

The Word on the (F) Street

Whether it's Lenten Season or Not

Andy Butler, Tech and Benevolence Lead

What we now call Lent began in the early Roman Catholic Church as a fast for the six days leading up to Easter. Six days, because that's how long it took God to create in Genesis. That amount of time was shifted around, baptisms leading up to Easter were factored in, and eventually the church landed on 40 days of lent with less fasting. The idea was not to give up stuff, because it sucks to give up stuff, and being a Christian sucks. The idea was to remove something important from our lives, as Christians, so that we can replace that space in our hearts and lives with God, his will, word and purpose. The number 40 was, and is, significant primarily because Moses fasted and prayed for 40 days, preparing him to lead God's people across the desert. Also Jesus, himself, fasted for 40 days in preparation for his public ministry. So these early Christians practiced a 40 day period of prayer, scriptural study, and some fasting in preparation for Easter, or more specifically, the death and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The thing is, the words "Lenten Season" or "Lent" aren't actually in the Bible. You won't find them there no matter how hard you look, but that shouldn't detract from the important Biblical concepts of living in sacrifice, prayer and scriptural study.

Many of the earliest Christians used a word called "detachment" to categorize, or frame up the act of separating oneself from the stuff, material or flesh (i.e., the self), of this world. In the early, early church Monastic (Christian Monks) movement, Lenten Season wasn't actually something they did seasonally, but was seen as imbedded or part of the Christian lifestyle, and viewed as essential to following the Monastic word and deed. In many early Christians in Byzantium, while Christianity was illegal, moved out to the wilderness to live in solitude, and vote themselves to prayer, sacrifice and self-restraint - or detachment. Again, the idea was not to suffer for suffering's sake. It also wasn't mindfulness, meditation or mysticism. It was to combat the world, the flesh (the lies that one's mind tells itself), and evil, with God's Word, prayer and the giving up of stuff. Or in other words, to grow closer to God. In American culture today, this is easier said than done (maybe a little easier given Christianity is legal here). Certainly from a biblical perspective, prayer and sacrifice are important as ever if we truly want to follow Jesus with our mind, body and spirit.

"Whatever we might decide to give up, it isn't worth it unless that space is replaced by God, his will, word and purpose."

So how should we put Lent into practice this season, or better yet, in our lives? What does this concept of lent or detachment look like with a modern cultural framework? The answer in its most basic form is: it looks the same as it did back then. Whatever we might decide to give up, it isn't worth it unless that space is replaced by God, his will, word and purpose. We were not created to worship the stuff we have, the food we eat, the lives we have or even the people in our lives. We were created to worship God. We were also created to love each other with the love of Christ - sacrificial love: the only love that is true and right and pure. This love cannot be fully realized without first pursuing a loving and devout relationship with God. Part of that pursuit involves sacrifice both to others and to ourselves.



A Place of Acceptance and Direction
F Street Neighborhood Church
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Calendar for February 2023

1st: 6:30pm Celebrate Recovery
2nd: 5:30pm FoodNet
5th: Sunday Service; **Happy Birthday Kelli Wenzel**
7th: 6:30am Prayer; **Happy Birthday Ronda Simpson**
8th: 6:30pm Celebrate Recovery
9th: 5:30pm FoodNet
12th: Sunday Service
13th: **Happy Birthday Marcia Thornton**
14th: 6:30am Prayer; **Happy Birthday Carlos Gomez**
15th: 6:30pm Celebrate Recovery
16th: 5:30pm FoodNet; **Happy Birthday Henry Connert**
17th: **Happy Birthday Kim Clark**
18th: **Happy Birthday Elizabeth Vacek**
19th: Sunday Service; **Happy Birthday Sandra Steinback, Bill Thornton**
21st: 6:30am Prayer
22nd: 6:30pm Celebrate Recovery; **Happy Birthday Daliah Vacek**
23rd: 5:30pm FoodNet
24th: **Happy Birthday Ramon Gale**
26th: Sunday Service; **Happy Birthday Eleazar Ocegvera**
28th: 6:30am Prayer; **Happy Birthday Patrick Higgins**

Please keep us up to date on birthdays & anniversaries! If you aren't sure that we have your information, talk to Jane Mailand or simply fill out a Welcome Card and hand it to her. In addition, if your address, phone, or email has changed, let Jane know.

In Matthew, Chapter 4, which I referenced earlier, Jesus was led by the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted there by the devil. As the scene unfolds, the devil tempts Jesus in various ways and Jesus answers each temptation with what? The Word of God. In so doing, Jesus is able to overcome each of the devil's lies, temptations and urgings. I always thought Jesus was able to answer the devil so powerfully there, in spite of his physical weakness. However, there are some Biblical teachers who would say it was actually *because* of his physical weakness, not in spite of it. They would say that by answering the spirit's call into the wilderness, Jesus, along with overcoming the devil's lies, is also modeling to his followers how prayer, fasting and knowledge of scripture helped prepare him to reject the devil's lies. Further, it was this Biblical scene, among others, that lead those early Christian Monks, who I mentioned, into the desert and into lives of prayer, sacrifice, scriptural study and detachment from earthly desires. They took very seriously, and apparently very literally, Jesus' model in Matthew 4. It is my prayer that we as his followers today, will do the same - whether it's Lenten Season or not!



Family Meeting Jeff Heerspink, Pastor

F Street Neighborhood Church Family Meeting is planned for Friday, February 3, at 7:00 p.m., and we are asking that all of you who are members in good standing, plan to attend. (Childcare will be provided for kids under age 5.)

Who are members of F Street Church? We have defined membership as those who have a relationship with Jesus, and are active in giving, serving, and attending. These are important parts of being a member of the family here at F Street Church.

What does it mean to be in good standing? It means that you are applying the 5C's to your life: Committed to Christ, Engaged in Community, Transformed in Character, Fulfilling your Calling, and Developing your Competencies. Although we are not going into the meaning of all this all here, we will have a copy of these and some of the practical application for them on the back table.

Why you should plan to attend? This is an important meeting, as we will be processing the following three things: 1. Reviewing our 2022 and 2023 budget, 2. Discussing what it means to be an elder, and taking nominations for elders, 3. Presenting the process of becoming a part of the Christian Reformed Church of North America and the Reformed Church of America.

Elder Selection Process

Bill Thornton, Teaching Pastor

At the present time, four men serve as elders of F Street Neighborhood Church. They are Jeff Heerspink, Trevin Preble, Tad Stryker, and Bill Thornton. Together they are responsible for the

oversight of the members, and ministry of our church family, through leading, teaching, and caring. All these men have agreed to continue their service in this leadership role through calendar year 2023.

In addition, on a regular basis, consideration is given to adding to the number of elders. At our next Family Meeting on Friday evening, February 3rd, at 7:00 p.m., we will provide an overview of this important selection process and explain how members of the congregation can participate. In preparation for this meeting, we would like to invite you to consider the characteristics given in Scripture for the office of elder, by reading I Timothy 3 and Titus 1. We also hope that you will join the elders in praying for our congregation as we work through this process.

Ash Wednesday Jeff Heerspink, Pastor

Ash Wednesday this year is February 22nd. The Celebrate Recovery Team is inviting you to attend the Ash Wednesday, Celebrate Recovery Service, as the start of this Lenten season. (See article on Lent written by Andy Butler). This service will provide a time for us to reflect on our sin, and need for Jesus. The service will begin at 6:30 p.m.



Monthly Mission Offering Jeff Heerspink, Pastor

This month, our special missions offering will go to Kris and Kim Walhof, who serve as missionaries, with Serge, in Kapsowar Kenya. Kris teaches at the Kapsowar School of Theology, and Kim is an OBGYN at the Kapsowar Hospital. Kim was once a student in the Youth Ministry of Pastor Jeff and Beth. We want to continue to support their service overseas, with their young son Dominic. Please prayerfully consider how you might be led to give to the important work that they are doing there. The following is a short update from Kris and Kim:

"We arrived back in Kapsowar at the beginning of November. Kim hit the ground running at the hospital, where she received a warm welcome and was happy to find many co-workers were still working at the hospital (we usually have a really high staff turnover so this was a wonderful surprise). We had over 150 babies born in November and again December in our 4-bed maternity ward! Kris was able to attend graduation at the School of Theology, and has spent a couple of months supervising renovations at one of the houses in our community, welcoming and helping to orient the four (!) new long-term families, studying Swahili, preparing classes, and writing devotionals for the Today (a daily devotional published by the Christian Reformed Church). Dominic enjoyed two months of "summer" vacation before starting 3rd grade on Jan 1 (homeschooling again). He went from being the only doctor's kid (and North American kid) in our community last year, to one of 16 now!! He loves all the activity and new friends.

We appreciate your support and prayers! Please continue to pray for the following areas:

-pray for the new students (current and future pastors) beginning classes at the school of Theology this week.

-praise God for so many new community members! Pray that we can work and live together with humility and common purpose.

-pray for a great long-term education plan for Dominic (age 7) and for patience for all of us in the short-term."

History of Early Christianity

Bill Thornton, Teaching Pastor

This will be offered on Monday nights. Following our survey of the Old Testament, beginning January 30th, we will be taking a twelve-week learning journey through the books of the New Testament. We will examine the life and ministry of Jesus, the establishment and expansion of the early church, and gain insights into Christian living from those who were Jesus' first disciples. We will meet on Monday nights from 7:00 to 8:15 p.m. in the Fireside Room. Please let me know of your interest to enroll in this class!

Sunday Rhythms Jeff Heerspink, Pastor



By now, if you have been attending Sunday Services at F Street Church, you may have noticed the new Sunday Rhythms. These are special segments in our worship services with different focuses: prayer, team highlight, Apostles Creed, and testimony.

First Sunday of the month – Prayer: Yes, we always want to be praying as a church. However, on the first Sunday of the month we want to have a special focus for us to learn and engage in prayer.

Second Sunday of the month – Team Highlight: F Street Church has many teams that enable us to fulfill our vision of being a place of acceptance and direction. We want to promote those teams so that you know about the different ways you can be involved in ministry, the teams you can be praying for, and learn just a little more about the things that are happening here.

Third Sunday of the month – Apostle's Creed: This year our former Pastor Brett Byford will teach a mini-segment, via video, on the Apostle's Creed. This will help us to better understand what we are claiming as a church, and why it matters.

Fourth Sunday of the month – Testimony: We often try to schedule our baptisms on the fourth Sunday of a month, as that often fits with our block parties. It also is a time for us to hear about the life changing work of Jesus in the lives of people in our community.

All of these are opportunities for us to grow in our relationship with God, be encouraged by what is happening here and learn more about how we can be engaged in the ministry here at F Street Neighborhood Church.

Coming This Spring Bill Thornton, Teaching Pastor

3M Classes, Membership, Maturity, & Ministry

With a view toward developing fully devoted Christ followers at FSNC, we regularly offer a series of classes called 3M which provide teaching on *Membership, Maturity, and Ministry*.

The *Membership* class helps folks become better acquainted

with what it means to be a part of our F Street Church family. The *Maturity* class focuses on the habits that will foster spiritual growth in our lives. The *Ministry* class will explore how each of us is uniquely shaped to serve the Lord and his people.

Each class is offered in one session and will occur following the Sunday morning worship service that day. You will want to sign up when opportunity is given in the coming weeks so we will know how many to plan for. Our upcoming class schedule is planned as follows:

Membership, March 5th

Maturity, April 2nd

Ministry, May 7th

Please feel free to contact me with questions or to sign-up for these classes.

Interested in Baptism?

Bill Thornton, Teaching Pastor

Perhaps you have been present when a friend or family member has been baptized, and you have wondered about whether you should experience this, too. We believe that baptism is a significant event in one's life as a Christ follower. As a church family, we want to provide the spiritual encouragement and understanding that should accompany your decision to be baptized. If you are interested in learning more about this, please contact me or Pastor Jeff.

Youth Update Sage Peterson, Youth Director

Hello everyone. There is a lot going on here with F Street Youth. During the month of January we have been talking about parables that Jesus shared. We were also able to have our monthly event, which was a board game night. The month finished off with our Big Give which we are collecting canned food items.



February will be a big month for the youth group. Registration for the middle school retreat in April will be opening up, along with Rocky Mountain High registration which will also be open. Not only that, but we are excited to announce our event for the month of February, which is Day of Love. Students will be able to pick a service site to go to, and different groups will serve all over town and show God's love. All students will then return and then compete with their groups to be crowned "Day of Love Champions!" We would love to have all students participate, and we are even looking for some volunteers for a couple of positions.

If you are interested or have any questions please contact Sage Peterson at sage@fstreetchurch.org.

Giving Goal Reached Tad Stryker, Elder

Thanks be to God, and to everyone who supported F Street Neighborhood Church regularly with your tithes and offerings, enabling us to reach our local giving goal in 2022.

The goal was \$120,000, which was a 33 percent increase over the previous year. The final tally shows that we received \$124,481.86, which is almost \$5,000 above our goal.

This does not include unexpected gifts from people outside our community. This is mainly the result of regular, repeated gifts by our members, and one important sign of an increasingly healthy church.

For 2023, the elders have raised the local giving goal again, to \$150,000. Although this is a smaller percentage increase from last year, we believe that even with a growing congregation, this is certainly a stretch. Yet it's achievable, and necessary to help support our growing staff and anticipated expansion of programming, which we believe will enable us to serve our community well.

Yes, we are asking you again to pray, and as the Lord leads, be as generous as you can.

If you have questions about local giving, or some other part of our budget for 2023, please come to the family meeting scheduled for 7 p.m. on Friday, February 3, at the church.

Community Groups

Group: Studying Spiritual Disciplines

Location: 6730 S 41st St.

Contact: Drew or Sarah Peters

Day/Time: First three Tuesdays of the month , 6:30 pm

Group: Keith Morrissey's House

Location: 1750 Prospect Street

Contact: Ardeshir Mazhari, Keith Morrissey

Day/Time: Thursdays, 7 pm

Group: Wayne & Linoma Wingate's House

Location: 5815 Brittany Place

Topic: Sermon Discussion

Contact: Wayne or Linoma Wingate

Day/Time: First and Third Thursdays of the month, 7 pm

Group: Young Adults (College/20s): Book of James

Location: Grace Room at the Church Building

Contact: Bill or Marcia Thornton

Day/Time: Thursdays, 7 pm

Group: Women's Study, *Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World*

Location: Fireside Room at Church Building

Contact: Beth Heerspink

Day/Time: Fridays, 10 am

Regular Email Updates

If you would like to, but are not getting regular updates about things at F Street Neighborhood Church, please send a request to be added to the email list at fstreetchurch@gmail.com

Prayer Requests

If you have prayer requests, please send them to our office email at fsncoffice@gmail.com

Atlas: Lincoln
presents:
5TH ANNUAL TRIVIA NIGHT FUNDRAISER

Friday, February 17, 2023 • Doors open 6:30 pm
Trinity Lutheran Church
724 S 12th Street, Lincoln NE 68508

Pre-event tickets can be bought at the link below or QR code:
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/5th-annual-trivia-night-fundraiser-tickets-517656714167>

Tickets will also be sold at the door on the night of the event.

Monthly Bible Reading Schedule:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Jan 30 – Acts 5	Jan 31 – Acts 6	Feb 1 – Acts 7	Feb 2 – Acts 8	Feb 3 – Acts 9
Feb 6 – Acts 10	Feb 7 – Acts 11	Feb 8 – Acts 12	Feb 9 – Acts 13	Feb 10 – Acts 14
Feb 13 – Acts 15	Feb 14 – Acts 16	Feb 15 – Acts 17	Feb 16 – Acts 18	Feb 17 – Acts 19
Feb 20 – Acts 20	Feb 21 – Acts 21	Feb 22 – Acts 22	Feb 23 – Acts 23	Feb 24 – Acts 24