

**Feb. 27 – Saturday**

**Read Philippians 3:17 – 4:1**

*from Rev. Rosetta Smith,  
United Disciples of Christ Church, Charleston*

It's easy to fall into paths of wanting what one doesn't need. There are many paths to take and goals to reach, with our society enticing us with intoxicating offers and choices. We're overworked, and wonder why we aren't satisfied, while adding still more work. We run from one scheduled event to another, exhausting ourselves. Every moment is filled with something, leaving us craving. The more we exert or spend, the emptier we become; it's like trying to refill a cup of water with a hole in the bottom. The season of Lent calls us to stop and get back on path! We can be transformed with comfort, love and peace growing within. Release! Reform! Be Resurrected! Christ is coming! Stay on track, steady in God.

*Steady us, O God, on your calling  
to give ourselves to the life which satisfies,  
which we find only in communion with you  
through your Son Jesus Christ.*

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Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)  
in West Virginia presents:

# Prayerscapes for Lent

*Reflections and Prayers from The Order of Ministry*

**Feb. 21: First Sunday in Lent**

**Read Luke 4:1-13**

*from Rev. Scott Thayer, Bethany Memorial Church and  
Chaplain of Bethany College*

*“Temptation!”* The very word sends a cold shiver down the spines of believers. We know this word, maybe too well. It is a word that was also known to Jesus. All three synoptic Gospels have accounts of Jesus being tempted by the devil in the wilderness.

Our Lord recognized the power and the dangers of temptation. When he taught his disciples to pray, he included a plea that they not be led into temptation. Of course we know that God does not lead us into temptation; we are perfectly capable of doing that ourselves, and the result is always disastrous. Temptation leads us away from God's purposes; it side-tracks us from the dream that God has for us. According to Luke's Gospel, Jesus was able to beat his temptations because he relied on the power of the Holy Spirit. Let us seek that power, too.

*O God, temptations are going to come our way.*

*That is a given. But by your power,  
temptation does not have to side-track us from your purposes.*

**Feb. 22 – Monday**

**Read Deuteronomy 26:1-11**

*from Rev. Dawna Watkins, Bluefield, WV*

*“A wandering Aramean was my ancestor...”* When was the last time you stood before God and offered your testimony as a thanksgiving for all that God has done in your life? Have you ever been brave enough to do so in the presence of your church family, with your pastor, with your friends and relatives? That is what the Deuteronomy text is asking the Israelites to do as they are worshiping God, following their liberation and deliverance. When Christ offers himself as our “first fruits offering” on the Cross; surely, we can be brave enough to tell others our stories of liberation from sin and separation. Surely we can give glory to God for how far God has brought us and how far God can take us.

*Freeing and empowering God,  
loosen my tongue to sing your praise and to tell your story.*

**Feb. 23 – Tuesday** **Read Psalm 91**  
*from Rev. Del Parris, Lost Creek, WV*

The 91<sup>st</sup> Psalm has always been problematic for me. We all know that bad things do happen to good people. No one is protected or sheltered from the illnesses, misfortunes, fears and suffering that are common to human life. Yet, while serving 36 years in hospital chaplaincy, I witnessed many people finding in God a shelter and refuge, even in their suffering and grief. They found that in some way God was there for them. Some found healing and renewal; others found strength for facing their suffering and death. It seems to me this is the Psalmist's challenge: to so trust God and to have such faith, that we can turn to him in such times ourselves.

*Lord, in this season of reflection, may I discover the trust and faith  
that always bring me to you in times of trouble and challenge.*

**Feb. 24 – Wednesday** **Read Isaiah 55:1-13**  
*from Rev. Steven Smith,  
United Disciples of Christ Church, Charleston*

Can you imagine going to the store, whether it be the grocery, clothing, car, hardware or whatever kind of store you can think of, and walking away with whatever it is the store is selling with no cost to you? What would you take: a month's worth of groceries, a whole new wardrobe, a shiny Cadillac, or a new set of tools? In hard economic times an invitation like this might very well be a welcomed one! As abundant and as good as this may appear, however, it is only a matter of time before we are once again left unsatisfied.

God speaks through Isaiah a word that the people of God might remember their covenantal relationship. In every day and in every time, life apart from God always proves unsatisfying. The word here is a promise, offered yet again, to take from God's abundant store, to offer this hope to a world that looks to be satisfied in other places, and to listen, eat, delight, and to live in God's abundant goodness.

*God, I seek you in this day because in it you can be found.  
I call upon you because you are near, waiting to satisfy my desires.*

**Feb. 25 – Thursday** **Read Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18**  
*from Rev. Sarah Webb, Wheeling, WV*

How long is a reasonable time to wait for a promise to be fulfilled? Abram and Sarai had more patience than most of us, but how long could they go on hoping? Even the most ardent of dreams can dwindle with time. Yet God is telling them to trust that barrenness was not to be their legacy. A new future is being offered.

It takes courage to believe that our lives can change. It takes daring to dream a new vision. The familiar is so much more comfortable. God offered Abram a legacy as numerous as the stars, but such an audacious dream requires hope. Hope is the gift that frees us from the same old mire that has held us back. As God's beloved children, can we dare to choose hope?

*Loving God, give us courageous hearts to trust in the future you offer.*

**Feb. 26 – Friday** **Read Psalm 27**  
*from Rev. Richard Howard, First Christian Church, Morgantown*

Where do you best experience God? Is it a favorite physical place, such as a beach, or a mountain view, or even your own yard? Do you find God in architecture, such as your local church's sanctuary or a medieval cathedral? Or maybe it's a place in literature where you best experience God. Psalm 27 is a passage of scripture that can transport us to a special place with God where we know that we are in a beautiful approximation with the divine. "*The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?*" What a statement of confidence and trust in God! There is nothing on earth or in the heavens that will separate us from God's love. These verses describe a relationship with God that is intimate and familiar.

In this Lenten time, let us proclaim as the psalmist proclaims, that the "*One thing I ask of the LORD (is) to live in the house of the LORD all the days of my life.*"

*Loving God, as we journey from our brokenness to your wholeness,  
may you be our constant companion, protecting us on our way,  
sharing your wisdom and your strength,  
and rejoicing always in our relationships with you and one another.*