



Susquehanna
Lenten
Devotional
2010

Photo courtesy of Matthew Getz

A Note from the Editor:

Welcome to the Susquehanna Lenten Devotional Book for 2010! Lent is the time in the church that leads us toward Jesus' death for us on the cross; however Lent can be much more than that. Lent can be a time to slow down and reflect on life, especially our lives as Christians. Lent can be a time to refocus our attentions on being disciples and living a life fully devoted to Jesus.

I realize that learning how to slow down and reflect can be extremely hard for us though. Our days are consumed with classes, meetings, and work; not to mention the time we try to fit in for food, friends, family, and sleep. But where is God in all that? God often gets lost in the hustle and bustle of our lives, which is why the season of Lent and this devotional can be extremely helpful for us all.

I encourage you to take some time each day to read these devotionals, written by those who are experiencing or have experienced many of the exact same things you are. For each day there are texts and then a devotional message. Take 15 minutes out of your day. Sit somewhere quiet and take some time for yourself. Read the daily texts and the message written by someone from the SU community. Then take some time to pray and share your thoughts and feelings with God. Or find a way to read the devotional that works for you. Just take some time to work on your relationship with God during this reflective time in the church.

Chelsea Miller, editor of this devotional booklet, is a senior Religion Major with minors in Women's Studies and Ancient Greek. She is the Deacon of Spiritual Nurture for SU and is actively involved in Religious Life on campus. She would like to thank her friends and family for their constant support in all that she is doing and continues to thank God daily for her call to serve His people.

Wednesday February 17

Daily Scriptures:

Matthew 6:1-6, 11-21

2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

Isaiah 58:1-12

As we begin our Lenten journey, we do well to take along with us a theme more often associated with Christmas: Incarnation.

The belief that God came among us as one of us; that, as St. John poetically put it, "the Word became flesh," must mean that whatever is spiritual in this life is inseparable from that which is physical, fleshy, incarnated.

Fasting in the flesh, we seek spiritual wisdom. "Giving something up for Lent," we engage in deepened spiritual discipline. Quieting our minds and stilling our bodies for times of prayer and meditation, we intuit the intricate interplay of body and mind, soul and spirit.

The prophet Isaiah reminds us that God wants us to include a related dimension in our spiritual lives: loving service to and passionate advocacy for our neighbors in need.

"Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house...?"

What do Haitian earthquake victims, undocumented immigrants, and people experiencing homelessness have to do with our Lenten journey? What do their bodily, physical, political and economic needs have to do with our spiritual lives? The Incarnation and the prophet Isaiah offer a one-word answer to those questions:

Everything.

Susquehanna University Chaplain and Associate Professor of Religion Mark Wm. Radecke is the founder and (co-)director of the SU CASA, SPLASH, and Issues at the End of Life service-learning programs, each of which has received a national award. He and his wife Tami live on campus.

Thursday February 18

Daily Scriptures:
Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16
Exodus 5:10-23

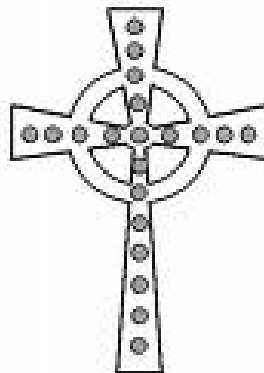
Acts 7:30-34

I am frequently astounded by what God expects of us. In Egypt, he lets his people fall into slavery to the tyrannical Pharaoh, and sends no immediate aide when the Hebrews are commanded to fulfill their quotas of brick without straw. Pharaoh denounces them as lazy, doubting the virtue of their spirit and religious practices. Pharaoh's faith in his servants stretches only so far as their strong backs and daily output.

As my college career at Susquehanna comes to a close, I look to the future, with optimism that prevents sleep and worry that prevents rest, daydreaming of the ways the Kingdom will be laid brick-by-brick in my young life. Humbled by the economic climate and my looming departure from the collegiate womb, my prayers are frequently interrupted by doubt as I comb the internet for job opportunities and grad school fellowships to create back-up plans in the eventuality that my hopes fall through.

The Pharaohs are beginning to sneer. The desperate search for employment places me on a utilitarian checklist of age, education, skills, and pay grade. My parents counter my naïve optimism with non-supportive realism as they try to grapple with the man who used to be their child. Our societal status quo demands that I answer for my lack of ambition to make money, ensure security, choose a political party and become a full-time consumer. I attempt, as John D. Caputo writes in *The Weakness of God*, "to pray for the impossible." When I think of my parents' love that sent me to Susquehanna, the family of friends I have met here, the fidelity of my fiancée's heart, the impossible starts to feel more familiar. The Lord has provided not only daily bread, but a feast. I could be more realistic and rely on my own strengths, but I know in my soul such things do not make a brick.

Steven McQue is a senior Creative Writing and Music double major and Deacon of Worship at Susquehanna. Steven loves to write and read stories and listen to and play music, and hopes to someday be an author, critic, creative writing teacher, jazz bassist or trombonist, missionary, pastor, husband and dad. He is a devoted son, brother, friend, and fiancé.



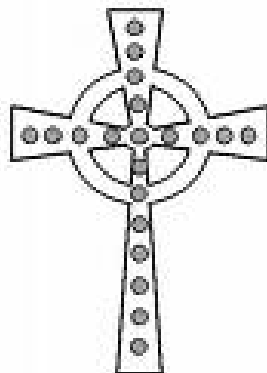
Friday February 19

Daily Scriptures:
Psalm 25:1-10
Exodus 6:1-13

John 12:27-36

“To you oh Lord, I lift up my soul, Oh-oh. In you I trust, Oh, Lord.” For readers who may not have the tune running through their head right now, Psalm 25 inspired a rather catchy worship song, entitled *Psalm 25 (I know, very clever)*, that is popular among various Christian youth groups. In a time that seems to be full of stress, anxiety, and despair, it’s nice to have upbeat songs like this one to lift our spirits. It might seem out of place to have a Psalm that is so positive during the season of Lent, a time where we are told to keep mindful of the sacrifice Christ made for us. But to me it seems perfect to remember that we are in this time of Lent because of God’s unconditional love for us. “According to your love remember me, for you are good, O Lord,” (Psalm 25:7). Some may ask how one can state so passionately that the Lord is good when the world is plagued by hunger and genocide. How can God be good when thousands lose their jobs during the economic downfall? How do we respond to the unknown thousands that were affected by the natural disasters in Haiti? Psalm 25 answers those cries for help. “You’re with me on the mountain, in the valley below. You are right here beside me everywhere that I go.” God is with us through the suffering. He loves us so much that he came down to earth and died on a cross to save us from all the evil in the world. When we put our hope and trust in God, we can move mountains and even be God’s hands and feet in the world by healing where we see pain.

Karen Ward is a junior Religion major with a women's studies minor. She is very active in religious life at SU and is the Deacon of Service for the Chaplain's office. In her free time she likes to sing and spend time with her friends. She just recently returned from a mission trip in Liberia where she worked in a woman literacy-empowerment program.



Saturday February 20

Daily Scriptures:
Psalm 51
Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

Matthew 25:35-45

Give me your eyes for just one second
Give me your eyes so I can see
Everything that I keep missing
Give me your love for humanity
Give me your arms for the broken hearted
Ones that are far beyond my reach.
Give me your heart for the ones forgotten
Give me your eyes so I can see
-Brandon Heath

Once, my youth leader told our group to draw the people we despised the most, so we excitedly drew away. He put the sketches on a dartboard, handed us darts, and said, "Fire away!" As he pulled down picture after picture, we each had our turn taking shots at our enemies. But when he pulled down the last sketch to reveal the paper below, it was a picture of Jesus – a picture marred with the holes from the darts we threw at our enemies.

Have you ever thought about how God views us?

He sees his child, for whom he would choose the cross over and over again. He loves us when we do great deeds and when we screw up. Isn't that incredible?

Now take it one step further. He loves your worst enemies, too, the same way He loves you, and He wants you to love them the way He does.

Every time you hurt your enemy, it pains God because that is His child. And you don't have to be the one to throw the dart. Don't let anyone else throw it either. Don't be a bystander, even if you think the person deserves it. Love the roommate who drives you crazy. Love the person who just seems to be out to get you. Love those who hurt you. Try to look at that person and see them how God sees them. But don't stop there. Reach out.

Corinne Woodward is a junior Graphic Design major and Advertising minor. She is involved with InterVarsity and Alpha Phi Omega. When at school she attends the Selinsgrove Church of the Nazarene and when at home by the Jersey Shore she attends First Baptist Church of Red Bank.

Sunday February 21

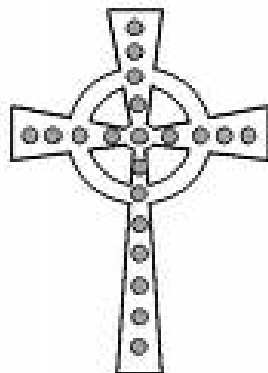
Daily Scriptures:

Deuteronomy 26:1-11
Romans 10:8b-13

Luke 4:1-13

I think that is fairly safe to say that we have all heard this passage before. It is probably also safe to say that we have all faced temptation just like Jesus did out in the dessert. . . just not quite to the same extent. We constantly and consistently are facing this temptation. The question is, are you ready for the test? Are we ready for the tasks that God has set before us? Each of us has a purpose and a place to go with our lives, and there are plenty of tests ready to prove whether or not we are fit for each undertaking. Pilots are tested to see if they are fit to fly, Doctors take many tests before they are allowed anywhere near patients, teachers take tests before stepping foot in the classroom. The list goes on and on and on. Jesus was tested in this same way. He had to fend off the devil's temptation and overcome that lure with the grace and strength that God gave him. Just as he did for Jesus, the Lord gives us his Holy Spirit to be our strength and guide and our consoler in temptation and testing. God the Father is ready to give us all that we need to live in his way of love and righteousness. During this Lenten season I encourage each and every one of us to take time to focus on the goals and tasks at hand, and to find our strength through our Father God. Do not give way to the temptation and testing that surrounds your every move. Find your strength and hope in the Lord.

Sarah Weiser is a senior Music Education Major. Post graduation she is looking forward to finding a job teaching middle school and high school general music and choir.



Monday February 22

Daily Scriptures:

Psalm 17

1 Chronicles 21:1-17

1 John 2:1-6

When I first read 1 John 2:1-6, the first point I focused on was do we walk as Jesus walked? However, after I read the scripture a second time I focused on verse 2: "He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world."

A lot of questions came to mind as I read the passage the first time. How often do we ask ourselves if we are walking just as Jesus did? Do we bear the imprint of Christ? Is his stamp on us evident in the way we walk? How do we know if we are doing what God wants us to do? We cannot simply mark these things off on a checklist. It is more complex and complicated than that.

As I reflected more on the scripture I found I thought of my own experience as a Christian. Every Sunday at the beginning of the church service my pastor always states "please rise and let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another." I always confess my sins and only think of myself and Jesus saving me. I don't think regularly of Jesus saving the whole world from its sin. I don't think of Jesus saving my family, friends or anyone from a different country. Does that mean I fail at walking as Jesus walked? Am I being selfish by only thinking of myself?

The concept of Jesus saving the world from its sin is a hard concept to wrap your head around. What does it mean? In our society today it is hard to grasp the concept of for once it is not all about me. Jesus is saving the world from sin.

Maribeth White is a senior Religion major. Her home congregation is St. John's Lutheran Church in Leck Kill, Pa.

Tuesday February 23

Daily Scriptures:

Psalm 32

Zechariah 3:1-10

2 Peter 2:4-21

“Why We Can’t Look Away” This was the headline on the cover of *Newsweek*, 12/21/2009. The article deals with our fascination with celebrity “transgressions.” If you didn’t read this particular article I’m sure you’ve seen the subject, or a variation, on television *and* on the internet *and* while standing in the supermarket line. I’m sure it’s on twitter *and* Facebook *and* everywhere else. As the author says, “We practically breathe it.”

2 Peter 2 describes a world that’s not much different: fallen angels, “world of the ungodly,” Sodom and Gomorrah, and the “lawless.” He takes a page from our tabloids and vividly describes the actions of false teachers, those who entice people into a world of sin. *The lies! The greed! The false promises!*

But Peter reminds us that the Lord is watching, judging. If we follow the examples of Noah and Lot, if we hold ourselves to standards different from the world around us, if we try to help others adhere to those standards, we are told that “the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trial, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment.”

But when constantly bombarded with lurid details, when the information is so pervasive that it appears that a certain lifestyle is the norm setting and living by different standards is easier said than done. We may pass judgment and think we are better (we don’t “transgress” like *they* do) but we are sometimes mean, sometimes thoughtless, sometimes deceitful.

“To be the same as others is easy, to be different is difficult.”

Peter warns us not to accept this as a matter of course.

So, back to the title of the *Newsweek* article. “Can’t “ because it’s everywhere? Or “can’t” because we don’t want to look away: we are fascinated, lured into the world Peter warned us about?

John Henry Newman wrote that “our great security against sin lies in being shocked at it.” Maybe we can’t look away but we must continue to be shocked by what we see.

As one who deals with information all day, every day, Kathy Dalton is the Reference Librarian at the Blough-Weis Library.

Wednesday February 24

Daily Scriptures:

Psalm 77

Luke 21:34-22:6

Job 1:1-22

Job lost everything. His animals, his servants, his children. Yet he gets on his knees and prays to God. What kind of man does this after losing everything he has? What kind of loving deity does this to what he calls his child?

Everything collapses in Job's world, he continues to pray—it is an act as preposterous as it is inspiring. Job has no reason to trust or glorify God after what He has done, but he does anyway.

Earlier this academic year, A.J. Jacobs visited campus. He wrote the book *A Year of Living Biblically*, about his attempts to live as Jesus would have lived in our time. He said that by praising everything that goes right, we'll realize how much we should be thankful for.

I started doing that—the only time I usually talked to God was to ask Him for something (“Can you please, please help me with that Statistics exam that I should’ve studied for but actually just fretted around and watched *Lost*.”)

Once I started thanking God for the things that I have, I suddenly realized how ignorant I was in the past. Every day I found some small thing I typically never thanked God for, things I simply took for granted. I was thankful that my shoes didn't have punctures in the soles. I was thankful that I had heat during the late November nights. I was thankful that I could eat whatever I want at the breakfast buffet in the café.

After New Years, I was strung-out. I was leaving to spend a semester in Spain, but I wasn't ready. I didn't want to leave my family, my girlfriend, and friends at SU. I was stressed and I couldn't sleep. But then I stopped for a moment. Prayed to God. Thanked Him for what I had.

And there's so much to be thankful for.

On my flight the woman next to me was going to be married in Barcelona to a man she met online, but never seen face-to-face.

Plus, on a more personal note, I didn't even lose my luggage in a foreign airport. And I'll be able to keep in touch with my loved ones abroad.

When not stared at by lethargic cows on his long runs in the bucolic Pennsylvanian countryside, Rob Rotell is hard at work in analyzing his neurosis and putting propositions at the end of sentences (which, to you freshmen writing majors, is a big no-no . . . if you're trying to please the English scholars).

Thursday February 25

Daily Scriptures:

Psalm 27

Genesis 13:1-7, 14-18

Philippians 3:2-12

I am writing this reflection during the week before Christmas to be read during Lent. The timing is interesting as the moods surrounding these two celebrations are so different. Christmas is a time of hope and joy. It reminds us of the blessed birth of Jesus which we celebrate with the giving of gifts. The season of Lent is more somber, reminding us of the ultimate gift of Christianity, God's love shown through the suffering of Christ. This sign of God's love for us makes Psalm 27 even more powerful today than it would have been when it was written, a time when Christ's coming was only hinted at in prophesy. It reminds us that God is our strength in times of trouble, in times of need. And lest we wonder about the strength of God's love we need only think about its ultimate symbol, Christ's death and resurrection.

The Psalm speaks of challenges from enemies and war. Thank goodness most of our challenges are not these, but our need for God's help is no less. At least mine is not. I am challenged by norms of society that run counter to my vision of a good life; I am challenged by the struggle to do the right thing even in those instances when this is most difficult; I am challenged to find the inner strength to care for those around me yet still nurture my soul within. I cannot confront these challenges alone. But I don't have to. "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?" In this season of Lent, as we reflect on our lives in preparation for the celebration of Easter, may we remember that as God was with Christ on the cross, so too is he with us in the many challenges of our daily lives. "The Lord is my strength."

Michele DeMary is an Associate Professor of Political Science and the University Pre-Law Advisor.

Friday February 26

Daily Scriptures:

Philippians 3:17-20

Genesis 14:17-24

Psalm 121

Have you ever been lost? I mean, REALLY desperate, as in “I have no idea how I’m going to get out of this!” Many years ago my family headed to the ELCA Churchwide Assembly held in Denver, CO. My husband and I had decided to drive (from our home in Hanover, PA) and make this roadtrip an adventure our family would never forget. Needless to say, our car first (notice I said “first”) broke down in Indianapolis as we headed west. We then spent a string of days in various garages (Indianapolis, then Kansas City, then Manhattan, KS ...) while different mechanics tried to figure out what was wrong with the car. Imagine a family with two young children, hundreds of miles from home, with little money left in the savings account, trying to get to their destination in a broken down clunker. Not a pretty sight.

The psalmist writes about these desperate times. In fact, the notes section of my Bible states “Pilgrims must travel through lonely country to their destination; they are protected, not by anything created, but by the Creator of everything.” (Life Application Bible-NIV, Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.) . Psalm 121 assures us of God’s protection, day and night. He watches over us, and we are safe.

My husband and I had intended for our Denver roadtrip to be an adventure, and it was! It was surely not what we had anticipated, but it was an adventure just the same. And I came away from this experience changed. I had the opportunity to rely upon the kindness of strangers, the incredible ingenuity of my husband, and the patience and joyfulness of my daughters (they didn’t seem phased by ANY of what we were going through!). Most importantly, I was reminded yet again that God will always provide just what I need, in the time that I need it.

Contributed by Deb Sowers, Class of 1986. Deb is a third grade teacher in the South Western School District and proud mommy of Katie, class of 2012.

Saturday February 27

Daily Scriptures:

Psalm 22:23-31

Psalm 118:26-29

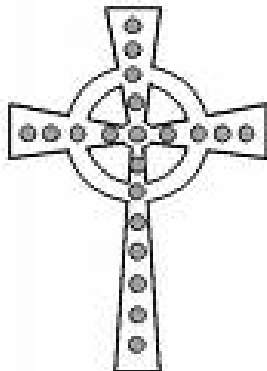
Matthew 23:37-39

As I write this devotion, Haitians are suffering today. After a series of earthquakes and after shocks, the Haitian capitol is in ruins and the people are suffering. They, the poorest people in the Western Hemisphere, have now endured a disaster for which they are not responsible. They did not cause the earthquake, nor did the GOD who made the heavens and the earth cause their suffering. Some have said that they are being punished by GOD for sins. If this were the way of our GOD, who could stand? But if suffering is not God's responsibility, how do we understand it?

In Matthew 23, Jesus laments what is happening to Jerusalem. Matthew's gospel, written after the Romans destroyed the temple and sacked the city (70 CE) interprets that tragedy through the lens of Jesus' own sufferings. Even so, Jesus words of lamentation allude to the promise of Psalm 118, that GOD is a savior and helper, a deliverer of God's people from disaster. Political disaster, war, and poverty seem to plague the people of Israel throughout the biblical narrative. The Psalmist who sings Psalm 118 stands as one who has been delivered, as one who comes in the name of the Lord to celebrate such deliverance in festival and song. The Psalmist sings, "I shall not die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the Lord." In the gospels, Jesus quotes verses of Psalm 118 about himself more than once. The gospel writers see, in Jesus, a fulfillment of the Psalm's promise of a divine deliverer.

Martin Luther said, "One cannot know Christ if one does not know God hidden in suffering." God is present in Haiti, in the ugliness of combat, in the lives of people who are hungry, thirsty, sick, and dying. God's hidden presence is revealed, Christ is made known, when God's people offer themselves in loving and compassionate service to those who suffer. Amen.

The Rev. Matthew Lenahan ('96) is pastor of Zion Lutheran Church, Akron PA. He lives with his wife Cherie ('98) and their three sons.



Sunday February 28

Daily Scriptures:

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

Philippians 3:17-4:1

Mark 13:31-35

In my opinion college students become very accustomed to giving out a students' version of name rank and serial number: "Hi my name is so and so, I am in this grade and this is my major". Sometimes that is accompanied by the dreaded "So what do you want to do with your life" question. I have been asked what I wanted to do when I grew up ever since I could talk and since then I and everyone else have been so focused on what we see ourselves doing 5 years from a certain point in time that other things fall to the wayside. I can imagine Herod being very focused on himself as well. In this verse Jesus refers to Herod as "that fox". In Jewish tradition that word was meant for someone who was useless, not helpful. Herod, however, did not see himself as useless because he had the authority and power. Don't we see ourselves as having the ultimate authority in our lives sometimes? Every so often it takes me a little longer than usual to step back and believe in "let go and let God".

This passage is one of Jesus talking about his work of dying on the cross in order to save us. Jesus felt as though people were not being receptive to the fact that he was doing this for them. At one point he states that he has wanted to be like a hen that protects her chicks. Remember how Jesus called Herod a fox? Well we know who would win in a fight between a fox and hen. Because Jesus was seen as less when compared to the political power of Herod were people also ignoring God's presence? At the end of this reading Jesus says that he will come again as "He who comes in the name of the Lord". So maybe the bigger question is while we wait in this period of Lent are we ignoring God in our lives now? We can't just wait to proclaim "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord Hallelujah Hallelujah!" on Easter Sunday and then go back to focusing on our personal journeys to whatever our new goal is. Jesus did die on the cross in order to save humanity, however he continues to protect us and lead us every day, and that should not be ignored.

Samantha Clements is a history, political science and religion triple major. She is involved in many religious life organizations on campus as well as secretary of Chapel Council, Co-President of Pre-Seminary group and President of History Club. She also often rides her bike around town and watches the Office and Greek.

Monday March 1

Daily Scriptures:

Psalm 105:1-42

Exodus 33:1-6

Romans 4:1-12

In the college setting, there are many situations where you find yourself looking over your shoulder asking, "Do I measure up?" Are the SAT scores high enough? Is the GPA where it needs to be? Am I going to make the team or be cast in the play? Does my term paper or laboratory report have what the instructor is looking for? One place you never have to look over your shoulder is with God. God doesn't ask us to pile up the good works to see whether they outweigh the bad; and he doesn't ask us to prove our worth by how hard we have worked. We could never do enough good to cover our sin to make us perfect before God. Our good works are never enough to pay the debt. That is what Jesus does. His perfection wipes the slate clear, and God only sees our faith. Just as Abraham was considered righteous because of his faith, so we too can stand before God confident because of Jesus' work that covers our wrongs. God's grace is not based on how hard we have worked, what we have suffered, what we have given up, or how much good we try to do. All we are asked to do is believe and that faith takes care of the rest. So while much of college life is filled with assessments, grades, try-outs, scores, auditions, and exams; our true measure will be determined by our faith. And as Jesus himself said in Matthew 17:20, "if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move" (New International Version, Zondervan).

Dan Ressler studied Soil Science and Water Resources. He teaches courses including Environmental Science, Chemistry of Natural Waters, Soil Science, and Groundwater Pollution and Monitoring in the Earth and Environmental Sciences department.

Tuesday March 2

Daily Scriptures:
Psalm 128
Numbers 14:10b-24

1 Corinthians 10:1-13

What were those dumb ancient Israelites thinking?!? God just displayed His glory in all these awesome ways, and it seems like two minutes later they up and forgot about Him!

How often do we read the Bible with a critical eye for others and yet an eye for self-validation? These stories are recorded because they tell us something about God and the human condition, and serve to warn us about the dangers we face in our walk with God. The specific manifestation may vary by culture, but these Israelites faced the same temptations that we do today! We must truly examine our everyday actions and mindsets to see how we too, in spite of all the ways God displays signs of His presence in our lives, evidence a lack of belief or trust in God. Maybe it is through constant anxieties about the “what if’s” of life. Perhaps it is in our frustration when things don’t go exactly as we had planned. I pray that God would remove our hardness of heart so that we would stop pointing fingers, be convicted in our sin, repent and ask forgiveness. That we may learn from the mistakes of others rather than repeating them ourselves. As the Numbers passage shows, God is willing to forgive us no matter what, but we may miss out on some of the blessings He has intended for us if we are obstinate in our acts of rebellion and unbelief. We cannot use the excuse that it is too much for us. God has given us the ability to overcome temptation. Don’t wait! Be reconciled to the God who passionately desires you, who is abounding in love, and who has a better plan than any you’ve imagined for your life!

Casey Oliver is a Senior Math/Physics major Religious Studies minor. He is an active member of LSM and InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, and participates on the SU Tennis Team.

Wednesday March 3

Daily Scriptures:

Psalm 105:1-11, 37-45

Luke 13:22-31

2 Chronicles 20:1-22

The story of Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 20 teaches about seeking and trusting God when we're faced with difficult circumstances. When Jehoshaphat heard of the imminent approach of the Ammonite and Moabite armies, he was fearful at first, but he made the decision to seek God for guidance and direction. He took six key steps: (1) He instructed his people to fast and pray. (2) He acknowledged God's sovereignty and reminded Him of his promises. (3) He recognized that he needed God's help. (4) He listened when the Lord spoke through his prophet Jahaziel. (5) He trusted the word of the Lord. (6) He worshipped and praised God **before** he got the victory.

What I find most remarkable about this story is that because of Jehoshaphat's complete reliance on God, he didn't need to engage in battle with his enemies. As he and his people worshipped God, the Lord confused their enemies and caused them to destroy each other. Have you ever been faced with a difficult situation and feared the possible outcomes? If so, how did you handle it? Did you seek God first and wait patiently for His response? Did you then trust the guidance that He gave to you? I don't know about you, but I don't always have the faith to rely totally on God. I am challenged to use Jehoshaphat's example and trust God when I'm faced with important decisions, knowing that He is concerned with every detail of my life. If I praise Him in advance and trust the guidance that He provides, I will be victorious.

As you meditate on this scripture, be reminded that God responds to earnest prayer. Ask Him today to make your faith perfect.

Dr. Geneive Henry is an Associate Professor in the Department of Chemistry. She attends Revival Tabernacle Church in Watson, Pa.

Thursday March 4

Daily Scriptures:

Psalm 63:1-8

Daniel 3:19-30

Revelation 2:8-11

The story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego is a pretty incredible one, and it's the sort of thing you wish you could've been there to see happen. I mean, really: Three guys get thrown into a furnace, and God Himself visibly saves them from the fire! Why don't we see Him do stuff like that these days?

I'm not going to pretend I know the answer to that question, but I will say He saves in other ways every day. Every time I get through a tough paper or story; every time I make it to the end of another seemingly endless week of reading assignments, group projects, and meetings, I thank the Lord for it. I thank Him for the little things, too—seeing a really good movie, getting M&M cookies from the caf, and getting a good night's sleep.

Take a moment now to thank God for whatever good fortune you've had in your life recently—even if it's something as small as a short break between all the work that can pile up throughout the semester. He may not be the one directly responsible for it, but He is the one that makes those moments possible.

Ian Doherty is a sophomore Creative Writing major and Music Theory/Literature minor. He is the current Student Assistant to the Chaplain and editor of the Religious Life eNewsletter.

Friday March 5

Daily Scriptures:

Revelation 3:1-6

Daniel 12:1-4

Psalm 95

Looking out the beautiful large window during mass at my church, it is so easy to reflect on the beauty of God's creation, feel his presence and have a kind loving heart while singing joyful noise about God's love and mercy. For the Lord is a great God.

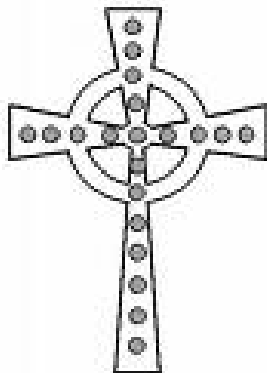
However, that perfect feeling can quickly disappear as challenges of the day begin to creep in and situations surface that cause pain, anger, stress or worry. During those times, it is important to not harden your heart. In Psalm 95, "It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways."

One of my favorite phrases is "What Would Jesus Do?" I know deep in my heart that whenever I encounter a situation that causes pain, I can rely on God to help me through it. I think how would Jesus handle this? God's way leads to forgiveness, patience, charity, understanding, wisdom and love. Following these truths guides me to a place where my heart is filled with peace and I find rest. When I don't, my pain grows deeper and stronger and I remain paralyzed in my selfish thoughts. Knowing God's way is at the center of living life with purpose, peace and fulfillment.

In the church hymn, *Come to the Water*, the line "How can your soul find rest, except in the Lord", makes me smile. Singing the song makes me feel grateful to know God's ways so deeply. This trust and understanding is the path to finding peace and rest wherever I am and in every situation.

Reflect on God's ways and let your soul find rest this Lenten season.

Mary Muolo is the Manager of Donor Stewardship Programs and advisor for Catholic Campus Ministry.



Saturday March 6

Daily Scriptures:
Psalm 19
Isaiah 5:1-7

Luke 6:43-45

The first question that popped into my head when I initially read this passage was why figs trees and grapes verses thornbushes and briers? Upon some further research I learned that the Fig tree was the favorite of all trees because it symbolized fertility, peace and prosperity. Grapes were used to produce wine, which happened to be the symbol of joy. Briers and thornbushes were used as fuel for fires. So how does this relate to me? Well, we too can produce good or bad fruit. I am reminded of a saying by Charles Read: "Sow an act and you reap a habit. Sow a habit and you reap a character. Sow a character and you reap a destiny." Character isn't sown, or created, overnight. Instead it has to be nurtured and formed over the course of a lifetime. It takes, time, energy, diligence and care but with time, good character becomes one form of good fruit. If we live in a godly way, and avoid the falsehood and 'bad fruit' we will be showing our true character. Those who are true to God know that their strength lies not in themselves but in God who supplies the grace that we need in order to live as his disciples. The fruit of a disciple is marked by faith, hope and love among others. We need to create a foundation of acts and habits that form our character. We need to weed out the thornbushes and briers and avoid starting fires in our lives and instead focus on the peace, prosperity and joy that can be found in Christ Jesus. Are you nurturing the good fruit in your life and rejecting whatever it is that produces the bad?

Sarah Weiser is a senior Music Education Major. Post graduation she is looking forward to finding a job teaching middle school and high school general music and choir.

Friday March 5

Daily Scriptures:

Revelation 3:1-6

Daniel 12:1-4

Psalm 95

Looking out the beautiful large window during mass at my church, it is so easy to reflect on the beauty of God's creation, feel his presence and have a kind loving heart while singing joyful noise about God's love and mercy. For the Lord is a great God.

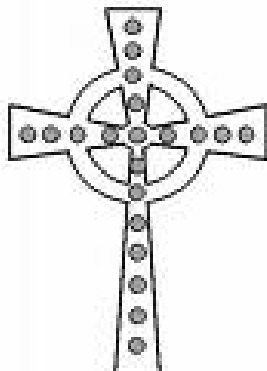
However, that perfect feeling can quickly disappear as challenges of the day begin to creep in and situations surface that cause pain, anger, stress or worry. During those times, it is important to not harden your heart. In Psalm 95, "It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways."

One of my favorite phrases is "What Would Jesus Do?" I know deep in my heart that whenever I encounter a situation that causes pain, I can rely on God to help me through it. I think how would Jesus handle this? God's way leads to forgiveness, patience, charity, understanding, wisdom and love. Following these truths guides me to a place where my heart is filled with peace and I find rest. When I don't, my pain grows deeper and stronger and I remain paralyzed in my selfish thoughts. Knowing God's way is at the center of living life with purpose, peace and fulfillment.

In the church hymn, *Come to the Water*, the line "How can your soul find rest, except in the Lord", makes me smile. Singing the song makes me feel grateful to know God's ways so deeply. This trust and understanding is the path to finding peace and rest wherever I am and in every situation.

Reflect on God's ways and let your soul find rest this Lenten season.

Mary Muolo is the Manager of Donor Stewardship Programs and advisor for Catholic Campus Ministry.



Saturday March 6

Daily Scriptures:
Psalm 19
Isaiah 5:1-7

Luke 6:43-45

The first question that popped into my head when I initially read this passage was why figs trees and grapes verses thornbushes and briers? Upon some further research I learned that the Fig tree was the favorite of all trees because it symbolized fertility, peace and prosperity. Grapes were used to produce wine, which happened to be the symbol of joy. Briers and thornbushes were used as fuel for fires. So how does this relate to me? Well, we too can produce good or bad fruit. I am reminded of a saying by Charles Read: "Sow an act and you reap a habit. Sow a habit and you reap a character. Sow a character and you reap a destiny." Character isn't sown, or created, overnight. Instead it has to be nurtured and formed over the course of a lifetime. It takes, time, energy, diligence and care but with time, good character becomes one form of good fruit. If we live in a godly way, and avoid the falsehood and 'bad fruit' we will be showing our true character. Those who are true to God know that their strength lies not in themselves but in God who supplies the grace that we need in order to live as his disciples. The fruit of a disciple is marked by faith, hope and love among others. We need to create a foundation of acts and habits that form our character. We need to weed out the thornbushes and briers and avoid starting fires in our lives and instead focus on the peace, prosperity and joy that can be found in Christ Jesus. Are you nurturing the good fruit in your life and rejecting whatever it is that produces the bad?

Sarah Weiser is a senior Music Education Major. Post graduation she is looking forward to finding a job teaching middle school and high school general music and choir.

Friday March 5

Daily Scriptures:

Revelation 3:1-6

Daniel 12:1-4

Psalm 95

Looking out the beautiful large window during mass at my church, it is so easy to reflect on the beauty of God's creation, feel his presence and have a kind loving heart while singing joyful noise about God's love and mercy. For the Lord is a great God.

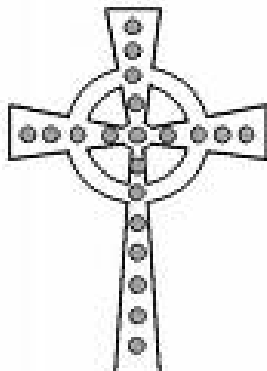
However, that perfect feeling can quickly disappear as challenges of the day begin to creep in and situations surface that cause pain, anger, stress or worry. During those times, it is important to not harden your heart. In Psalm 95, "It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways."

One of my favorite phrases is "What Would Jesus Do?" I know deep in my heart that whenever I encounter a situation that causes pain, I can rely on God to help me through it. I think how would Jesus handle this? God's way leads to forgiveness, patience, charity, understanding, wisdom and love. Following these truths guides me to a place where my heart is filled with peace and I find rest. When I don't, my pain grows deeper and stronger and I remain paralyzed in my selfish thoughts. Knowing God's way is at the center of living life with purpose, peace and fulfillment.

In the church hymn, *Come to the Water*, the line "How can your soul find rest, except in the Lord", makes me smile. Singing the song makes me feel grateful to know God's ways so deeply. This trust and understanding is the path to finding peace and rest wherever I am and in every situation.

Reflect on God's ways and let your soul find rest this Lenten season.

Mary Muolo is the Manager of Donor Stewardship Programs and advisor for Catholic Campus Ministry.



Saturday March 6

Daily Scriptures:
Psalm 19
Isaiah 5:1-7

Luke 6:43-45

The first question that popped into my head when I initially read this passage was why figs trees and grapes verses thornbushes and briers? Upon some further research I learned that the Fig tree was the favorite of all trees because it symbolized fertility, peace and prosperity. Grapes were used to produce wine, which happened to be the symbol of joy. Briers and thornbushes were used as fuel for fires. So how does this relate to me? Well, we too can produce good or bad fruit. I am reminded of a saying by Charles Read: "Sow an act and you reap a habit. Sow a habit and you reap a character. Sow a character and you reap a destiny." Character isn't sown, or created, overnight. Instead it has to be nurtured and formed over the course of a lifetime. It takes, time, energy, diligence and care but with time, good character becomes one form of good fruit. If we live in a godly way, and avoid the falsehood and 'bad fruit' we will be showing our true character. Those who are true to God know that their strength lies not in themselves but in God who supplies the grace that we need in order to live as his disciples. The fruit of a disciple is marked by faith, hope and love among others. We need to create a foundation of acts and habits that form our character. We need to weed out the thornbushes and briers and avoid starting fires in our lives and instead focus on the peace, prosperity and joy that can be found in Christ Jesus. Are you nurturing the good fruit in your life and rejecting whatever it is that produces the bad?

Sarah Weiser is a senior Music Education Major. Post graduation she is looking forward to finding a job teaching middle school and high school general music and choir.

Thursday March 11

Daily Scriptures:
Psalm 32
Joshua 4:1-13

2 Corinthians 4:16-5:5

As a child, I decided that Easter was my favorite holiday. I loved Easter for one reason, and one reason only: Easter Egg Hunts. I am not speaking about the community run egg hunts where plastic eggs were scattered over a flat field and all you had to do was run forward and pick up what was set before you. I am talking about ones where each egg has been carefully hidden away. I would search desperately to find these hidden treasures. I would stain my Easter dress crawling on the ground looking under bushes, bruise my knees trying to get a good look in the crook of a tree, and exhaust myself searching diligently in the shadows. All in order to get a good grasp on what I could not see.

When reading 2 Corinthians, I was reminded of the joy I felt when finding an elusive egg. Here we find ourselves on the Lenten journey as children of faith still seeking after that which is unseen. As we wander through the wilderness with Christ, we cannot see where our own journeys end. However, we have great faith that Christ's journey ended on the cross, justifying a sinful humanity before God. Let us not only follow the way to the cross humbly and obediently; but may our journey to the unseen mysteries of the faith be made as enthusiastically as a child searching for a hidden Easter egg.

This Lenten season, let us get our hands dirty serving all humanity, in response to our God who is gracious. Let us allow our egos to be bruised and humbled defending a God who saves us. And most of all let us search in the shadows and darkness for places to share the good news of that which cannot be seen. "For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal" (2 Cor. 4: 17-18)

Amy Troxell is a 2008 Susquehanna Alumna who is currently working towards ordination at the Lutheran Theological School at Gettysburg.

Friday March 12

Daily Scriptures:

Psalm 23

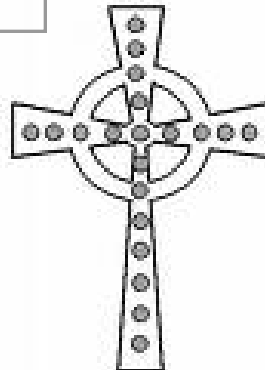
Joshua 4:14-24

2 Corinthians 5:6-15

In the first few verses Paul writes about being home in the body and being away from the Lord. Lebanon, PA is my hometown and where I grew up, and Susquehanna in a sense, has become my new home. Paul speaks about “in the body” and “with the Lord” as separate locations and one cannot live at both at the same time. I know the life I have at Susquehanna I cannot have while I am at home. The overall preference would be to be home with the Lord. Body and Lord are just different places we call home. “Home is where the heart is” is an expression we can use to demonstrate that we can still be “home” while in the body. Paul then mentions that we “walk by faith not by sight.” It is important that when we are “in the body” our relationship with the Lord is built on faith. No matter where our location it should be “our aim to please him.” By this our relationship with the Lord will be the same whether home or away.

Paul continues explaining that Jesus died for all and therefore indicating all are in need of salvation. During the Lenten season let us remember that since we live we no longer live for ourselves but for “him who died and was raised for them.”

Kelsey Fitting is a freshman at Susquehanna double majoring in Psychology and Religion. She is a member of LSM, TNW, Pre-Sem, chapel choir, band, and chorale. She is from Lebanon, PA where she attends Holy Trinity Lutheran Church.



Saturday March 13

Daily Scriptures:

Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22

Exodus 32:7-14

Luke 15:1-10

When I was younger, during worship, when children would approach the communion rail, they would receive a specific blessing from my pastor. He would lean down and, while tracing the sign of the cross on the child's forehead, ask "What are you always going to remember?" A question to which all the children (and adults!) of the congregation knew to reply, "That God loves me." Over time, this dialogue became as much a part of the liturgy as every other component to the service.

Years later I realized that a part of this short litany bothered me. It was the "me" part that I had a problem with. I was okay with a Jesus who loved the little children of the world, but a Jesus who loves "me" forced me to recognize the immensity and intensity of God's love, a love I could not escape, a love that sought me out and brought me back regardless of where I was.

God the shepherd forces us to recognize the same thing. We cannot read Luke's text without questioning the logic of the shepherd. Why leave the 99 sheep and go after the one? Surely the 99 are enough to keep the shepherd company. And sheep are valuable property – leaving the other 99 presents a risk to their safety.

Regardless of our issues with the shepherd's logic, we like to think of ourselves among the 99, living our lives among the anonymity of the herd, and under the protection of the shepherd. But what if we are the one? To be the sheep that has wandered off means we recognize that the shepherd knows us, knows what we have done, and loves us in spite of that. In fact, the shepherd loves each of us enough to search us out and bring us back into the safety of the fold. During our Lenten journey we can see the outstretched arms of the shepherd bringing us life and love regardless of where we are.

Alina Gayeuski is a 2009 graduate of Susquehanna University. She currently attends the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia where she is pursuing a Master of Arts in Religion. In addition to her studies, Alina works for the Archives of the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania, explores the great city of Philadelphia, and misses witnessing the lively discourse between certain professors in the SU Religion Department.

Sunday March 14

Daily Scriptures:

Joshua 5:9-12

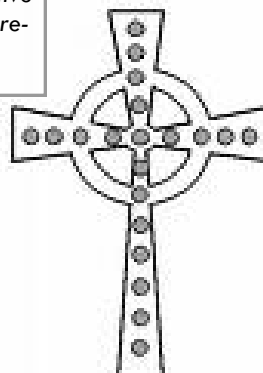
2 Corinthians 5:16-21

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

Philosopher Bertrand Russell once said "In all affairs it's a healthy thing now and then to hang a question mark on the things you have long taken for granted." When I saw that the passages for today were all at least relatively well-known Biblical lessons I knew that I would have to apply that quote to my reading of the Scripture. After hours of agonizing I realized that it could actually be a blessing, not a curse, to write a devotional about a famous passage with the goal of bringing to light a new perspective on the story.

The parable of the prodigal son is always used to illustrate God's forgiveness and continual acceptance of repentant sinners. We are the wayward son and God is the father having a feast for us when we return home. That's all well and good, but then why is there an older son in the story? Sure, there are times when we are the petulant younger son trying our luck in the world but what about the times when we are the respectful, obedient son who stays on the farm and carries out our duties? This character speaks to the times when we as obedient and faithful Christians are justifiably annoyed when it seems like our good deeds go ignored while the repentance of a sinner is celebrated in Heaven by multitudes of angels. Logically, then, the best option would be to live our lives the way WE desire and repent right before death assuring us both a fun earthly life and a party in Heaven. This is one of the times when a game-theory payoff matrix unfortunately does not apply, however, and we must strive to follow the straight and narrow path. The goal of Christianity is not to be cheered for, it is Communion with God which is exactly what we get from a lifetime of obedient and faithful dedication.

Matthew Getz is a sophomore at SU majoring in International Studies and Spanish. He is a member of Chapel Council, LSM, the hand bell choir, SU Swings, band, and choir. He is also an active member of Phi Mu Delta and enjoys underappreciated sports like team handball.



Monday March 15

Daily Scriptures:

Revelation 19:1-8

Leviticus 23:26-41

Psalm 53

GODISNOWHERE

What do you see?

I used to see this billboard a lot and it always startled me. What if people read the wrong message in passing and go on thinking that God is nowhere? Today's Psalm writer tells us that only fools do not seek after God, but it is sometimes difficult to see how God works in our daily lives and to feel God's presence with us.

I know what a busy time this is for everyone at Susquehanna. Trust me. Last year on this exact date was my senior recital. Today is the start of the second half of the semester. Everyone is getting ready for graduation or whatever the summer may have in store, but the pace just never seems to slow down. However, I think Lent gives us the perfect opportunity to SLOW DOWN and reflect on our lives- especially our lives as Christians. We have the opportunity to refocus our attention back to living our lives fully devoted to Jesus.

No matter how busy we are we can take comfort in knowing that God is with us. In fact, our Lenten journeys bring us to the joy of Easter and the true message with Jesus' resurrection that God is NOW HERE!

Laura Lengel Ramsey graduated last year with a dual degree in Music and Religion. She is now working toward her M.Div. at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg. She and her husband, Jesse, are enjoying married life, but miss everyone at SU.

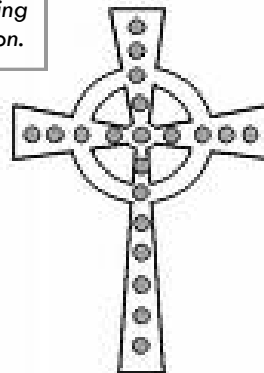
Tuesday March 16

Daily Scriptures:
Psalm 146
Revelation 19:9-10

Leviticus 25:1-19

As soon as I started reading this passage, I was delighted to find math, even multiplication! ⁸And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Being a math major may have evoked this response, but I also feel that it is rare to come across much math in the Bible. Math is concrete; it usually results in one answer, one way of doing things: a proof. Concrete proof of God and religion is hard to come by. We believe through faith. We don't need to see God to believe. The Bible tells us stories of Jesus and of God appearing to people, which strengthened their belief in God. We have this second-hand experience of proof, but not many people have direct proof of God's existence, just that feeling: faith in the unknown. I wish I could use that in my math class. "This is true because I believe it is true". I guess we do put a lot of faith in the mathematicians before us, using their ideas or 'stories' to believe in concepts such as calculus, geometry, and even basic arithmetic. Why does $2 + 2 = 4$? Well, someone a very long time ago said so and proved it somehow, but most of us just remember what our elementary school teachers taught us. I did take one class that showed me the theory behind counting, but I prefer to go by blind faith. This is how our faith in God works too. We believe because others believe. We are shown evidence and sometimes 'proof' is explained to us, but we don't always fully understand it. We do however trust in God and boldly live our lives knowing that He is in control. We live by His word.

Sarah Hawk is a senior math secondary education major. She rows on the crew team and is active with Lutheran Student Movement. She is currently student teaching at Selinsgrove Middle School and is looking forward to teaching math after graduation.



Wednesday March 17

Daily Scriptures:

Psalm 107:1-16

2 Kings 4:1-7

Luke 9:10-17

The simple task of sharing what one has with those less fortunate than ourselves is the major lesson that we learn in Luke 9:10-17. Although we may not be well off ourselves, there is always a way to share what little we do have with the masses, especially in a time when helping others is more dire than ever. The current economic situation brings about the need to help those who are suffering the most. Giving to others not only benefits those we help, but it also gives us the knowledge of knowing that we have brought the word of God to someone who needs it more than ever. In this Lenten season, reflect on how you can help someone receive this word of God and change their life in some way.

Alex Hauserman is a freshman Music Education major. He participates in the University Chorale and Chapel Handbell Choir.



Thursday March 18

Daily Scriptures:
Psalm 126
Isaiah 43:1-7

Philippians 2:19-24

Have you ever had the experience of sitting around with a group of friends and recalling with enthusiasm the memory of a time you all shared? In your recollection, it is as if the past event becomes alive again.

There is a particular kind of remembering that Christians and Jews do during their chief holy days. The technical term is “anamnesis.” It is the sort of remembering in which the recalled events of the sacred past become present within those now gathered for worship. So it is that Christians sing, “O sacred head, **now** wounded” and “Jesus Christ is risen **today**.” And at Passover, Jews living in the 21st century say, “**We** were slaves in Egypt, and God brought **us** out with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm.”

Returning from years of bitter exile in Babylon, Israel faces the daunting task of rebuilding a nation that lay in ruins. Through the prophet Isaiah, God says to them,
“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are mine.
When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you.
For I am the LORD your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.”

Recalling that event through anamnesis, God’s people living many centuries later can claim that call, that promise, and that presence as their own. Faith is not the mere persistence of the past; it is the faithful appropriation of those pivotal events that possess the power to transform a random group of people into a living, vibrant community of faith

Today.

Susquehanna University Chaplain and Associate Professor of Religion Mark Wm. Radecke is the founder and (co-)director of the SU CASA, SPLASH, and Issues at the End of Life service-learning programs, each of which has received a national award. He and his wife Tami live on campus.

Friday March 19

Daily Scriptures:

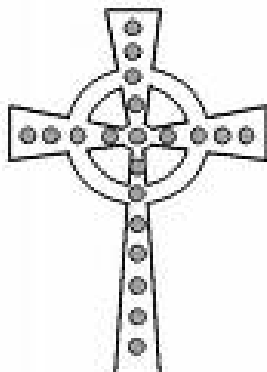
Philippians 2:25-3:1
Isaiah 43:8-15

Psalm 30

Have you ever been sick and prayed that God would heal you? Or have you had someone else pray for you? How wonderful is it when those prayers are answered and we can rejoice in the greatness of God? In this passage, the psalmist shares of just such a time of thanksgiving for recovery! I'm sure that many of us have experienced that same celebration or know people that have, after a trying time of physical crisis and the experience of overcoming it.

In the spring of my sophomore year, I was faced with just such a challenge. I was getting extremely sick all the time. I couldn't keep anything in my system and I was constantly losing the nutrients my body needed to survive. I was tired all the time, I was sick all the time, and I was not a happy camper. While I went through what seemed like endless tests to figure out what was wrong, I was blessed to have an amazing family and extremely supportive friends who continually prayed for me and with their support and the knowledge of doctors we finally found out what was wrong. While the day of diagnosis was one of celebration, I continue to celebrate everyday that I feel good. When I remember all that I endured during that time in my life, my mourning turns into dancing so that my soul can praise the Lord and not be silent.

Chelsea Miller is a senior Religion major with minors in Women's Studies and Ancient Greek. She serves as the Deacon of Spiritual Nurture and loves that she gets to talk about emotions all the time.



Saturday March 20

Daily Scriptures:

John 11:45-47

Exodus 12:21-27

Psalm 51:1-12

What exactly is a clean heart? An organ free of build up from too much Red Robin? Or perhaps one without worries and burdens? Maybe even one devoid of sins? When I studied abroad in Perugia, Italy I lived in a quaint apartment that was inspected for cleanliness monthly. A woman would scrutinize every inch of the apartment, and place a green, yellow, or red card on my kitchen table, based on how well my apartment “performed” in the cleanliness inspection. The days leading up to the inspection were always filled with scrubbing and scouring, tension among roommates and lots of trips to the store to purchase cleaning supplies.

Lucky for us, God doesn't perform a cleanliness inspection on us. We don't receive colored cards based on our sins. Instead, God gives us the opportunity for repentance through Lent. In Psalm 51 we read, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” Before this line, the Psalm is concerned with the many sins we commit. In my Italian apartment, I could have asked for forgiveness for not cleaning the stove, but that would not have gotten me a green card. God, on the other hand, allows us to use Lent as a time reflect on our transgressions and ask for forgiveness. There are no fines to pay or cleaning products to purchase. Maybe it would be easier if we could go out and buy something that would automatically wash away all of our wrongdoings. However, I believe that God is less concerned with us having spotless and squeaky-clean hearts, than he is with the scrubbing and scouring that it takes to reach a clean heart. The process of prayer and repentance is more valuable than being perfect. I wish you happy cleaning in this Lenten season.

Jess Bontempo is a senior elementary education major and religion minor from Norristown, PA. She is a member of LSM, involved with the Fair Trade Festival, and is a Tour Guide. She is an active member of St. John's Lutheran Church.

Sunday March 21

Daily Scriptures:

Isaiah 43:16-21

Philippians 3:4b-14

John 12:1-8

This Easter 2010, Shaw University in Raleigh, NC will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, or SNCC (pronounced "snick"). Who could have known that the actions of a small group of Black college students who refused to leave a Woolworth's lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina where they had been denied service would become a key organization in the American Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s? "Keep Your Eyes on the Prize" was adapted from a spiritual and quickly became an anthem that was often sung during protests and marches. Whether it is a rendition by artists such as Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, Mavis Staples, or hip hop artist, Marley Marl, the lyrics remind us of St. Paul's words in Philippians 3:4b-14:

Wouldn't take nothing for my journey now

Keep your eyes on the prize, hold on!

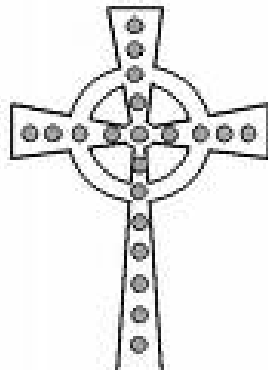
Hold on, (hold on), hold on, (hold on)

As Christians, we must continue to transcend oppression, fight discrimination, and persevere against any struggle that may arise in our lives. The treasure that we have is the grace to grow closer to Christ Jesus. Our *raison d'être*, is to fully reflect Christ in our own words, deeds, and lives. We cannot stop growing, learning, and moving forward. Our invitation this Lenten season is to reflect, repent, and realign ourselves with the mission that God Himself calls us to continue.

Our joy, comfort, and faith are to share in the resurrection, yet our work this side of Heaven is incomplete. We have much to accomplish in Jesus' name and for his greater glory.

What spirit-filled action can I do today which moves me closer to knowing Jesus?

Simona J. Hill is professor of sociology and faculty advisor for the Theresa Palmer Society at Susquehanna University. She is also a lifelong promoter of The Central Association of the Miraculous Medal.



Monday March 22

Daily Scriptures:

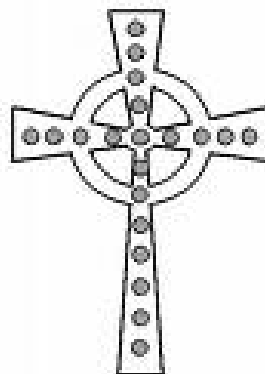
Psalm 20

Exodus 40:1-15

Hebrews 10:19-25

Here we find an urging toward the practice of faith, hope and love. A “sincere heart” as in verse 22 may not be that hard for many of us, but having it in “full assurance of faith” might prove more difficult. Luckily faith and hope go hand in hand, and the next verse shows how the two are connected. To “hold unswervingly” to our hopes is, essentially, faith; it is a decision to believe *sincerely* in what we hope for. But what do we hope for? The “Day approaching” in verse 25: the establishment of a world in which all people live together in love. James tells us elsewhere that faith produces works, so our faith in hoping for love ought to be somehow expressed, which is exactly what verse 24 advocates. If we believe we are justified in expecting a future full of love, it makes the most sense to show this through doing our part in creating that future. To “spur one another on toward love and good deeds” is to proclaim our belief that love between all people is indeed achievable, and to profess such a belief requires our utmost involvement in it. Love and good deeds do not happen without the contribution of those whom they aim to bring together. Again, it may not be easy, which is why verse 25 urges us to meet with and encourage each other in our efforts to bring more love into the world.

James Dunham regularly attends both Susquehanna's chapel service and the campus Quaker Meeting for Worship. He is a double major in Creative Writing and Philosophy.



Tuesday March 23

Daily Scriptures:

Psalm 143

Judges 9:7-15

1 John 2:18-28

If you haven't done your homework, i.e. read 1 John 2 18:28, stop do your homework now – homework is important.

One should never take Scripture out of context. When you do, strange things happen – for example the bible tells you to commit suicide – Judas went out and hung himself -- go thou and do likewise.

But, I must put two parts of 1 John, separated by a few verses, together to tell my story.

“Dear Children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard the Antichrist is coming” and “See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. And this is what he promised us -- even eternal life.

After 50 years of teaching Physics, I could not help thinking – John is talking about finals. It is indeed the last hour. And if what you have heard from the beginning like Newton's law or the energy equation, remains in you, you will indeed receive what he promised – even an A. Hallelujah! Amazing what one can learn from the Scriptures, -- how to get A's.

Of course we Christians know that John had more important things in mind. He tells us not to be deceived by false teachers (or by our own false ideas about things, like Physics) Stick with the truth that you have been taught, in text book or Bible. As we work our way through Lent to Easter, just as we work our way through term to finals, avoid the counterfeit, hang tight to the truth. Why? In the academy, an A in Physics. In reality, Eternal Life.

Happy Easter!

Dr. Fred Grosse has taught Physics at Susquehanna since 1960 (50 years this June). Since 1997, a Christian, he has visited those jailed in USP Lewisburg, and USP Allenwood. Lately he also visits those in Snyder and Northumberland County Jails. Dr. Grosse attends and sings in the choir at St Monica Church, Sunbury.

Wednesday March 24

Daily Scriptures:

Psalm 119:9-16

Habakkuk 3:2-15

Luke 18:31-34

There is no question about it- people today are stressed more than ever before. With more co-curricular opportunities available now in addition to a constant academic workload, students increasingly strain themselves to meet the expectations of family, friends, and professors. Faculty and staff are not immune from this feeling of perpetual motion, though, and too experience high levels of stress working at the collegiate level that today demands greater and greater commitment as schools compete for students and money in a time of economic hardship.

Indeed, it is all too easy to become absorbed by the realities of this world and lose sight of life's most important gifts. Moreover, we are especially susceptible to being engulfed by what is often coined the "Susquehanna bubble" and fall into trivial daily routine that can ultimately become personally unfulfilling and derails us from seeking out God's will for each of us. As our academic, work, and social commitments ever increase, commitments to personal values, including religious ones, tend to be displaced. Further, we may sometimes feel inconvenienced trying to fit God into our busy schedules. In essence, we are multitasking God out of our lives as we prioritize seemingly more important or urgent "obligations" over our relationship with the Lord.

But how do we avoid falling into this trivial daily cycle that displaces God from the top of our priority list and remain true to his word? I think it starts with minor adjustments that help reaffirm our dedication to the Lord. By spending time with God each day in prayer, we can face our everyday challenges and hardships with an ever-faithful friend and prepare ourselves to live each day with greater meaning and substance. When we place our relationship with the Lord first and remain pure to His teachings, we will be blessed and actually find it much easier to meet our daily commitments. Amen.

Andrew Steele is a Junior Biochemistry major from Frewsburg, NY. He is currently involved on campus as the Vice-President of the Student Government Association, a member of the Student Conduct Board and Welcome Week Planning Committee, a brother of Phi Mu Delta, and a student driver for the Health Center.

Thursday March 25

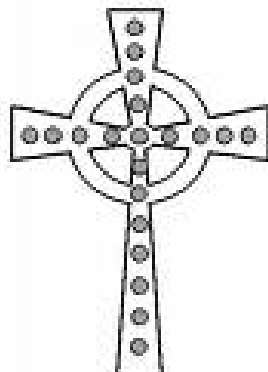
Daily Scriptures:
Hebrews 2:1-9
Isaiah 53:10-12

Psalm 31:9-16

“But I trust in you, O Lord; I say, ‘You are my God.’”
When I lived in England, there were times where I felt unworthy or unwanted. For a while, I felt like an outsider; someone who was there but didn’t really “get it” like others did. And even though there wasn’t a language barrier, something still hindered me from becoming a part of the community at times. Maybe they knew that in a year, I would leave, so why waste their energy on me. However, when I looked in the face of a child, I immediately felt this sense of belonging and worthiness. Children instantly accepted me. Their spirit, joy and happiness to engage me was never an issue. I depended on the children of southern Hertfordshire to get me through my day, and in return they embraced me and loved me as one of their own.

While I know I was never a “horror to my neighbors” or “dread to my acquaintances” in England, I still put my trust and faith in God, to help me realize that barriers can be broken and together, as a community, we can serve one another. While we all might feel worthless at times, it is through God’s love and grace that saves us in moments of distress and alienation. When we don’t feel accepted by others, we always know that God accepts us no matter what our age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, political viewpoints or other beliefs.

By putting my trust in God, I was overwhelmed with love from Julia, Ruari, Samantha, Masie, Natalie, Joshua and hundreds of children in England. For it is God’s love and grace, shining through His children in this broken world, that we are reminded of God’s incredible gift to us.



Kristin Vought '07 graduated from Susquehanna University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications. Currently, she serves as the assistant director of alumni relations. Prior to working at SU, she served as a missionary through the ELCA's Young Adults in Global Mission program in southern Hertfordshire, England where she taught social responsibility through Christian values to children and youth.

Friday March 26

Daily Scriptures:
Hebrews 2:10-18
Isaiah 54:9-10

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

Through the season of lent, this Psalm is a spark of hope for the meditative and reflective season. The beginning of this passage, verses 19-22, speak of our entrance to Heaven which has been opened through Jesus. We enter through the gates of righteousness, not out of our own righteousness, but only through the grace of the Lord. The writer of this Psalm saw the world through the eyes of the Hebrew people. It was those who obeyed the law who reached Heaven – but this was flipped around when Emmanuel came down to us on Christmas. As Jesus came to Earth and continued through His ministry, it was then that the meaning of “the righteous” changed from followers of the law to the followers of Jesus. It is out of this change that the rest of the Psalm can be inclusive to all and be as praiseful as it is.

As the rest of the Psalm develops, the writer continues writing praises of the Lord which we can say daily as a gift of praise and thanksgiving. We are thankful for the day, the day which the Lord has made, as it is another day for us to do the work of Him who has saved us. Verse 27 is even better as it brings the church year altogether into one verse. We thank Him who has given us light (both the sun’s light and His light in His Son). To do this, we bring branches to the procession, as we do on Palm Sunday, and give them up to the alter where we worship. As it says in the beginning of the Psalm, by entering the gates of righteousness through His Son we can live eternally with Him. For this, we praise and thank Him at every opportunity by saying the beginning and ending verses, “O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.”

Jon Snyder does many things around campus including directing the handbell choir and acting as the Chapel Council Liaison to SGA. One of his favorite roles on campus is a Resident Assistant in Reed Hall working with many freshmen in the residence hall. He also is a Presidential Fellow and remains very active in the music department.

Saturday March 27

Daily Scriptures:
Jeremiah 33:10-16
Leviticus 23:1-8

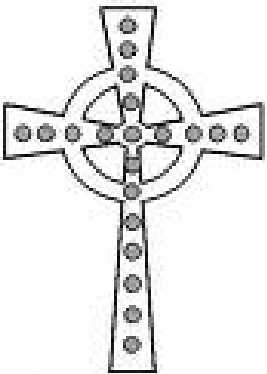
Luke 22:1-13

Sometimes it feels like life's daily problems and struggles are just my own. I'll be going through the day focused on things that I need to accomplish and stressing about ways to complete all my daily tasks. I can become so near sighted about what I need to do that I can forget that God has given me greater gifts than just opportunities. God has given us community and people to lean on and has provided us with everything we need, and then some.

In Luke 22: 1-13, through Passover, people were able to come together and support one another and were reminded that God was their ultimate provider. When the disciples came together, he produced a way for them to carry out the tradition. He gave them specific directions for the sacrifice of a lamb and by putting all their trust in Him, they were provided for. Out of nothing God will provide. In Jeremiah 33: 10-16, in the desolate towns of Judah and wastelands of Judah, God restored the good fortunes of the uninhabited, desolate and the streets of Jerusalem.

God creates times for humans to form strong bonds with each other because this journey is not just our own. Whether it's going to church on the Sabbath as described in Leviticus 23: 1-8, coming together for a Passover as seen in Luke, or bringing together a new group of people like in Jeremiah, God creates numerous opportunities to find community. God gives everything we need.

By trusting in the Lord I can let go of my fears and stress and focus on living my life through God. He gives me everything that I need and supplies me with abundance. Abundance in community and in every other aspect of life.



Emily Stankaitis is on the executive board for LSM, a member of Intervarsity, hand bell choir, symphonic band and wind ensemble, and on the girl's lacrosse team. Her major is currently undecided.

Sunday March 28

Daily Scriptures:

Luke 19:28-40

Philippians 2:5-11

Isaiah 50:4-9a

As a little girl, I remember learning a bible lesson about the Armor of God. I was taught that as Christ followers we needed to put on the "Breastplate of Righteousness", the "Belt of Truth", and so on. As a Sunday school student I remember being so excited to dress up in cardboard battle gear marching around in circles waving my sword for Christ; I now fully understand the importance of that lesson. When we declare that we are Christ followers, and submit our lives to the Lord, immediately a huge red "target" sign seems to appear on our back. A fired up believer is a serious threat to Satan, so bad situations and serious problems creep into our lives, and challenge our faith. Often times, believers falter or give up. But as Christ followers it is our job to press on. Fighting the battle of the Lord is no easy job; things will get hard at times, and sometimes it will seem as though there is no way out. The enemy will attack from all sides weakening our defenses but with the Armor of God we will not fall.

Isaiah reminds us that when the enemy does attack- which he will, the Lord is forever by our side. As a follower of Christ we must not run for cover, and hide from our problems; but we must journey into the storm with one hand on our sword and the other intertwined with God's. No problem is too big for the Lord, and with him in our corner, we have nothing to fear.

Ebony Bradley is a freshman Spanish major at Susquehanna. She is a member of Acts 29 and she is in the application process for the 2010 Resident Assistant program. Ebony is also in the process of starting a Gospel Choir on campus. She is from Reading, PA where she attends Spring Valley Church of God.

Monday March 29

Daily Scriptures:
Hebrews 9:11-15
John 12:1-11

Isaiah 42:1-9

Each election season, I quickly grow disgusted with the television and radio ads. Rarely can candidates stick to extolling their own virtues. Rather, it becomes about defaming the competition. It's a game that no one wins. Perhaps it's my affinity for underdogs, but I tend to feel more empathy for the slandered than the one who "approves this message."

How nice it would be to hear a calm voice, speaking only truth and justice, without harm to others. Isaiah describes the servant as just such a candidate:

A bruised reed he will not break,
And a dimly burning wick he will not quench;
He will faithfully bring forth justice.

It is not force and show, after all, which accomplish the most, but gentle, steady commitment. So it is with our faith. May we continue in our quiet way to establish justice in God's creation.

Erin Hayes is a 2003 graduate of Susquehanna. As a student, she was active in Chapel Council, Tuesday Night Watch, and the Handbell Choir. She currently serves as the Assistant Director of Financial Aid.



Tuesday March 30

Daily Scriptures:
Isaiah 49:1-7
1 Corinthians 1:18-31

John 12:20-36

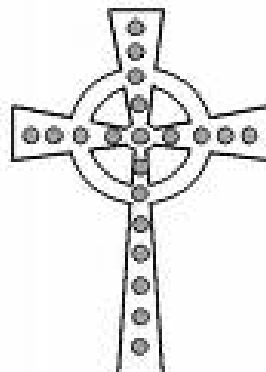
We all wonder how power exists in this world, especially those in college who are trying to attain it. The one who has the power is then in control. There are now some places and things that we can point to as having power. Money, popularity, and strength are all usually entangled with power. Yet, those who are in control of power determine how to unleash it. Echoed through the verses are the inferences of who these are and where the power lies.

In John, the Gospel writer accounts Jesus telling people that if one wishes to live, they must hate their life in this world. Right after this, Jesus says that his servants must follow and be with him wherever he is (12:25-26). Taking these two statements, Jesus then talks of his crucifixion. So, as shocking it was for Jesus' audience, so it tends to be for us: if I am to live, I must be crucified. But this makes utter nonsense! To be with my powerful savior, I need to be humiliated? Declared an enemy of the state? Die? Paul confronts this confusion by explaining God calls the foolish to shame the wise. Now we see that the power of God is in opposition to the powers of this world and know that this power is greater, though it seems it isn't.

We know this is a powerful hidden force when we see Isaiah in the second verse talk of his mouth like a sharp sword hidden and a polished arrow in the quiver. God's best weapons plucked from the deeply despised and abhorred by the nations.

Yet God startles us again by these weapons used as flashlights so that God's salvation might reach the whole Earth. Jesus calls us to the service of God so that we might carry the light of God's bizarre and radical love in the face of Evil.

Paul Tomkiel is a junior who is majoring in Religion and Economics. He is highly involved in activities on campus and hopes to attend Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago sometime in the next three years.



Wednesday March 31

Daily Scriptures:
Psalm 70
Hebrews 12:1-3

John 31:21-32

As the disciples are relaxing, having just had their feet washed by Christ, Jesus tells them that one of them will betray him. They don't believe this and question Christ about the identity of the betrayer. The disciples hear the ensuing conversation between Jesus and Judas but do not understand.

Men judge other men by outward appearances; Judas was the keeper of the common purse and the disciples assume that the conversation was about money. But God sees into a man's heart. Jesus knew that Judas had given in to Satan and that he would betray Christ; Jesus just asks Judas do it quickly.

Throughout history, God picked men by looking into their hearts (Joseph, David, etc.). Christ cured the sick, the lame, the blind by looking into their hearts and seeing the good in them and bringing that out in them.

As we arrive at the final events of Christ's ministry and the beginning of Christ's suffering (just as depicted in this passage), we need to examine our own heart. Would Christ look into our hearts and see good? And then heal us. Are we ready to accept Christ or are we like Judas and being swayed by our sinfulness? We might be able to fool others, but God knows what is in our hearts and we cannot escape this.

Now is the time to be ready.

Dr. James Pomykalski is an Associate Professor of Information Systems in the Sigmund Weis School of Business and the Director of the University Honors Program. He is a practicing, life-long Catholic and an active parishioner of St Pius X in Selinsgrove. Dr. Pomykalski serves on the parish council and is a member of the Knights of Columbus.

Thursday April 1

Daily Scriptures:

Exodus 12:1-14

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

John 13: 1-17, 31b-35

For as long as I can remember, my church's Maundy Thursday service has included a footwashing rite. And for as long as I can remember, I've been coming up with excuses to not come forward and have my pastor wash my feet. (It's a completely voluntary thing: you don't have to have your feet washed if you don't want to.) I understand the reasoning behind it, but I've never been comfortable with footwashing, either having my feet washed or washing someone else's feet. The whole thing just feels weird to me, and, like I said, I'm very uncomfortable with it.

The thing is, Jesus tells his disciples "Love one another," not "love one another – but only as far as you're comfortable." I know this is almost a cliché, but shortly after John tells us about Jesus washing the disciples' feet, Jesus went to Gethsemane knowing that he'd be arrested, tried, beaten, and crucified, which is, from what I understand, a horrible way to die. "Uncomfortable" doesn't even begin to describe what Jesus went through on that first Good Friday, but he still did it.

How often do we have the opportunity to help someone, whether by volunteering our time, or simply by donating money and helping to support others? And how often do we pass that opportunity by because we'd feel uncomfortable, or we're scared to? I can only speak for myself, but I'd have to answer that question by saying "Way too often." So I'm going to try to change that, at least for myself. I'm going to do my best to love everyone, and to show my love to everyone, no matter how much it scares me or how far out of my comfort zone it takes me. It's not going to be easy, I'm sure, but I know God will be there to help me with it.

Kyle Crouthamel is the president of Chapel Council, and is a member of most of the religious life organizations on campus. He's also a member of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia fraternity and the University Choir, which means that, for someone who's not a music major, Kyle spends a lot of his free time singing. (When he's not trying to get everything done so that he can graduate in May, that is!)

Friday April 2

Daily Scriptures:
Psalm 22
Hebrews 10:16-25

John 18:1-19:42

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.” These words from the book of Hebrews strike a resonant chord for me about the possibility we have for influencing one another’s behavior.

The capacity to be our best and to move towards love and good deeds is enhanced when we are touched, inspired or even spurred by the acts of others. One of the great teachers in my life was Dr. Harvey Potthoff, a distinguished theologian and president emeritus of the Iliff School of Theology. I met him as a student at “my Susquehanna” --Nebraska Wesleyan University -- in a course he titled Aging, Dying and Death. I was struck immediately by his boundless and rich mind, his gentleness, his joy for living, and his ability to see beauty in all living beings and in the face of nature. He inspired me and others to embrace love and good deeds.

More than 20 years later, I learned about one of the inspirations in Professor Potthoff’s life. Early in his academic career, he studied for a time at Harvard with Alfred North Whitehead, mathematician and philosopher. Potthoff wrote in 1936 that “Whitehead never seems to doubt the marvel and wonder of the universe and his whole soul is wrapped up in the effort to know it better and to be worthy of it. He shows in his life just how beautiful and interesting life can be. I hope that I shall always be able to preserve some of the glow coming from his personality.”

My classmates and I shared that same sentiment about Harvey Potthoff. He inspired and spurred us through his intellect and his celebration of the beauty and gift of life. I pray all students might have a Whitehead or a Potthoff in their lives to bask in the glow and to move them toward love and good deeds.

Jay Lemons is a native Nebraskan and has served Susquehanna since 2001.

Saturday April 3

Daily Scriptures:

Ezekiel 36:24-28

John 20:1-18

Romans 6:3-11

In Romans 6, Paul explains his deep theology about the symbolism of our baptism and how it connects to Jesus' death on the cross. Paul uses imagery that one typically doesn't think of when one conceptualizes baptism. Baptism is death. When we were baptized, we all died to the power of sin. In the words of one of my respected Religion professors, "Dead people can't sin!" It's true! You don't see Lincoln walking around causing mischief do you? In the early church and in some denominations today, baptism involved full immersions of the participants. In this practice, one can see the symbolism of drowning the human sinful part of one's self and emerging into a new life with Christ. As the baptized individuals emerged from the water they breathed in the Holy Spirit, which provided much more than oxygen ever could and signified the start of their new life in God. Through baptism we become united with Christ. The choice to die with someone in order to live a new life is the strongest sign of loyalty and faith I can imagine. We become forever bonded with Jesus through death. Therefore we become united with him in his new life. When we were baptized, we handed our lives over to Jesus. He made a colossal sacrifice for us on the cross in order that we might be free from sin so we can live a life fully devoted to God. As Easter approaches just beyond the horizon, let us be thankful for the sacrifice that Jesus made for us and let us be mindful of the promise we made to him through our baptisms. Amen.

Karen Ward is a junior Religion major with a women's studies minor. She is very active in religious life at SU and is the Deacon of Service for the Chaplain's office. In her free time she likes to sing and spend time with her friends. She just recently returned from a mission trip in Liberia where she worked in a woman literacy-empowerment program.

Sunday April 4

Daily Scriptures:

Acts 10:34-43

1 Corinthians 15:19-26

Luke 24:1-12

Celebrate! Jesus Is Risen!

The sounds of “alleluias” echo throughout churches everywhere. Today is a very exciting day! We have to celebrate! So we deck the church with flowers and get in our best dress, make special breakfasts and look forward to seeing all those we haven’t seen since Christmas. Because why would we think about celebrating Jesus on any other day. I mean, he was born and that’s very exciting. Then he went and rose from the dead and that’s a miracle, so of course we need to celebrate that. But every other Sunday, he’s just some dude that walked around talking about God and how important it is to take care of one another. No big deal right? Wrong! We do celebrate today because Jesus did more than be born and die. He lived a life worthy of replication! He begged us to serve one another and wash each other’s feet. He calls us to care for those who are weaker and he asks us to love one another. So we do celebrate. We celebrate that Jesus is alive in each of us. We celebrate that his rising reminds us of our call to serve the world. We celebrate that the Spirit is alive and moving in this and every place. And we celebrate that we get to call Jesus our Lord and Savior every single day, not just on Christmas or Easter.

So celebrate! Tell the world! Jesus is risen today and everyday!

Chelsea Miller is a senior Religion major with minors in Women’s Studies and Ancient Greek. She serves as the Deacon of Spiritual Nurture and loves that she gets to talk about emotions all the time.



Susquehanna
UNIVERSITY

Edited by Chelsea Miller

1858 Weber Way

Selinsgrove, PA 17870