

GROW. PRAY. STUDY

Maple Grove United Methodist Church – Weekly Devotional Guide

March 10, 2019 - With All Your Heart: "Wandering"

Scripture References:

<u>Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Psalm</u> <u>91:1-2, 9-16; Romans 10:8b-13;</u> <u>Luke 4:1-13</u>

Notes from today's sermon:			

40 DAYS OF LENT

Before Jesus ventures out to preach in the synagogues of Judea, he departs to a desolated place. Jesus retreats in order to advance his ministry. These 40 days offer us the opportunity to do likewise. As we seek to discern how and where God is calling us to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, we are invited to find a place without distraction, where we can notice our thoughts, name our fears and listen for a holy word of guidance that is no doubt very near.

WEEKLY SCRIPTURE READINGS FROM THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

from Lent for Everyone: Luke, Year C – A Daily Devotional by N. T. Wright

MONDAY 03.11.19 <u>Luke 2:22-52</u> (focused on 2:22-32)

Simeon has been praying and waiting for this moment all his life, and now it's come. This is the Messiah; he's seen him with his own eyes; now he can die in peace. How do you feel as you hear him say that? What does it make you want to do, or to pray?

• Pray for the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom and inspiration to know what to pray for, and how to recognize God's moment when it comes.

TUESDAY 03.12.19 <u>Luke 3</u> (focused on 3:3-6, 10-14)

John the Baptist knew he had a job to do, and we as spectators gather round, listening to his stirring talk and seeing how people react. He had come to the lowest point on earth because that was where God had met with his people before when they were on the verge of crossing over into the promised land. John believes that God's people now are on the verge of something new, something even bigger.

- People ask: 'What should we do?' Answer: 'Straighten your lives out in the simplest, most direct way.' Today Most of us know the places where, in our own lives, there are mountains to be flattened and valleys to be filled in, if God is to come and take up residence.
- Lord, show me how my life can be straightened out, so that your healing, restoring power may flow through me to the world around.

WEDNESDAY 03.13.19 Luke 4 (focused on 4:14-30)

This young would-be prophet is talking about grace — about 'the year of God's favour'. Well, that's fine; we know about the Jubilee, the time when everyone is to be released from all their debts. Maybe it's time we did it once for all, and more thoroughly. But ... he's talking about God doing it for everybody! The wicked and the pagans are going to be let off as well! We can't have that! Who does he think he is? He deserves to be lynched! Are you angry? You should be. He's just stood all your good, sound advice on its head. Unfortunately, God tends to do that; Jesus himself tended to do that. God is turning the whole world upside down. That means he's turning your whole world upside down as well.

- As we allow a scene like this to wash over us, we will sometimes hear the disturbing question: when we know, only too clearly, what God ought to be doing, are we prepared to take a second opinion? God's opinion?
- Sovereign Lord, teach me to listen to you even when you're saying things I badly don't want to hear.

Lenten Challenge

What am I being challenged to <u>give</u> <u>up or stop doing</u> in order to grow in my relationship with God?

What am I being challenged to <u>start</u> <u>doing or practicing</u> in order to grow in my relationship with God?

Who will I ask to hold me accountable for these 40 days?

Prayer Concerns

THURSDAY 02.28.19 Luke 5 (focused on 5:1-11)

So there you are, going about your ordinary everyday business, and one day someone comes up to you. He wants to borrow your boat. He talks about God becoming king, about everything being different, about a new day dawning in which the poor are going to be helped up out of the mud. And the next thing you know, it isn't just the fish that are caught ... it's you! He seems to know something that goes deeper than everything else. He seems to have a purpose, a plan. He wants helpers. Why me? Goodness knows, but actually (I know it sounds a bit stupid) there's something about him I've never seen before. Maybe this is for real. Maybe he is for real. Maybe he thinks I'm for real. That's a scary thought. In fact (it just strikes me), if he's really a prophet, and if he wants me to work with him, my life might have to change. Just a bit. Don't think I want that ... But what's that? He's laughing. 'Get up, Peter. You're going to be catching people from now on.' What? You mean me? You can't be serious, Lord. But he is. Very serious. But also very light-touch. Come on, Peter. This is the first day of the rest of your life.

• Lord, help me to hear your call and be ready to respond. I'm not perfect but I'm ready to have you take charge.

FRIDAY 03.01.19 Luke 6 (focused on 6:20-27)

Supposing you were in the crowd listening to Jesus telling you all kinds of things about God and his kingdom. So much to take in, so much to think through, so much to try to remember ... but wait, he's teaching us something, something we can learn quite easily. It goes with a swing and a flow. But what does it all mean? Well, we're working on that. It's a bit like the words they say his mother sang when she knew he was on the way: the rich getting brought down with a bump and the poor getting a leg up. God turning the world the right way up at last. But not everybody's going to like it. There are already mutterings and mumblings in the background.

- Read again slowly the words in verses 20-23.
- Lord, help me to learn your new song, and to find out what it means in our world today.

SATURDAY 03.02.19 Luke 13:31-35

Perhaps we're with Jesus and his party as those Pharisees (friendly ones, as occasionally they are in Luke) come to warn him that Herod, the local king who doesn't like rival 'kings' on his patch, is out to get him. You can feel the tension in the air. Some of us knew it might end in this way; all the talk about the rich and the powerful being thrown down and the poor and humble raised up was bound to lead to trouble, however much it's in the Bible! Now what shall we do? Now what will he do? He's saying, 'Herod can't touch me; prophets die in Jerusalem. Didn't you know that?' Surely he doesn't mean he's going to Jerusalem...in order to *die* there?

'Jerusalem, Jerusalem!' Think of the hen and the chicks. Think of the fire that will sweep through the farmyard. Yes, I'm coming to Jerusalem, and that's what I wanted to do for all of you, to take the fire on myself, the fire of Herod, the fire of Rome, the fire of all the wickedness in the world. But are you going to be ready for it? Or will you reject your one chance of safety?

• Lord, we don't always understand what you're up to, or why you went to die in that way. But we pray for strength to follow wherever you go, to be sheltered under your wings from all the evil that may come.