

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Guyana – Christian Education Department would like to thank its contributors of our 2018 Lenten Devotional Booklet.

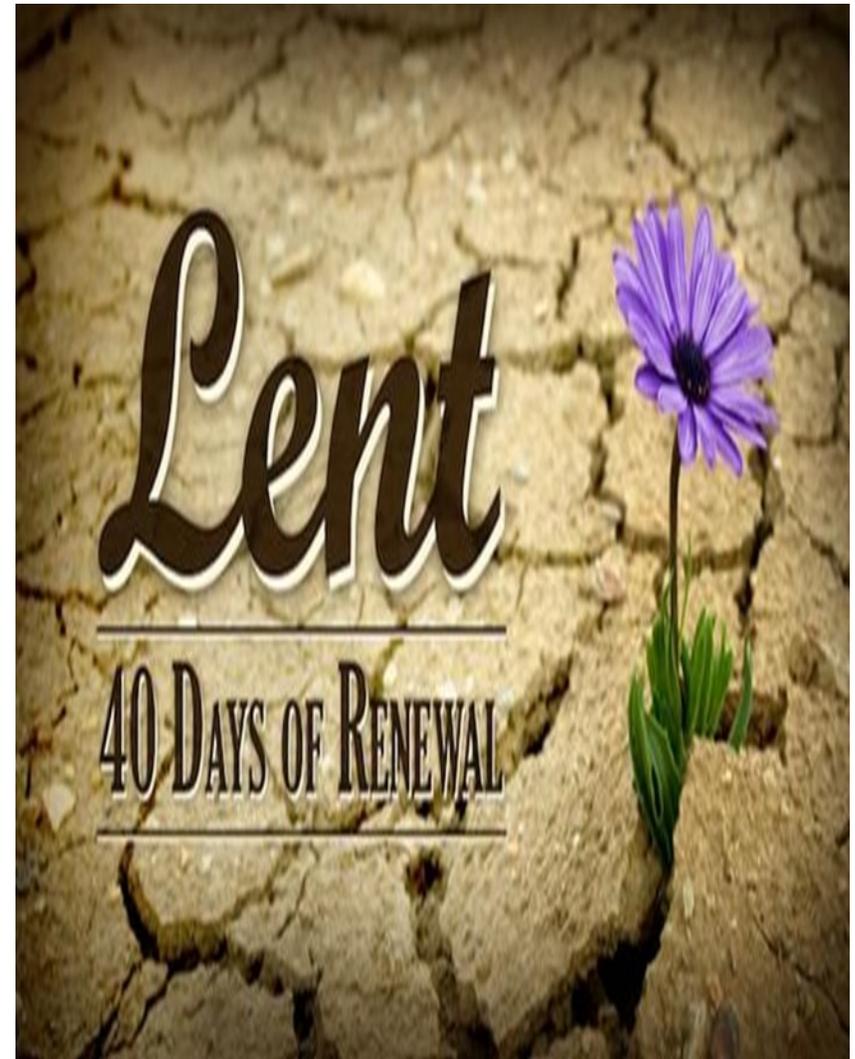
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FEBRUARY 2018

DAILY MEDITATIONS



2018

Remember you are dust, and to
dust you shall return...

Precious Lord,

Our world is a wilderness of dust and ash. The flames of poverty consume. Deserts engulf forests and grasslands. Drought, famine and food shortages blow through an ever more hopeless world.

Yet amid the ashes and dust, we know that you are there. Your rod and staff comfort us in death's valley. For forty days you fasted in the wilderness. As you faced death, you, too, felt the pain of thirst. It is out of death that you conquered death. Out of hopelessness, you bring eternal hope. Out of dust, you breathe new life.

On this day, Lord, drown us in the waters of your compassion. Fill us with the daily bread of your promise. Give us eyes to see our dusty neighbors and remind us of the dust from where we came, and the grace-filled dust where we will one day return. You are the one who was, who is and who is to come, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

EASTER MESSAGE

"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me shall never die"

The glorious Easter message, that Jesus, who was crucified, is not here but is risen and this offers us the comforting assurance that death has been defeated.

On this glorious day, **"Let the earth rejoice, in shining splendor"**.

Today is the radiant day of this victory, for Christ has trampled death and destruction underfoot. **By his resurrection he has brought life and immortality to light** (2 Tim 1:10). **"He has made us pass from enslavement to freedom, from sadness to joy, from mourning to jubilation, from darkness to light, from slavery to redemption. Therefore let us acclaim in his presence: Alleluia!"**

As the season of Resurrection comes, may the miracle of Easter fill your heart with peace, compassion, hope and joy!

Grace and Peace.

Rev. Shirley Jaundoo—Director

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

EASTER PRAYER

God our Father, creator of all, today is the day of Easter joy. This is the morning on which the Lord appeared to those who had begun to lose hope and opened their eyes to what the scriptures foretold: that first he must die, and then he would rise and ascend into his Father's glorious presence.

May the risen Lord breathe on our minds and open our eyes that we may know him in the breaking of bread, and follow him in his risen life. Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen



2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:1

14 February 2018

We entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, ... (vv. 20b-6:1).

ASH WEDNESDAY

Today is Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent. In many churches across the world ashes are placed on the forehead of worshippers with the sign of the cross on each, and the words declared, **“Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return”** (Gen 3:19). We are to repent and turn to God.

In the Scripture reading, St. Paul urges all to be reconciled to God. We are created for a relationship of trust in God, but everyone has turned away and needs to be reconciled to God. But no one can do this on her or his own; that is God's doing in Christ. Notice how far God went in Christ to make us right with God. Jesus fully identified with us, taking our sin into himself that we might become a new creation in Him. Martin Luther calls this the **“happy exchange”**: Jesus Christ takes our sin upon himself and in exchange gives us his righteousness.

St. Paul earnestly entreats us to live the truth that we are reconciled to God on account of God's grace in Jesus Christ. Through faith in Jesus Christ, we are given a new beginning. Now is the time of our salvation, of God in Christ reconciling us to God. Yes, today, Right now, we are urged to live the truth that we belong to Jesus and we want, with all we have and with all we are, to live faithful to who we are now: people reconciled to God, clothed in the righteousness of Jesus. Dressed in Jesus' righteousness, you are Jesus' ambassador wherever you are.

Prayer: O, God, as I begin my Lenten journey with the Lord Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, remind me of Jesus' total identification with all in our sin; that he gave his very life that I might be reconciled to God. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Rev. Dr. Winston D. Persaud

Titus 3:1-15

Saturday 17 February 2018

Titus 1:1-16

Thursday, 15 February 2018

He must hold firmly to the message which can be trusted and which agrees with the doctrine. (V9a)

TRUE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

Many Christians need to take to heart the lesson of this story of Little Red Riding Hood as many wolves in sheep's clothing prey upon God's flock. Some are masters of deception and disguise. They talk like Christians. They use the Bible. They seem like nice people. But they will draw us in to eat us for dinner!

Because the enemy is so active in promoting destructive heresies, Church leaders must be godly people of the Word who have to vigilantly guard the flock by refuting false teachers and by correcting believers who have followed false teachings by exposing and correcting the many errors that keep creeping into our lives. So, Paul tells Titus that these men must be silenced. While it may not be possible to stop them from talking, it is possible to stop them from spreading their errors within the church. This would include guarding the pulpit from false teachers as false teaching always damages people, but also being on guard against their infiltrating smaller groups in the church. They do not focus on the person and work of Jesus Christ.

But as Christians, we must believe in the Bible alone as our authoritative source of truth. And all of Scripture centers on the person and work of Jesus Christ, who is the eternal God, who took on human flesh to die as the substitute for our sins on the cross. It is the job of elders to protect the flock from deception by teaching God's truth and by refuting the many false teachings that prey upon the untaught in our day.

Prayer: Lord God, as we look to you from where our help comes, enable us to put the enemy beneath our feet as it comes to us in all forms of temptations.

Amen

Rev. Shirley Jaundoo

Titus 2:1-15

Friday, 16 February 2018

1 Corinthians 15:19-28

Sunday 1 April 2018

If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, ...For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ (vv. 19-22).

THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD

Today, with Christians throughout the world and across the ages, we join in celebrating Jesus' resurrection from the dead. Jesus' resurrection is a radical turning point for the world. Because of Jesus' resurrection, you are called and given the strength and power through the Holy Spirit to live here and now with a new outlook on life. This news comes up against the powerful, irresistible feeling of despair, hopelessness, and resignation to live by the old adage, "What comes will do!" (Whah come sa do!)

In the midst of living our lives, we know that death is real; that death interrupts the rhythm of our lives and can and does have consequences, indeed, drastic, lasting consequences. It is so easy to fall into despair that death is the only truth which defines you and each and every human being. While death is inevitable, the Christian hope is that it is not the final, ultimate word.

In the resurrection of Jesus, God says, "**No!**" to the message that the last word about each human being is death. When we confess that God alone is the source of life, healing, and forgiveness, we do so, knowing that Jesus did not stay dead in the tomb. No, God raised him from the dead. The hope of the resurrection, which Christians confess in both the Nicene and Apostles' Creeds, is on account of Jesus' resurrection '**the first fruits**'. Through faith in him, we live in the hope that we, too, will be raised from the dead. Yes, we say to others today, "**Jesus Christ is risen,**" and hear the response, "**He is risen, indeed!**" This is true for all days.

Prayer: O God, with Christians throughout the world, let me bear witness to this good news that others may believe and join in the Easter celebration. Amen

Pastor Winston D. Persaud, PhD

Hebrews 4:1-6

Saturday, 31 March 2018

For indeed the good news came to us just as to them; but the message they heard did not benefit them; (v2)

OUR PLACE OF REST

Stoplights are the custodians for guiding us to make the best use of our roads. They allow us the opportunity to navigate the direction we are going in a very secured and safe manner. Stoplights help to prevent havoc and recklessness.

The Christians who received the words from the writer of Hebrews were on the verge of turning away from the promised rest in Christ. The difficulties of their time overshadowed the reality of God's promise. They doubted God would fulfill God's promise to them. They were a people who needed to see a clearer path before them. The choices we make in times of uncertainties and challenges can lead to our downfall. Any alternative to God's plan is never helpful. Israel doubted God's promise and it cost them forty years of wandering in the wilderness.

A combination of the knowledge of who God is and faith in God are important tools for us when life takes us to our stoplights. Here is where God's true colour will be reflected, indicating to us and assuring us, that our promised Sabbath rest in Christ is a continuous process of God to complete his good, gracious and perfect work in us.

Prayer: Thank you dear God for your abiding presence which we can see and feel in so many ways every day. Help us in our restlessness to know that our true rest can only be found in you. Amen. Rev. Moses Prashad

For the grace of God has appeared bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, (V11)

LIVE WHAT YOU LEARN

2017 was marked by some disturbing events. Sex scandals involving high profile people and decisions along with statements made by world leaders led us to see how easy it is for character to become tarnished by behaviour. The actions of these individuals left many feeling hurt and others anxious.

The church stands as a city on a hill. We are torch bearers of the gospel which is life giving and reflects respect for the dignity of each person. This is what helps to forge strong communities where harmony exists.

The call by Titus for a life of sound morals, therefore, includes everyone. Titus is aware that words and actions can help or hinder our God given mission. The absence of living what we have been taught breeds quarrels, divisiveness and judgmental attitudes. This destroys our credibility and obscures the gospel.

But a life which seeks the good of others just does not come naturally. While sin and opposition to God create tremendous stress on relationships, Titus tells us that redemption in Jesus Christ prepares us for good deeds. In Christ, the grace of God is revealed and enters our humanity in humility and love. These two virtues are foundational to our life with God and our neighbour.

Prayer: Dear God, by the power of the Holy Spirit teach us to be disciples who by word and deed live as your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

Rev Moses Prashad.

“He saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we have done.” (V: 5a)

ARE WE CHRISTIAN CITIZENS?

Lent is a time which we use to draw closer to God. In Paul’s letter to Titus, he makes the distinction between Christian citizens and others. Christians are to adhere to those qualities that would enhance their positive relationships with others.

We are expected to be law abiding, active in our service to God, to our country and in every work, as long as it is good, careful in speech, tolerant and not aggressive. We are to maintain Christian values and stand up for what is right, but without falling into intolerance. We are to be kind and just in all that we do.

Our actions are to come from our realization of what God has done for us in Christ. Through Jesus’ life on earth and his death on the Cross we have been placed into a new relationship with God. God’s love and grace are unconditional gifts which none of us could earn. They are only to be accepted in trust and love. We must guard our hearts against our pride, arrogance and self-satisfaction in our achievements.

As believers, we are new creations in Christ. Through our baptism, we are renewed and re-born. In this season of Lent, as we seek a more intimate relationship with Christ, let us remember the two greatest Commandments, which our Lord highlighted in Matthew 22:37-39. ***“You shall Love the Lord, your God, with all your heart and with all your mind... [and} You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”***

Prayer: Lord God, teach us to love you unconditionally and help us to love our fellow human beings as ourselves. Amen
Romans 8:31-39

Rev. Conrad Plummer
Sunday 18 February 2018

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us (v37)

Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9

Friday 30 March 2018

When he was made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all those who obey him. (v:9)

DEFINING OUR DESTINY

We are all familiar with the adage, “Jack just flows with the tide.” When there is no specific goal to life very little can be achieved. Attention to personal enhancement and being of help to others will probably be overlooked.

Was Jesus’ life just a passive script? Definitely not! His life instead was a continuous process of making the will of God his own. So what was God’s will for Jesus? It was Jesus choosing the path of obedience even though obedience led to suffering and death. Precisely because Jesus obeyed God perfectly even under great trial, he can help us to obey no matter how difficult obedience seems to be. But why should we obey Jesus? Is there anything of value or worth attached? Yes, there is!

Eternal Salvation will be offered. This means there will be the elimination of the verdict of our sin, the setting aside of judgement and the award of undeserved membership in God’s family. It is the overcoming of death and awakening of hope turning us into a life of discipleship.

Salvation in Christ is God’s vote for us, inviting us, empowering us and investing in us. This gives us all the reason to smile in the morning and rest in the evening knowing that God loves us and we belong to him.

Prayer: Gracious God, in our darkest moments help us not to feel abandoned but to trust in your presence and to continue to walk with you and obey you. Amen.

Rev Moses Prashad

"Do this to remember me." (v24)

LEST WE FORGET...

Is it possible to live the Christian life and yet forget the Christ whom we say we follow? Is that why we are reminded to **"Do this to remember me?"**

Can you picture a garden in the darkness of night? Three sleeping, one in prayer. Do you remember?

Friends would soon abandon Him. His enemies would soon grab Him. His life was nearing the end. The tragedy of all mankind lay just around the bend. The shouts of joy soon turned into shouts of hate. What began in a wooden manger was coming to an end on a wooden cross. Don't you remember?

Can you see Him endure the mockeries, the blows, the spitting, the pulling of hair? Oh can you not see the King of Glory, the King of kings, stripped of His garment, exposed to the gaze of the crowds? Don't you remember?

The heavens observed the spectacle, every detail recorded and remembered. **"It is finished, it is over, it is done."** The scorching sun is gone and all that remains is darkness. Not just physical darkness, but spiritual darkness as well. How could you forget?

It appears impossible that those who have been redeemed by the blood of the dying Lamb should ever forget His sacrifice. That those who have been loved with an everlasting love could ever forget the Son of God. Can you forget the One who never forgot you?

Can you forget He who poured His life blood for your sins? The One who loved you so much that He sacrificed Himself for you? Can you forget Him?

His name is Jesus Christ. Can you forget Him? Never! Never! Never!

Prayer: Lest I forget Gethsemane, Lest I forget Thine agony; Lest I forget Thy love for me Lord, lead me to Calvary. Amen.

Mr. Michael Davy Ram

GOD IS OUR REFUGE AND OUR STRENGTH

Each of us during our lifetime will have to carry burdens, of one kind or other. No one is exempt. However, whenever these occasions arise, and we are tempted to carry them on our own shoulders. The Psalmist reminds us to **cast all our burdens on the Lord and he will sustain us.** (Psalm 55: 22a)

Two months ago, I was faced with a situation where I had to make that decision whether to carry the burden alone, or depend on the Lord to do so for my family and me, and that was my husband's illness and subsequent death, during which time I was often told "you are a strong person". However, I have come to realise that I am not strong in myself, but in the Lord. As Paul tells us in 2nd Cor.12:9, **"My Grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness"**. Our strength comes from the one who took our burdens and sins to the cross.

During this season of Lent, we are reminded of what Jesus had to suffer in order that our sins can be forgiven. God gave His only Son to die for us; and because Jesus conquered death, we can have life and have it more abundantly. When suffering comes, it should not drive us away from God, but rather help us to identify with him, and allow His love to heal us. Let us therefore put our trust, our hope and our faith in Him.

Prayer: Gracious God, to whom shall we go when we are hurting? Help us to recognise that you are sovereign God and that you are only a prayer away. Amen
Deacon Elaine Grannum

Hebrews 2:11-18

Monday, 19 February 2018

Since He himself has gone through suffering and testing He is able to help us when we are being tested (v18)

TRUSTING DIVINE HELP

In the Old Testament, High Priests made sacrifices to God for the people's sins. Jesus Christ, our High Priest came to earth as a human being. Therefore, He understands our weaknesses and shows mercy in time of our needs. He came to pay the penalty for our sins once and for all by his sacrificial death.

The new Hebrew converts are being encouraged here to trust Jesus as their "**Great High Priest**" as they are being persecuted for their faith and were being tempted to fall back into their old life styles.

Christ also suffered pain and faced temptation and this should help us to face trials. Jesus understands our struggles because He faced them as a human. Some believers tend to give up when trials and testing comes. True believers should know that this is all part of a believer's dilemma. The road will never be easy. Jesus told his disciples that they will face troubles, but because He had overcome, they too would overcome.

We can trust our "**Great High Priest**" to help us to survive suffering and overcome the troubles and temptations in this world which can so easily bother us when we go to Jesus for strength and patience.

Prayer: Almighty God, we pray that through your Son our "Great High Priest", you will graciously hear our prayers when we seek your aid. Amen

Rev. Babsie Pierre

Romans 5:6-11

Wednesday, 28 March 2018

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (v8)

ALL THIS JUST FOR US

In this passage, Paul rehearses the benefits that are ours as the Children of God. The initial portrait of humanity without God is painted in hopeless ink. Man is described as being weak, wicked, wayward and warlike. **For these reasons, good works alone can never bring us salvation; we will always fall short of the glory of God.** (Romans 3:23)

It is understandable to give up your life for a loved one but can you imagine giving up your life for an enemy? This is exactly what God did for us through the death of His Son, Jesus Christ. We are reconciled with God through Christ, the peacemaker. Peace is not just the absence of war but the presence of a wholesome relationship with God.

It's not just what we have been saved from but more importantly what we have been saved for. Yes, we have been saved from God's wrath through the death of Christ but the resurrection of Jesus means that we have been saved for all eternity; it grants us eternal life. **Christ acts as our advocate** (1 John 2:1) **and our intercessor** (Hebrews 7:25), He gives us the privilege to be one with God, a gesture beyond anything we deserve.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we pray that your endless and abiding love flow through us, so that we can express this love to the people around us. Amen.

Dcn. Mahendra Singh

Romans 12:1-2

Tuesday, 27 March 2018

I plead with you to give your bodies to God....Let them be a living and holy sacrifice – the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him (v1).

DYING FOR JESUS?

In Romans 12 Paul makes a call for radical commitment. **“I plead with you to give your bodies to God”**. Paul was not telling us to die for Jesus. He told us to do the reverse – to live for him! **“Let them be a living and holy sacrifice – the kind God will find acceptable”**

In the Old Testament, sacrifices were offered to atone for sin, making that person right with God and dedicatory sacrifices were voluntarily offered as an expression of thanksgiving and praise to the Lord. Jesus offered himself as the atoning sacrifice. His physical body was broken for us. In response we are often exhorted to give our hearts to Jesus. But here Paul is asking us to offer our physical bodies as dedicatory sacrifices – as thanksgiving offerings to God. They are to be **‘a living sacrifice’**. If we are grateful, we will give your bodies to God because of all He has done for us.

The demand of discipleship is not to die for Jesus, but to die to sin and self! Jesus died to give us new life. We who receive this new life will no longer live for ourselves, instead we will live for Christ. In this season of Lent, let us read and ponder on the life of Christ and be drawn into a closer relationship with Him.

Prayer: Dear Lord, we thank you for your loving tender care for us. Help us to trust you in all areas of our lives so that we can experience your amazing promises, in Jesus’ name we pray. Amen

Rev. Shirley Jaundoo

Hebrews 3:1-11

Tuesday, 20 February 2018

Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: “Today, if you will hear His voice.” (v7)

PROCRASTINATION—THE THIEF OF TIME

What are you going to do today? “Today” is emphatic. “Today” God is speaking through a greater someone than Moses, and today God expects us to respond. The writer knew human tendency to delay... to procrastinate, especially with spiritual matters. So he repeats three times “Today”

“Today,” of course indicates urgency. It does not necessarily mean a 24-hour period but rather it means “now!” In other words, it refers to this present moment. The Apostle Paul stated, **“... Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”** (2 Cor. 6:2) The time to respond to God is always, now! Jesus being fully aware of the urgency of our salvation said to the thief, **“Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”** Luke 23:43

The problem begins when we hear the word of God, feel the conviction of the Holy Spirit, tell ourselves that we need to take action, but then we do nothing! We tend to procrastinate with the most important issues of life. But the warning in this portion of scripture is that if we fail to follow through when challenged by the word of God, we face the inevitable hardening that occurs when we hear and fail to respond. The heart gets harder every time we say “no” to Jesus or to any part of His truth or will.

If we are tempted to put off our spiritual need, this scripture warns us of the danger of wrong choices and encourages us not to miss out on what God has in store for us. Act now and make today count!

Dear God, I ask that you forgive me and cleanse me. Right now, I receive your grace and forgiveness. I accept the sacrifice Jesus made on the Cross for my sin and I thank you that my debt has been fully paid. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen!

Mr. Michael Davy Ram

Hebrews 3:12-19

Wednesday, 21 February 2018

For we have become partners of Christ, if only we hold our first confidence firm to the end. (v14)

WE ARE PARTNERS

When reading the Bible we hear time and time again how God has been faithful to those he has called while the called have been unfaithful to God. The story of Moses leading the children of Israel out of the slavery in Egypt to the freedom of the Promised Land should be a glorious story, but the writer of Hebrews reminds us how sad and painful it becomes. The people rebel and turn away from God; they die in the wilderness. God did not intervene and spare them.

The author of Hebrews is concerned that the congregations are growing weary, turning away from God and becoming like the people in Exodus. So, the author calls them (and us) to hold on to the confidence that they first felt when they believed. God will not force them to remain faithful, but God will not spare them from experiencing the consequences of their own actions.

Hold on to your faith. This is how we get through the difficult times in our community, our country, our world. We must never forget that **“we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses that we can continue in faith to the end.”** [Hebrews 12:1]

Prayer: Gracious and loving God; we thank and praise you for calling us to become your children and enabling us to share in your ministry. Remind us that we are yours, and you will always be with us. Amen.

Rev. Vivian S. Roberts

Hebrews 9:11-15

Monday, 26 March 2018

He entered once for all into the Holy Place, not with the blood of goats and calves but by his own blood, thus obtaining an eternal redemption (v12).

SET FREE FOR LIFE WITH GOD

The writer of Hebrews makes comparisons between the earthly high priests and Jesus, the Great High Priest. The former served in earthly tents but Jesus serves in the greater and perfect tent not made with hands i.e. heaven. The earthly high priest made repeated sacrifices for sin whereas Jesus' sacrifice was **“once for all”**. Again the earthly high priest offered up the blood of animals. Jesus offered his own blood. The effects of the sacrifice of the earthly high priest purified the flesh. In the case of Jesus it purifies our conscience. The sacrifice of Jesus our Great High Priest has both present and eternal value for us.

In verse fourteen we hear that Jesus' sacrifice **“purify our conscience...”** There is an effect that flows from this benefit; we worship the living God. There is a qualitative shift in our lives. We are no longer engaged in vain and worthless things that result in spiritual death. Our lives are now given to serving God. This service we render in faithful living to our baptismal covenant with God. This means committed discipleship, devotion to God's mission to the world and living loving and compassionate lives that manifest the presence of the Spirit in us.

A second benefit of Jesus' sacrifice is that we receive the **“promised eternal inheritance”**. This is the forgiveness of sin and salvation. In his death on the cross Jesus paid the price or ransom for our sin. He died in our place. By his sacrificial atoning death we are set free from sin, death and the devil for righteousness, life and God. Thanks be to God for God's immeasurable benefits to us in Christ Jesus Our Great High Priest.

Prayer: Dear God, We thank you all the wonderful benefits we have through Jesus' sacrificial death for our sin. By your Spirit help us to offer ourselves daily as living sacrifices. Amen.

Rev. Roy Thakurdyal

Philippians 2:5-11

Sunday, 25 March 2018

"...at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE SHOULD BOW, .. that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."(V10 -11)

HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST AMONG US

Our text calls on us to **"let the same attitude and purpose and humble mind be in us which was in Christ Jesus: Let Christ Jesus be our example in humility"** (V: 5). We often speak of Palm Sunday as the triumphal entry into Jerusalem among welcoming and cheering people and children with palm branches singing, **"Hosanna!"** In contrast, it is actually about the 'coronation ride' of Jesus towards Calvary's cross. This was also the coronation ride of Jesus as King of Israel.

Jesus knew that no matter what anyone said today, He was going to face betrayal, arrest, crucifixion and death on Friday. It would require a real sense of mission, strong will, and humility of a remarkable quality. This is frame of mind we are to imitate when Paul writes, **"have this mind among you"** – humility.

Jesus Christ as God did not hold His own divine glory and almighty power, but He counted redeeming us as important as the glories of the Trinity. Jesus didn't give up being God or all of the powers and glory of God forever. He set them aside for a time and emptied Himself in absolute humility even unto death. Yes, He laid aside His glory and became human for the grace of salvation for us - sinful people. Jesus' resurrection and eternal, everlasting life are won and poured out for all people. **"Those who believe and are baptized shall be saved!"**

Prayer: Our Lord and Saviour, You showed us through Calvary's cross the Father's love for the salvation of all who by faith in Jesus, and baptism are saved by grace. In Jesus' name. Amen

Mr. Samuel J. Goolsarran

Hebrews 4:1-10

Thursday, 22 February 2018

There remains, then a Sabbath-rest for the people of God. (v9)

A DAY OF REST

We are reminded that God did rest, after he had done six days of work, He rested on the seventh day. We may be thinking that if we go a little harder we will get all this work that we have planned done. But what we are forgetting is that if God doesn't give us the strength and the energy to go forward we can do nothing without him. If our Lord Almighty, the creator, has taken the time to rest, who are we that we think that we can go on and do not have that rest.

So today, let us not worry about what we have done if only we had worked some more and how good it would be if we had worked on Sunday. He has given us the weekly Sabbath so we can rest and look to him for more energy to start the new week, renewed and refreshed in Christ.

Believers cease their own works and rest in salvation in the finished work in Christ on the Cross. Revelation 14:13 says it best. **"Then I heard a voice from heaven say write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." 'Yes' say the spirit "They will rest from their labor for their deeds will follow them."**

Prayer: Thank you Lord that you have given me a day so that my weary body may rest and be blessed in you. Amen

Rev. Patrick Jones

Hebrews 4:11-15

Friday, 23 February 2018

Seeing then that we have a “Great High Priest,” who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God; let us hold fast our confessions (v14)

KEEPING THE FAITH

There are earthly priests today. Aaron was a high priest in Old Testament times but Jesus is the “Great High Priest” forever. We can trust Christ for who He is, because to begin with, Jesus is the God-man. The name “**Jesus**” means “**Savior**” which identifies with His humanity and His ministry on earth.

Son of God affirms His deity, He is God. Son of God shows his humanity. In His unique person, Jesus united deity and humanity through which He is able to bring people to God and bring to them all that God has for them.

Positionally, Jesus is “**Great**” He passed through the heavens. When He ascended to the Father, Jesus went up into the heaven where God is. There He ministers in a heavenly tabernacle not an earthly one. In addition, Jesus is not only in heaven, but He is enthroned. He sits on the throne of grace. There, He intercedes for us. He is “**Great**” because He is ministering mercy and grace to those who go to Him for help.

As believers in Christ, we can run to our **Great High Priest** at any time, in any circumstances and find the help we need. No trial is too great, no temptation is too strong to make us give up our faith in Christ. Only Jesus can give us the mercy and grace that we need when we need it.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, help us to cherish our confession and trust in Jesus your Son, as our Great High Priest, always. Amen

Rev. Babsie Pierre

Romans 11:25-36

Saturday, 24 March 2018

For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. (V27)

SALVATION THROUGH ISRAEL

It will be a huge mistake to perceive that God is finished with the Israelites. The scriptures clearly states that the call of Abraham will result in him being the father of a great nation; his name will be great and through him all the families of the earth shall be blessed

This promise continues through Isaac and Jacob (Israel), but sad to say that over the years, Israel has become rebellious, worshipping idols and being disobedient. However, God continues to love his people with great passion but reminds them of this and their transgressions through the voice of the prophets.

Eventually God allows the fulfillment of his prophecy by sending his son, Jesus, who is tasked with taking special care in shepherding his chosen people.

Immediately Jesus set out to gather his people – a reminder of what He told the woman that he was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel and yet because of her faith, his compassion did not allow him to leave her in her distress.

After experiencing rejection by the lost sheep of the house of Israel, he further said: I have other sheep that are not of this fold, I must bring them also and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. Paul tells us in Romans that until the fullness of the gentile come in so all Israel shall be saved. The gentiles are in and so are all God’s people.

Prayer: To you alone O Lord belongs all glory. We praise you for your inexhaustible kindness towards us in Christ Jesus. Amen

Deacon Ackloo Ramsudh

Romans 11:13-25

Friday, 23 March 2018

If the part of the dough offered as first fruits is holy, then the whole batch is holy; if the root is holy, so are the branches.” (v16)

GRAFTED WITH HIS GRACE

We are grafted in and given life from the root of the tree. The branch is dependent upon the root rather than the root upon the branch. This speaks of how the original community of God's people has adopted the Gentile community through Christ rather than becoming something completely new.

We sometimes display some form of pride, that separates us from the grace of God. As it already has been pointed out, the branches were dependent upon the roots, not vice-versa. True, the branches were broken off so that these branches might be grafted, but with such pride, these new branches will be snapped off even quicker. Paul again affirms that we only belong to the community of God by faith. Neither the Jews nor the Gentiles belong without faith; they both belong because they have faith.

It is the undisputed kindness of the Lamb of God that saves our very lives. We belong to the body of Christ only through faith

We should regularly affirm our faith. We should constantly keep this in our thoughts, no matter what challenges we face in our daily lives. The pinnacle of hope comes from Grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. We ought to understand that though chosen, our salvation is by God's grace. We are to humbly accept this fact to enter into His divine kingdom.

Prayer: Thank you Lord Jesus for the gift of your gracious love to accept us, despite our many sins. Amen.

Deacon Keith Hazell

Acts 1:15-26

Saturday, 24 February 2018

And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was added to and counted with the eleven Apostles” – as the Lord's special messengers (v26)

PRESERVING THE APOSTOLIC LEADERSHIP

“After Judas fell, Barsabbas and Matthias were nominated to take Judas' place in this ministry as an Apostle, in fulfilment of Ps. 109:8 **“Let his days be few and let another take his office and charge.”** The disciples prayed to the Lord who knows the thoughts, passions, desires, appetites, purposes and endeavours of the nominated two, and all of us (V 24). They drew lots, and Matthias was selected, and he was added and counted with the eleven Apostles. A church leader will sometimes fail. When this happens, a new leader usually is elected. It is not only in our day that this happens. When Judas betrayed Jesus, the early church elected a leader to take his place. Not all elections in the church result from the failure of leaders, but sometimes they do.

We are to remember that the future of the church is not depended on anyone of us, but on Christ Himself. When we fail, others will take our places. Jesus will build His church, and the church will live on. We have the word of God to guide us in all things, spoken by men of God and inspired by the Holy Spirit. We rely on the Word of God to continue to guide us in difficult times. 1 Timothy 3:1-13 set down criteria for church leaders who must be above reproach, be worthy of respect, sincere in what they say with a clear conscience and be able to serve. If our church faces a situation like this, we are to be filled with peace and confidence in the Word of God to guide us.

Prayer: Almighty God and Father, You continue to watch over your Church and provide dedicated leaders to serve the people and to preach the Gospel of good news of salvation to all. Amen

Mr. Samuel J. Goolsarran

Romans 5:1-11

Sunday, 25 February 2018

Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. (v5)

HOPE DOES NOT DISAPPOINT!

St. Paul is talking about a hope, a confidence that only God can give and he wrote about this while he was in jail. Because Christ is in us, we can expect the glory of God to shine not just in one area but in every area of our life. That's real hope. The kind that the whole world needs to get a hold of and never let go. It is an amazing hope given by **"an amazing God."** It is a hope that does not disappoint when we are conscious of how much God loves us. No matter what we face in our life **"it's the peace that surpasses all understanding"** that will see us safely through each and every time when we face our individual crosses!

Things are always going to happen in our life. That's just the way life is but because we know how much God loves us, we know that no matter what happens He is always working all things together for our good. That means every single thing that happens in our life, He's taking them all, shaking them together and sculpting them into something beautiful for us! everything that happens to us, God is aware of and is using it to bring about good in our life. Right now, a week from now, twenty years from now, eighty years from now...we will always, on a consistent basis, have this hope that does not disappoint.

Prayer: You are the God of peace when all around is fear. You are the God of Joy when all around is sadness. You are the God of Love when all around is hatred. You are the God of Hope when all around is despair. Amen

Mr. Michael Davy Ram

Romans 11:1-12

Thursday, 22 March 2018

"But if it is by grace, it is no longer conditioned on works or anything we have done. Otherwise, grace will no longer be grace" (v 6)

GOD'S SAVING GRACE ALONE

Christ Jesus brought the new covenant which provides for forgiveness and reconciliation for God's saving Grace. The OT law reveals sin; the Gospel forgives sin and comforts with the gracious love of God. The Law which condemns the sinner is replaced by the Gospel of grace. God in His love and mercy, entered into human history to save and redeem us. God's grace and love in Christ brought us forgiveness and make us alive together with Christ. The believer's new life is in and with Christ. Being in Christ and with Christ is also a matter for the Church as a body of believers in Christ.

God's love, saving grace and promise of eternal life, is for all people to faith in Jesus Christ, The OT talked about God's promised Grace, but its full richness was revealed and made available only in Christ. So we believe in faith that God's Grace alone comes to us through Jesus Christ. **"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and not from your own selves; it is the gift of God - not works, so that no one can boast"** (Ephesians 2: 8 - 9). Yes, we are saved by grace alone. We believe, and in faith humbly pray, and in penitence accept that God in Christ is seeking to save us, and offering us eternal life.

Prayer: Our loving Father in heaven, we gratefully offer our thanks for your promise of eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ. We believe that your grace comes to us through faith in Jesus Christ, led by the Holy Spirit, and that we are saved by Grace alone for eternal life in your heavenly kingdom. Amen

Mr. Samuel J. Goolsarran

Romans 10:14-21

Wednesday, 21 March 2018

'How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? (v14)

BEAUTIFUL FEET

Not so long ago I was remembering, as a little boy, I was invited to an open air meeting. There I heard for the first time, **"The Good News of God's love" for me as shown in "Jesus' death on the cross"** preached by one Charley Charles. The Spirit opened my eyes and heart that night and I received Jesus Christ as my Savior.

We praise the Lord for people like Charley Charles who faithfully preach the gospel and introduce others to Christ. According to the apostle Paul, they have **"Beautiful-feet"** Romans 10:15

But spreading the gospel is not just the responsibility of Pastors, teachers and preachers. All who know Jesus can share on a personal level with friends, co-workers, family members and strangers. It is our privilege and duty. Otherwise, how will people **"believe in Him of whom they have not heard?"**

This Lenten season we can make our feet beautiful by taking the Good News of Jesus to others.

Prayer: Thank you Lord for opening our eyes and hearts, we ask you for courage, for us to help others in the same way, so that they too will have salvation. Amen

Rev. Sugrim Gobin

Romans 1:1-15

Monday, 26 February 2018

And you also are among those who are called to belong to Jesus Christ. (v6)

THE GOOD NEWS OF THE GOSPEL

"Bright eyes gladden the heart; Good news puts fat on the bones." Proverbs 15: 30. Open your daily newspapers, turn on your radios, switch on your television sets; you are bound to be greeted by bad news! What is happening on a national and worldwide scale is simply the magnification of what is happening on an individual level. As personal problems, animosities, and fears increase, so do their counterparts in society at large.

In his letter to the Romans, Paul was obligated and eager to be the bearer of good news. Good news, does such a thing even exist? Yes! The good news is the Gospel, God's own Word: it is a promise of grace and salvation; a promise of Jesus Christ. The death, burial, resurrection and reappearance of Jesus Christ are the four fundamental ingredients of the gospel. (1 Cor. 15: 1-8.)

Paul's willingness to bear witness and spread the gospel is beyond admiration; it shows us the magnitude of discipleship we should try to emulate. It's not up to us to save anyone. It is God alone who saves (John 6:44) but he uses a person of God, equipped with the Word and Holy Spirit. Now ask yourself: Are you a person of God?

Prayer: Almighty God and Father, we pray that you help us today to be more like your Son, who bore witness to the truth. Amen.

Rev. Amanda Singh

Romans 1:16-25

Tuesday, 27 February 2018

For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith. (v16)

POWER OF GOD!

This is a very powerful passage, and one that is often misused to condemn those whom we see as morally inferior to ourselves. But starting with verse 18, the 'wrath of God' seems to be directed to humanity in general, not any smaller group. We are all guilty of not measuring up to the '**righteousness of God.**' Later in Romans (7:19), Paul admits that even he cannot choose the good over the evil.

The condemnation this passage aims at all of us, is uncompromising. Because of that we often forget the beginning of this passage - verse 16. Left to ourselves we are condemned. But God does not leave us to ourselves. God saves us with the power of the gospel - the good news that we are not alone to try to sort things ourselves. The good news is that our salvation comes to us through faith, not by what we try to do ourselves.

St. Paul makes a point of not being 'ashamed' of the gospel. Who would think it is shameful to believe the gospel? The gospel is God's power - not ours - for our salvation. That is not a sign of weakness, or something to be ashamed of. We rejoice that God's power is given to us through faith.

Prayer: Father God, let us be mindful of your power that comes to us through faith. Let us not condemn those around us, but rather share the good news of God's salvation with everyone. Amen.

Mr. Eric A. Roberts

Romans 10:1-13

Tuesday, 20 March 2018

For Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes. (v4)

END OF THE LAW!

This passage starts in the middle of a discussion about the place of the Jews in God's plan. St. Paul talks about his desire for '**them (the Jews) to be saved** (v1). St. Paul says that the Jews went about things the wrong way, by trying to live according to the Law of Moses. His point is that all, both Jew and Gentile, live by faith.

Therefore, Christ is the '**end**' of the law. The word '**end**' here means to accomplish the purpose set out. Christians do not follow the Law because Christ has fulfilled the purpose of the law so that we may live through faith. Yes, we do study the Ten Commandments, but we do that to learn more about the gospel. We cannot achieve righteousness through obeying the law.

"If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." (v 9) This is not a new Law that St. Paul demands that we follow, but rather a summary of the good news, that there is no demand of the law. The law has been completed, fulfilled by Christ so that we do not need to try to fulfill it ourselves.

Prayer: Lord God, show us the path to live in righteousness, following the example of Christ who has completed the demands of the law and freed us to live in him. Let us share that gospel with all we meet. Amen.

Mr. Eric A. Roberts

Romans 9:19-33

Monday, 19 March 2018

Are not and in the very place where they were told, 'You are not my people,' there they will be called the children of the living God. (v26)

SHAPED FOR HIS GLORY

The Lenten journey can be described as a time of shaping or reshaping for Christians. In Romans 9:19-33, St. Paul uses the imagery of the potter and the clay to explain how God shapes us for his glory and how we are children of God.

The clay is humanity and therefore to be clay means we must be like a material that is flexible in the hands of God. Suggesting that the condition of our hearts needs to be soft and not hard hearted. Clay is messy and it reminds us of our imperfection and sin. Only God can change 'messy' clay into beautiful art work.

"Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me, Spirit of the Living God fall afresh on me." Indeed, we are made afresh daily in Jesus Christ and hence children of the living God.

Prayer: Thank you God for taking me just as I am, a sinner and transforming me for your glory through your Son Jesus Christ who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit one God now and forever. Amen

Deacon Ishwardei Melville

Romans 1:26-27; 2:1-11 Wednesday, 28 February 2018

'For this reason God give them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature. (men likewise) (vv26-27)

THE SCORPION STING

Aesop tells the ancient story of a boy hunting for locusts. The lad has caught quite a few when he saw a scorpion. Mistaking it for a locust, he reached out to take it. The scorpion showed its sting and said: "If you had but touched me, my friend, you would have lost me and all your locusts too."

There are some things you cannot embrace, without losing what you had in process. King Solomon warned his son against the dangers of sexual sin. As a wise father, he wanted his son to know, that in this wonderful, dangerous world, there are not only flowers and songbirds but also scorpions and fire.

This warning was not just about sexual immorality. Together with the rest of the Bible, such insights help us to understand the wisdom of an eternal God, who loves us far more than our parents. His Word also points us to the one who can help us even if we have 'grabbed' a scorpion or built a fire in our lap.

Life offers us choices. In all transgression, Christ graciously offers us forgiveness for what is past and wisdom for what lies ahead

Prayer: Lord, search out in us all hidden sin so that thy purity within, so cleanse our lives that it may be a temple wholly fit for thee. Amen.

Rev. Sugrim Gobin

Romans 2:12-24

Thursday, 1 March 2018

And so, according to the Good News I preach, this is how it will be on that day when God through Jesus Christ will judge the secret thoughts of all (v16).

SECRET THOUGHTS WHICH ARE NOT SECRET

I once read this quote; “Our minds are worlds apart.” Indeed, the same can be said of our thoughts. They are hidden from each other and two persons can sit close together but be unaware of each other’s thought. Thoughts can be either good or evil and both have its reward and consequences. Our lives are the sum total of our thoughts.

Where our thoughts go, our bodies will follow. Paul in Colossians 2 **encourages us to set our affection (thoughts) on things above where Christ sits on the right hand of God.** Here the apostle is drawing a connection between our thoughts and our ultimate destination.

Imagine Judas and the thoughts he allowed to possess his mind. He spent three years, eating and moving with Jesus. He allowed greed to take over his mind which led him to betray the Lord of Glory to his death. Evil thoughts results in evil actions and evil actions result in hurt, pain and destruction. On the other hand, we think about Jesus who came with pure thoughts to save humanity. His thoughts were loving, holy and compassionate. As a result he healed the sick, raised the dead and gave his life as a ransom for our sins. Good thoughts produce good actions and good actions make a positive difference in people’s life. Good or bad thoughts are plain in God’s sight. In our scripture He tells us that he will judge all our secret thoughts.

Prayer: Heavenly father, you are always aware of all our thoughts. Help us to examine our thoughts that whatever we think it will be for your honour and glory. Amen
Deacon Leeta Chutkhan

Hebrews 5:7-9

Sunday, 18 March 2018

“And having been perfected, Jesus became the author and source of eternal salvation to all those who give heed and obey Him (v.9)

OBEDIENCE TO JESUS OUR HIGH PRIEST

There is more activity in our Church during the period of Lent, which is seen as a period of self-discipline and self-denial, and a period for heart-searching and repentance. If we understand Jesus’ teachings, fasting and penitence are not determined by the Lenten calendar, but can take place any time. Although it is good to practise self-denial, outward observances are not the main concern. The scripture readings for this period direct our thoughts to what God has done, and is doing through Jesus Christ on the journey to Calvary which enables us to reflect on what led Christ to cross of Calvary.

Our thoughts are directed towards God’s covenant with His people – the story of God’s faithfulness and the people’s unfaithfulness and disobedience. Repeatedly God renews His covenant by forgiving his people and starting over again. This was the case when the Son of God came, and brought fulfillment of the new covenant for salvation. By His suffering, Christ identified with humanity, and made the perfect sacrifice on Calvary’s cross.

Prayer: Almighty God and Heavenly Father, we offer our grateful thanks for the great love shown through your faithfulness, in spite of our unfaithfulness and

Romans 9:1-18

Saturday, 17 March 2018

“but the children of the promise are counted as descendants” (V8b)

CHILDREN OF THE PROMISE

The Triune God whom we serve is sovereign and omnipotent. V15 says **“I will have mercy on whom I have mercy and compassion on whom I have compassion”**. Mercy and compassion are attributes of our God and are dispensed according to His sovereign will and are not motivated by human will or human works.

The Jews are God’s chosen people, hence there was the belief that salvation belonged solely to them. However, as Paul points out, we as gentiles are also children of God. Children by adoption, children through our faith and election, children through Jesus and the “new” covenant that He made with His blood on the cross.

In our liturgy every Sunday we hear the absolution which says, **“To those who believe in His name [Jesus] He [God] gives the power to become the children of God”** (John 1:12) This is the promise that we live by and live for.

Our God keeps His promises. Paul in Romans 9 takes the time to point out to the Romans a few of the promises God made to humankind. All of which, at the time they were made may have seemed almost impossible, but our God is Omnipotent and God of the **“apparent impossible”**

Prayer: Father God, we thank you for your love of us through Christ. Teach us to live lives worthy of your love and your gracious gift of salvation, in Jesus’ name. Amen

Rev. Conrad K. Plummer

Romans 2:25—3:18

Friday, 2 March 2018

What shall we conclude then? Do we have any advantage? Not at all! For we have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under the power of sin. As it is written, “There is no one righteous, not even one.” (vv9-10)

ATONEMENT THROUGH THE BLOOD OF JESUS

As humans, sin is a part of our nature and we all sin every day in thought, word and deed. Paul tells us that the reason for this is lack of reverence for God. Because of sin we are under God’s just condemnation; and our relationship with God and with our fellow humans suffers. Sin gets in the way of obeying the greatest commandment – loving God with our entire being and loving our neighbour as we love ourselves. Since we are all sinners we all need a Saviour. God our Father, who loves us beyond measure, has provided someone to save us from sin.

The Bible tells us that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. He died to pay the penalty for our sins – past, present and future. Through the shed blood of Jesus Christ our sins are atoned for and we are redeemed. It is through our belief and our faith in Jesus Christ that we are made right with God, and we receive from Him the righteousness of Jesus Christ. This happens not because we deserve it, but through God’s grace.

Prayer: Dear God thank you for your gift of salvation and for making us righteous through Christ. Help us to be always willing share the good news of salvation so that others may come to know and love you. Amen.

Deacon Shelda Emanuel

Romans 3:19-31

Saturday, 3 March 2018

Since all have sinned and fall short of the Glory of God; they are now justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. (vv23-24)

JESUS PAID THE PRICE

When God created Adam and Eve, they were perfect, lived in a beautiful garden, and enjoyed a great relationship with their Creator. But then they both disobeyed God, and in committing the first sin, their relationship with God was broken, and they were put out of the Garden. Humanity's nature is to sin, and this is done every day in thought and word and deed knowingly and unknowingly. But because of God's unconditional love for us, He made a promise and we were reconciled to Him when He sent His Son to live among us, in human form.

Christ came for this specific purpose, and all that He did was in preparation for His death on the cross; whatever suffering we go through, Jesus understands because he went through them too. We are justified because Christ took our past, present and future sins to the grave.

Let us therefore endeavour to live our lives to reflect the Christ in us, so that others may be drawn to Him by the way we live. Romans 3:20 reads **"For no human being will be justified in His sight by deeds prescribed by the law for through the law comes the knowledge of sin"** Verse 3 reads **"Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no mean! On the contrary we uphold the law."**

Prayer: Dear Lord, in our weakness and many wrong doings, please help us to do the things that are right, and noble in your sight. Amen

Deacon Elaine Grannum

Romans 8:28-39

Friday, 16 March 2018

Neither the world above, nor below—there is nothing in all creation that will ever be able to separate us from the love of God which is ours through Jesus Christ Our Lord (v39)

GOD'S LOVE IS ALWAYS AVAILABLE

Paul the Apostle had once been Saul the Pharisee. A Pharisee zealous for God and yet completely against Jesus and those who followed Him. He went from house to house seeking out and destroying those who followed Jesus. He was certain they were blaspheming the name of God and wanted them destroyed.

After an encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus, the one who sought to kill Christ's followers became a leader of the church, the man who wrote a large portion of the New Testament, and the one who spread the gospel of Jesus Christ all over the known world. But Paul's encounter with Christ and his conversion were not without a price. He was beaten, jailed, shipwrecked, hungry, cold and betrayed.

Today's verse was written by Paul to the churches in Rome and it comes directly from his heart and life experience. Nothing, anyone can think of or imagine can possibly separate you from the amazing and deep love of God.

God's love is everywhere. It is consistent and everlasting. God will not withdraw his love from us. Today, let us celebrate God's unbelievable love. Let us pray, thanking God for His love that doesn't end

Prayer: Almighty God and Heavenly Father, thank you that nothing can ever separate us from your love in Jesus' name. Amen

Rev. Gloria Sampson

Romans 8:12-17

Thursday, 15 March 2018

“Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in His sufferings in order that we may also share in His glory.” (v17)

NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

Those who believe in Christ and accept Him as Lord and Saviour become children of God, redeemed by the shed blood of Jesus. Through Christ we are born again and become new creations.

Believers have a hope in God's inheritance through the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the, second Adam who became incarnate and lived among humans. Their inheritance is sure because Christ earned it for us. He assures us of this in John 14:19 with these words, **“Because I live you also will live.”** This is an indication of God's immeasurable love for humanity.

Christ's death and resurrection is our salvation story. He gave His life so that we may have life.

During this season of Lent we are reminded that Christ did not suffer for Himself but for the sins of humanity. He willingly walked the road to Golgotha, and suffered rejection and scourging so that we can be reconciled with God. Through His grace we become children of God by adoption and are assured of our inheritance.

Prayer: Dear God and Father, thank you for your love; thank you for sending your son to live among us as our Saviour and Redeemer and for the assurance of our inheritance through Him. Amen

Deacon Shelda Emanuel

1 Corinthians 1:22-25

Sunday, 4 March 2018

But we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, (v23)

GOD'S WISDOM

Who wants a crucified God? Crucifixion was the worst thing that could happen to anyone. It was horrible and included torture and humiliation before, during, and after death. The crucified could painfully hang naked for days before they died; and some were left to hang on crosses after death until they rotted and fell off. No wonder the death of Jesus was seen as a stumbling block or absolute foolishness.

What does it mean to proclaim Christ crucified? The cross reminds us that God does not merely wait for us to find him. Instead God comes into our world, as one of us, with a love so great and unconditional that even the hideous cross becomes an instrument of that love. We are called into a relationship with God through the cross. Remember when we are baptised, we are joined “to the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.” [Lutheran Service Book and Hymnal, page 136]

The power and wisdom of God (verses 24, 25) is not based on political and social order, it is not based on wealth and popularity. It is based on God's loving us and giving us life. It is that love and life that enables us to live for others.

Prayer: Loving God, on the cross you have shown your love for all people. Through that same love enable us to become channels of your love to those around us so that all may glory in your cross. Amen.

Rev. Vivian S. Roberts

Romans 4:1-12

Monday, 5 March 2018

But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. (V5)

RIGHTEOUSNESS IS APART FROM WORKS

If anyone could be saved by works, it was Abraham. But what does it mean when it says that faith was counted unto Abraham for righteousness? "Counted" means "to put on one's account." So when Abraham believed God, righteousness was placed on his account. If you have a car payment that comes out of your bank account monthly, but at the end of the month you have just five dollars in your account, and the car payment is four thousand dollars, it means you're in trouble. But if someone deposited four thousand dollars in your account, you now have enough money to make your payment. The reason God placed righteousness on Abraham's account was because Abraham's "righteousness" was not enough to save him. For God to place righteousness on a person's account is justification. Justification is the act of God whereby He clears a believer of the judgment of condemnation and declares him/her to be righteous. Why did God declare Abraham to be righteous? Paul says it was not the result of Abraham's works. If that was the case then it would be something he earned and had reason to boast about. Abraham was saved when he believed God. He was saved by faith. If you're trusting in your good works to save you, you can't be saved. If you say you have been saved, live like you have been saved. Believe that through Christ's work on the Cross, you are made righteous.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, because of You, I have been set free from sin. May I shine with Your holiness as You shape me into Your image. Amen

Mr. Michael D. Ram

Romans 8:1-11

Wednesday, 14 March 2018

For God has done what the law, ... could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin...who walk...according to the Spirit (v3-4).

WHAT GOD HAS DONE IN JESUS CHRIST

This passage shows God's abundant grace for us sinful humans. Our sin makes us enemies of God. There is absolutely nothing anyone can do to repair the broken relationship between us and God. No amount of good works will do it. Neither can keeping the law restore this broken relationship. This is because we are incapable of keeping the law because of sin. The law is indeed good and holy. However, it is made weak by our sinfulness. What we cannot do for ourselves through keeping the law or doing good works, God does for us.

God restores the relationship between God and us by forgiving us, reconciling us to Himself and redeeming us. This God does in Jesus Christ who took on humanity and bore our sin. Though he himself was without sin he died for our sin. We who are in Christ are regarded by God as righteous for Christ's sake i.e. we are in a right relationship with God. We do not face the condemnation we justly and rightly deserve because of sin. Instead, God forgives and saves us. This is what God has done for us in Jesus Christ. What is our response to such abundant and undeserved grace?

In grace upon grace God gives us the Spirit who empowers us to live lives that please God. This is the new life we have through the Spirit. We therefore live our lives in a way that witness to God's grace and love shown in Christ. We glorify God with lives surrendered to God in loving service to God and neighbour.

Prayer: Gracious God, we thank you for your love shown us in Jesus Christ. In him you forgive us our sin and reconcile us to yourself. Help us to live as forgiven, faithful disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen

Rev. Roy Thakurdial

Romans 7:13-25

Tuesday, 13 March 2018

I can't understand my own actions, I do not do what I want, I do the things I hate (v15)

LET GO – LET GOD BE

In this scripture reading, we learn that Paul could not understand his own actions; but we understand what he was going through. Paul is speaking from his own experience in his past. Darkness overshadowed him. He was broken and could not mend the pieces together by himself. Stressful moments, guilt and shame cause inner pain.

Physically, certain thing, he did not want to do, but he was forced against his will. The flesh is deceiving, of course he was battling against temptation. He was tempted and tried. Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, but then the truth of God's word send the devil away.

Unlike Paul, Satan uses his power over us, so we continue to do the wrong things that lead us to sin. But what Paul says in Romans 6: **'How can we who died to sin go on living in sin.'**

Hear the word of the Lord today, sin is serious. The Holy Bible teaches: **'The wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal'**. Be careful, be wise, our God is not mocked. Whom do you choose this day? The choice is mine, the choice is yours, choice is all of us.

As Christians and leaders, we all have a past, we do things we hate. That was then! Time is now!

Are we ready and prepared to let go of what comes back to haunt and destroy us and let God be? Let us put on the whole armour of God, each piece put on with prayer. Renew our confessions to God, the Father and He will rescue us from sin and death.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, we thank you for forgiveness of sins. Strengthen us when testing comes. Help us to let go of the guilt of our past sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness, in Jesus' name we pray. Amen

Deacon Mavis Campbell

Romans 4:13-25

Tuesday, 6 March 2018

God's promise and Abraham's faith forming the outline of a right relationship... inclusive descendants did not come through the law (v13).

TRUSTING IN HIS DIVINE PROMISE

Here, Paul builds on two prior points he has made regarding the law: If our relationship with God were based on good works, then we would be in a position to boast about our performance. Instead, we trusted in the promises of God through Christ Jesus.

Paul describes the patriarch as having faith in the promises of God who can indeed bring life to the dead. Abraham was about a hundred years old, and Sarah was beyond childbearing age. Nevertheless, Abraham believed the promise, and "his faith was reckoned to him as righteousness"

Righteousness in the biblical sense often has to do with the right relationships. Abraham was rightly related to God through his faith, and so he was considered by God as righteous. We are justified by grace through faith which flows to us through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It entails God drawing us into intimate relationship not through our works, but through divine grace. It involves our response to trust, and faith in what God did, does, and will do for us through Jesus Christ. No guarantees, but divine promise. Even when human sin and death make it appear impossible, we are like Abraham to trust in **"God's Divine Promise."**

Prayer : O Gracious Master, We thank you for the gift of faith that renews our belief in the promises of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen

Deacon Keith Hazell

Romans 5:1-11

Wednesday, 7 March 2018

You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. (v 6)

THE FINAL PROOF OF LOVE

Steve Maraboli once said, "Many have tried but love is indefinable." The fact that Jesus Christ died for us is the final proof of God's love. It would be difficult enough to get a man to die for a just man; it might be possible for a man to be persuaded to die for some great and good principle; a man might have the greater love that would make him lay down his life for his friend. But the wonder of Jesus Christ is that he died for us when we are sinners and in a state of hostility to God. Love can go no further than that.

We were always the enemies of God due to our sinful nature, but reconciliation was attained through justification. "We are saved by God's grace through faith; not by our good works and deeds but by God's gift to us: **gracious salvation through the blood of Christ, the ultimate sacrifice**". (Ephesians 2: 8-9)

With endless love comes great responsibility. Paul highlights that we should also rejoice in our sufferings because there is the hope of the glory of God. We ought to trust God because "**all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose**". (Romans 8: 28)

Prayer: Gracious God, we thank you for showing us the true meaning of love by the redeeming work of Jesus Christ on the cross, for our sins. Amen

Rev. Amanda Singh

Romans 7:1-12

Monday, 12 March 2018

In the same way, my friends, you have died to the law through the body of Christ ---- (v4)

WHICH SIGN? LAW OR CROSS

Let us just for a moment imagine a day at the creek. You plunge into the inviting waters for a swim. Then as you lift your head after taking the first splash, this sign attracts your attention: "**No Swimming! Alligators.**" Your day becomes ruined. But is it the sign's fault or must you be angry at the people who put it up? I do not think we should. The sign is a marker to point us to what would be detrimental to our life.

The law is like a sign. It is essential and we should be grateful for it. The law helps us to see that some of our actions can endanger our lives. But following the logic of the illustration, the sign could not get rid of the alligators. Similarly, the law is powerless to save us. Striving to make our way to God by keeping the law is a recipe for frustration and discouragement. However, because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the way to God becomes open.

It is God's action of grace, mercy and love seen and known on the cross that empties the creek of the alligators. The cross is the place we look for empowerment against opposition and rebellion to God. Self - determination and our own performance guided by the law do not merit favour with God. It is faith in "Christ and him crucified."

Prayer: Dear God, ever so often we forsake you and try to rely on ourselves. Help us to remember that even your Son our Lord Jesus Christ prayed, 'let not my will but your will be done.' Amen.

Rev. Moses Prashad.

Ephesians 2:4-10

Sunday, 11 March 2018

But God who is rich in mercy out of the great love with which he loved us (v1).

LOVED IN THE FIRST DEGREE

Recently, I was reminded of the proverb which stated "Action speaks louder than words." On the cross of Calvary this very truth was evident when God demonstrated his love towards the world by given his Son as a ransom for our sins. One writer penned these words. "**It was love, not the nails which kept him on the cross.**"

In 1 John 4:7-8, Christian saints were encouraged to love one another. The writer continues by saying that "**Love is of God and everyone who loves is born of God, he that love not, do not know God, for God is love.**" Everything God does is because of his love. There are times when he disciplines us, but he did so as a father who loved his children. Moreover, Jesus describes his love for us as the Love of a friend. He said, "**Greater love has no man when a man lays down his life for the world**". In Romans 5, it is stated that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us all. This amazing love is available to everyone. John 3:16, fully describes his love for the world, "**For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son.**"

Today he still loves us with an everlasting love. Further in Ephesians 2, we are told that "**We are saved by grace not by works.**" Grace is unmerited love or undeserved love. Indeed, although we do not deserve it, God still loves us

Prayer: Father, thank you for your love expressed in Jesus' death and resurrection. Help us to love and serve you faithfully. Amen

Deacon Leeta Chutkhan

Romans 5:12-21

Thursday, 8 March 2018

For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.(v:19)

SAVING GRACE

Paul's reference to how sin entered into the world should be behind us, however because of disobedience to God's spoken word, our calamity (sin and the desire to sin) is recognized. Death as a consequence of sin is the stark reminder of how serious the issue is, a constant struggle is the just reward for all believers .Genesis 2: 15 tells us what was God's pronouncement to the serpent (Satan); "**I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed .He shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel;**" a constant struggle indeed.

Paul wishes for all to recognize the significance of God's grace. We can experience true peace if we understand how important God's Grace is to us. The constant struggle can be peaceful if we allow in our heart a place for God. He wishes for all to come to the realization that there is going to be a great trial and those that are not with Christ will not survive.

In emphasizing the importance of God's grace, Paul made the unique comparison of the role of two men in this regard, He clearly recognized that for every offence there is grace, for every condemnation there is justification, and obedience should replace disobedience. Paul recognizes too that sin is prominent in humanity. The law has become the yardstick through which sin is determined, however grace supersedes it all and hence grace reigns through righteousness onto eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore brethren obedience to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is required for our salvation.

Prayer: Dear Lord, Your grace abounds for us so that we may enjoy justification, life and peace as Adam did before the fall. Reign over us dear Lord that we may conquer death. Amen.

Deacon Ackloo Ramsudh

Romans 6:1-11

Friday, 9 March 2018

Certainly not! We have died to sin – how then can we go on living in it? (v2)

UNION WITH CHRIST

There is relief in death. This is true for us as Christians. The apostle Paul characterizes the Christians life as one of death. That sounds strange, doesn't it? But it is true. This death occurs for us through baptism. Of course we understand baptism to be a beginning of spiritual life for a Christian. This is true. But when a person is baptized he also dies. That is why St. Paul writes, **“Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death.”** Baptism is real because it connects us to Christ's death. Baptism connects us to Christ's crucifixion. As St. Paul states, **“For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin-- because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.”** Just as Christ was buried after he died on the cross, through baptism we were buried with Him. For, **“We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death...”**

Because we died with Jesus Christ on the cross we are no longer accountable to anyone except Jesus Christ. Satan can no longer shout in our ear demanding justice, justice has been done. God has instead given us the gift of salvation through Jesus' death on the cross and his glorious resurrection.

Prayer: Loving God, we thank you for Jesus, who came to take away the sin of the world. We thank you for your mercies which are new every day and your divine protection as we focus on the cross you have borne for us. Amen

Rev. Shirley Jaundoo

Romans 6:12-23

Saturday, 10 March 2018

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. – (v23)

GOD'S FREE GIFT

Today's reading begins with the word, “Therefore,” which refers us back to the yesterday's reading, and baptism, an action done by God, a gift filled with love and grace.

Paul reminds us that baptism changes everything. No longer does the power of sin control our every breath and thought. No longer does sin make us dirtier and dirtier until it is impossible to see us as human. Instead, God daily cleanses us from sin and makes us strong. But be careful, Paul warns us against going out and sinning just because we know that God will save us. There is no benefit to us or others in doing so.

Instead, Paul challenges us to live in such a way that we become “slaves of righteousness”. [Verse 20] We are to reflect the life of the one who has saved us. We are to live for others, to reach out to our sisters and brothers, especially those who have no one to care for them. Paul reminds us that the more that we act like Christians, the more intimate our relationship with God will become. As Paul puts it in verse 19, we are sanctified, that is we are blessed, purified, and made holy by God.

Prayer: Merciful God, thank you for washing us clean in the water of baptism. Turn us away from sin. Show us your salvation. Renew us in our service to you through our service to others. Amen.

Rev. Vivian S. Roberts