clever and better. No more need be said of our trivializing sin. The real problem is our estimation of ourselves. A friend pointed out to me a test followed by a poll of students here and abroad recently. Although in math American students ranked relatively middle to low in testing, when asked how they ranked themselves as math students, they were on the top! Self-perception ≠ reality. Similarly, our sense of worthiness is rightly measured not by how we feel about ourselves or compared to our own closest peers but in how we should see ourselves by God's understanding and estimation. Simply, if you were not in need of radical

reclamation, Jesus Christ would not have come down from heaven and died for you. On that basis, who is worthy to gather up the crumbs under His Table? Is not the *burden of our misdoing grievous unto us, the burden, intolerable?* If you can swallow that, and it should make a lump in your throat, then you can appreciate the hymn verse, *And from my smitten heart with tears two wonders I confess: the wonders of redeeming love and my unworthiness* (Hymn 498, v. 2).

The Cramerian catalogue of our sinfulness is sharp, as needs be to meet our too-often dulled and self-satisfied ego. This is intentional. And so is what comes next, at least in the Rite One service, i.e., the "comfortable words." They begin with, *Come unto me all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you*. If you have accepted the Prayer Book diagnosis, you know you need, and indeed will cherish that, as well as what follows: *God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son to the end that all who believe in him should not perish but have everlasting life*. It is enormous good news which only makes sense if you "get" the bad news of our life without Christ. If we are too tender-eared to hear the truth about who we are as sinners compared to a holy God, we are not ready to hear and receive the Good News of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and we ourselves by him.

So as you approach Easter, keep in mind this summary in straight talk from our Lord: *...which will love him more?...the one forgiven the more...but he who is forgiven little, loves little*. The reformed slave trader become pastor John Newton who wrote *Amazing Grace* was fond of saying, *Two things I know: I am a very great sinner, and I have a very great Savior*. Amen.

submitted by Father Reeves