

CENTENNIAL HOTSPOT

Centennial Presbyterian Church
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MINISTER'S MUSINGS

March 6 is the **first Sunday** of Lent. Forty days crossed by six Sundays, beginning in Ashes and ending in resurrection joy. Why 40 days? Well, the number 40 is certainly in the Bible: Israel spent 40 years in the wilderness learning to trust God. Elijah spent 40 days in the wilderness before hearing the still, small, voice of God on the same mountain where Moses spent 40 days listening to God give the law. Then we have Luke's own story of Jesus' spending 40 days in the wilderness.

And what is that wilderness? The Greek word for wilderness used in this passage is *eremos*, and it literally means uninhabited, a place with no human population. The emphasis is not so much on the terrain of the landscape as it is on the solitary quality of the landscape.

And with Covid-19 many people probably feel they are in a similar place. A place where they are stuck. A place where they feel fruitless. A place where life is on hold. And it can feel like time is just being wasted. And the isolation is certainly wilderness-like.

Yet, what is important to understand when it comes to the wilderness time, is that this is not lost time. God uses wilderness time to refine His people. In fact, there are some lessons that are best learned in the wilderness. The wilderness is where David learned to become a leader of men. The wilderness is where Paul came to a fuller understanding of the gospel. The wilderness is where the children of Israel learned about the importance of faith. The wilderness is where Moses was humbled enough to become a servant. The wilderness was where Jesus faced and overcame temptation. Wilderness time is not lost time; it is time when God can do a deeper work in our lives if we are open to His guidance. What is God doing in such times? He is revealing our hearts. He is providing for us and reassuring us of his goodness. He is forming us as his children.

We observe Lent because Jesus entered the wilderness long before us and we're chasing after — hoping, expecting, to meet God there. To meet Jesus there. God with us. So, if you come to Lent this year already overwhelmed by the wilderness, without strength enough to give something up or take something up. Don't. Instead allow yourself to be taken up by your fellow wanderers in the wilderness. Let the faith and velocity of the church around you carry you. Find ways to be together as we slowly get back to the church. And if you find yourself already buoyed up, already carried, with energy to do — by all means don't keep it to yourself. Reach out in faith, hope and love to others around you. Especially those who may be feeling without the capacity to reach out on their own. And let's journey through the wilderness together.



PRAYER CALENDAR

If you have any prayer concerns that arise, please contact the office and we can include these in our prayer chain. If you would like to be part of our prayer chain, please contact the office and have your name added to the list. Updates will be given via text or email as is suitable for you.

Do you wonder how you can reach out to others in the congregation? Every day on the prayer calendar is a person or family to pray for that day. Look them up in the directory and give them a quick call to say hello! It's a small gesture that could go a long way.

NOTES FROM THE LOFT



The style most often associated with early Christian music is that of the chant. While often denoted as a "Gregorian chant," Gregory was actually rather late on the scene, as these chants were already being used long before he lent his name to them. This involved a layered recitation based on a scale pattern and hexachords.

However, the psalms were likely more musical, as the writers were known to use instruments, and several of the psalms themselves specify the instrument for which they were written. This would indicate the use of melody, which surely carried through to the early worshippers.

It is important to note, that by the early years of the Common Era, before 300 AD, many musical instruments were considered to be linked to "sensual heathen cults" and therefore were forbidden in churches of the time.

Carla Zacharias
Music Team Leader

SESSION NOTES

We are back to in-person Services as of February 20th. It was a very cold, snowy day but 20 persons were in attendance for the morning service.

Several items were discussed at our last meeting with the following decisions:

- All Anon and approved outside groups can now begin to use the building again.
- Bulletins can be put on the table at the back of the sanctuary. Will not be handed out.
- Coffee fellowship following the service is not approved yet. Hopefully by April 3rd after our next meeting.
- As of March 1st, masks will not be required but are still preferred.
- As of March 1st, social distancing will not be required but some pews may still be blocked off depending on attendance.
- Children will continue to go downstairs for Sunday School upon arrival. This will be reviewed at our next meeting in March.
- The May 4th Family Night can proceed with only governmental restrictions current at the time being enforced.

Our next Communion Service is planned for April 3rd and then on Easter Sunday, April 17th.

A video camera has been purchased and will be set up to record our live services for those unable to attend.

Okelo has returned from a trip to Ethiopia where he was able to meet family and met with the orphans we have supported in the past.

Doug Bonar
Clerk of Session

PEWS NEWS

Birthdays to celebrate in March and April!

March 8, Shirley Mittoo; March 9, Romeo Enyeawah; March 11, Shirley Bates; March 13, Kyrie Kiplagat; March 17, Bunglingo Ogwok

April 1, Nyagoyini Changach; April 4, Nyajab Changach; April 5, Krystal Oben; April 6, Josh Flim; April 13, Bernadette Fonmedig (Muma); April 14, Olive Lewis; April 15, Rameses Rivera; April 23, Velma Smith; April 27, Curtis Chesami

Anniversaries to celebrate in March and April!

March 22, Doug & Carla Zacharias (19 years); March 31, Gavin & Madison Mahabir (4 years)

April 27, Eric & Marie Gichuki

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 8 Worship Committee 4:00pm Zoom

March 16 FISH Network 7:00 pm Zoom

March 29 Session, 7:00 pm

Newsletters will continue to be emailed, for those who do not have email addresses or have not provided one a physical copy of the newsletter will be mailed.

May newsletter deadline is April 27.

FROM THE OFFICE

Vacation: Carla Zacharias will be away from March 24—April 11, visiting Doug in Abu Dhabi. As a result there will be no April newsletter.

Office Hours:

Rev. Kim's office hours: Tuesday—Friday, 10:00—4:00

Carla will be in the church office Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:00—12:00 and Fridays from 9:30—12:00.

If you have **upcoming birthdays and anniversaries** you would like us to celebrate as we do every Sunday, please send the dates to office@centennialchurch.ca or call Carla Zacharias and we will get them in for celebrating.



The FISH NETWORK

Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. Ephesians 4:15-16

FISH Network: Friendship Inspiration Sharing Hospitality

At our February **FISH Network** meeting, discussion included the possibility of resuming our Family Nights – this will be confirmed after consulting with Session. Discussion also included congregation engagement and reaching out to post secondary institutions to welcome students (and faculty) to Centennial Presbyterian. We would like to reach out to out-of-province/city students and invite to join in worship at Centennial Presbyterian. Discussion topics also included providing students with an opportunity to intern as a youth leader with us, and to reach out in **friendship** and extend **hospitality** by hosting Christmas dinner (it's never too early to think about Christmas or other occasions!) for those who do not have family close by.

As always, we encourage you to stay connected with one another -- while at church and in between times. Call someone. Send texts and emails. Make a connection. It will be welcomed. Do not think of it as you are bothering someone! Our annual report church directory is a great reference for phone numbers. If you do not have an electronic or hard copy of the directory, please call the church (403 285-7144). Reach out in **friendship**.

Please feel welcome to contact our **FISH Network** -- Annie Edie, Carla Zacharias, Israel Ayongwa, Jean Tupper, Jin Woo Kim, Phyllis Russell, Shirley Watts, Simon DeVries. If you are uncertain how to reach us, please call Centennial Presbyterian Church (403 285-7144) or reference your annual report church directory.

Experience the joy of **FISH: Friendship, Inspiration, Sharing, Hospitality**.

The Fish Network



