



Grace Church of West Feliciana Parish

"A loving congregation seeking unity with God and each other in Christ"

Newsletter

February 11 & 18, 2018

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Restraint, Withhold, Reserve

I don't like stop signs, especially the ones that tell me I can't turn right on red. I see the value of these restraining symbols, but I resent having to slow down or come to a complete stop. Life is too busy for anything that would place limitations on my way of doing things. The rational side of me knows that without traffic signs we would have chaos in our streets and highways. The emotional side of me, however, secretly wishes I could have a gadget installed in my car that would turn all red lights green.

Lent is like a spiritual traffic sign that invites us to stop and prepare for the green light of Easter. During Lent the Collects in the Book of Common Prayer, the Lectionary readings, and the hymns we sing invite us to make an assessment of our lives, to identify areas where change is needed, and to repent for the many times in our lives when we have acted contrary to God's will. The collect for Ash Wednesday puts it this way, "Create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, worthily lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of you, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness..." This sentiment is echoed by the collect for the First Sunday of Lent, when we ask God to "Come quickly to help us who are assaulted by many temptations; and, as you know the weaknesses of each of us, let each one find you mighty to save..." In Lent we acknowledge that God is the one who makes new hearts and gives us the strength to resist the many temptations that assault us daily.

The assessment of life Lent asks us to do requires that we do a few things differently during the season. This year I invite us all to restrain our tongue, withhold judgement, and reserve time for God and others. Some of the synonyms for restrain are "keep under control, check, curb, and suppress." (Dictionary.com). When I say "restrain our tongue" I am really saying that we will try very hard to adopt a kinder speech. Sarcasm, negative comments, self-deprecating jokes, put downs, speaking about people's shortcomings rather than their positive attributes, and unkind criticisms are all part of the speech I invite all of us to avoid during Lent. If we are to give something up, let it be unkindness and lack of civility in our speech.

Restrain and *withhold* are closely related, but I am thinking of a different meaning for *withhold*. Let us withhold our tendency to rush to judgement until we have obtained all the facts about a particular situation. There are times when it is appropriate to form an opinion or judgement about a situation (politics, the economy, various public figures), but these must be based on well-researched facts. When it comes to our brothers and sisters, even if our original suspicions are proven right, let us vow to withhold judgement and to treat others with the same grace and compassion we desire for ourselves.

I am using *reserve* as set-aside, carve-out, and save. Our lives are so extremely busy that there is little time for God and others. Let us vow this Lent to set-aside at least 20 minutes daily to pray, at least one hour weekly to read Holy Scripture, and at least one hour a week to connect with friends and relatives from whom we have become separated or isolated. I often find that many people, myself included, often suffer from a lack of connectedness. Distance among people can grow so easily. It often starts slowly (we just don't see people as often as we used to), but overtime this distance becomes more pronounced. Many of us have brothers and sisters with whom we haven't spoken in years. Let us vow to make this season of Lent a time of connectedness and community with those people God has placed in our lives and with God.

Pray that we may give-up negative speech and judgment and that we may add prayer and connectedness to our life. These are small changes than can make a world of difference as we prepare for the Risen Christ at Easter. Blessings, Fr. Roldan+

What Happened? Over the weekend of February 2-4th, I had the privilege of watching three of our high school youth experience Happening #80. I can't give away too much as those who haven't "Happened" yet will get to in the future and much of the weekend is meant to be a surprise for them. However, Happening weekend is an entirely youth-led weekend sponsored by the Diocese of Louisiana for high school aged youth. The youth are supported by clergy and adult lay leaders, but they plan it, run it, and are the support network for those that are Happening that weekend. It's open to all high-schoolers, not just Episcopalians, and allows the youth to experience their faith and further their spiritual journey with the support of other youth leaders who have already "Happened." Without giving away too much detail, I was able to see three of our young leaders tackle the tough questions of faith, confront their experiences in today's world living each day at a fast pace, dealing with peer pressure, school, home, family and friends, and then reconciling all those realities with what it means to live God's call. They learned more about how to accept, lean into God's love and peace, and the importance of sharing that love with those around them.

Happening is an emotional weekend full of questions, reflection, reconciliation, and hopefully for each youth, peace. But even more it's a weekend where our youth today can share and experience in God's love in a protected space, where they have clergy and lay leaders, both youth and adult, to help them understand their feelings. It may sound sappy, but as one who got to "Happen" along with our three high schoolers, it's a highly rewarding, and in my opinion, much needed weekend to slow down and appreciate what God has provided us. I invite all high school aged youth, whether you are youth group members or not (which you should be; we have a lot of fun 😊) to join us at Happening #81, September 14th - 16th, 2018. It's an experience you'll never forget, just ask those who have Happened. Thank you, Meg

Mark your calendar with these exciting youth group events!

- ◆ **Tuesday, February 13th:** Experience a New Roads Mardi Gras with St. Paul's/Holy Trinity in New Roads! We will join St. Paul's/Holy Trinity to watch the two parades. If you need a ride, please let Ms. Meg know by Friday, 2/9, 5 p.m. We will meet at Grace at 9:15 a.m. and return following the last parade.
- ◆ **Wednesday, February 14th:** We will attend Ash Wednesday services and then begin our Lenten discussion. We will be doing the same Bible Study that Fr. Roldan will be teaching, however, at a youth level. Open to all 6th–12th graders. I hope you can join us.
- ◆ **Sunday, February 18th:** Service day with West Feliciana Food Pantry. We will be helping the food pantry to bag rice. Please come to the 10 a.m. service. We will stay for coffee hour and lunch and then head to the Food Pantry at 12:15 p.m. Following our service day, we will have youth group.
- ◆ **Wednesday, February 21st:** No evening youth group, it will be held on Sunday, Feb 18th.

Intercessory prayers are asked for Grace Church members who are ill:

Thomas Kendrick, Jason Kennedy, Tom Morris, Eric Nelson, Sara Nelson, Olivia Pass, Kay Tengler, Wendell Wade, David Walker, Pam Willson, Jake Wray, Madeline Wright.

Birthdays

Penny Reinhardt-Feb. 11; Elizabeth Feirn, Davis Bankston, John Moss-Feb. 12; Elizabeth David, Kay Tengler-Feb. 13; David Opperman, Paula Finley -Feb. 14; Logan Reinhardt, Richard Kendrick-Feb. 15; Chris Betz, James Kane, Melissa Dowd-Feb. 18; Bill McClendon -Feb. 19; Tyler Ferris-Feb. 20; John McGehee, Libby Dart,-Feb. 21; Lauri Dooley-Feb. 23; Rosalie Raymond, Stephanie Ferguson, Merrick Lambert-Feb. 24.

Wedding

Anniversaries

Dwight & Martha Singer-Feb. 20; Lin & Carlin Kendrick-Feb. 23.

Other persons prayers are asked for:

Sister Abigail, Claiborne Arbuthnot, Charles Barham, Micaela Kell Bennett, Isabella Bertucci, Leslie Bickham, Phillip Bowen, Ben Brown, Steve Brown, Willie Bryant, Randy Bryant, Jenny Clark, Kitty Claus, Bob Crowley, Sandy Davenport, Kathleen Davis, Debbie Desmar, Helen Deselles, Cathy Doslovic, Molly Douglas, Amy Dwyer, Mark Ellison, Jennifer Erickson, Mark Feltner, Dennis Flynn, Matthew Gill, Roy Hardin, Parke Henderson, Wayne Hudnall, Joel James, Michelle Jean-sonne, Jill Joffrion, Henry Jones, Mary Jo Kaly, Jody Lemoine, Bob Lewis, Jessica Liddle, Max, Ralph McKenzie, Laine Martrain, Kathy Drew Matter, Mary Anne McCrory, Ruby McKee, Bennie McNeely, Robin Michel, Bill Miller, Jimmy Mitchell, Rusty Melton, Randall Nachman, Barton Platte, Susanna Prescott, Susan Pray, Jeanette Rackley, Carol Ratcliff, Tammy Riggs, Stephen Seale, Gwin Shanks, Kaizlyn Shockley, Cade Stapleton, Roland Touns, Denham Turner, Rufus Yerger.

Those serving in the armed forces: Parker Blanche, Amanda Browning, Jay Christopher, Ryan Coacher, Ben Colia, John Davis, Joseph Dooley, Bryan Geltz, Edward Jenkins, Laura Latson, Shawn Lemons, Terry Palmer, James Powers, Jeff Ragusa, Christopher Willis, Matthew Young, Aaron Zuccro, 745th & 746th Exped Squads, 379th & 926th Exped. Support Squads.

Your prayers are asked for the family of Frances Merritt, mother of Lynn Gaudet, who died on February 26. The funeral will be held in Texas. Final arrangements are pending.

The Church Office will be closed for Mardi Gras, February 13th.

Ash Wednesday Services: We will have services at 7:00am, 10:00am (Preschool service), and 5:15pm. The first and third services will include Holy Communion. The children's service will be no longer than 15 minutes and it will be more informal. Please make plans to join us.

The Conundrum Book Store will have for sale copies of the Lenten Bible Study Book "The Lord is Our Salvation" starting on Ash Wednesday, February 14. For this class you also need to bring your Bible. Please sign the list in the Narthex if you will be attending this Bible Study so we know how to set up the room.

Church Mice will return on February 14 at 6:15pm: We are very excited about the return of Church Mice on Ash Wednesday. Church Mice is for children Pre-K through 5th grade. Contact Meg at 635-4065 if you would like to help supervise or teach a lesson.

Lenten Bible Study: "A God on the Side of Sinners: Reflections on the Parables of Luke Chapter 15" will be taught by the Rector every Wednesday of Lent at 6:00pm. Please join us for a light soup and salad meal and the study. Sign up in the Narthex. Invite friends.

St. John's Church will celebrate the Eucharist on Sunday, February 18 at 7:00am.

Altar Flowers/Greenery are needed: Altar Greenery is needed for Feb. 25, March 18, flowers are needed for May 27, July 1, 8, 29, November 18, 25. The Sanctuary Candle sign up list has been filled. Please call the church office if you want to sign up for one of these dates.

Coffee Hour: If you would like to help with Coffee Hour on a Sunday, there will be a sign up list in the Narthex this Sunday and it will be passed around during the Annual Meeting later Sunday. This will help our Monthly Chairs fill their Sundays and share the responsibilities. All that is needed on a Sunday are cookies, coffee, orange juice or other light refreshments.

The Vestry will meet on Tuesday, February 20 at 5:30 pm.

Congratulations to our new Vestry members who were elected at the Annual Meeting on January 28 for a three year term: Dr. Pat Schneider, Drew Nordgren and Dr. Tom Flynn. Welcome to Missy Higgins who will be our new treasurer; Glenn Thomas has retired after many years of service. Thank you, Missy and Glenn, for your ministry.

Welcome to our newest member James Nelson Whatley, son of Dr. Adam and Carly Whatley, who was baptized on January 28th at our 10am Eucharist.

The ECW "No Bake-Bake Sale" will be Sunday, February 28 to raise money for the construction of a Youth Center at our Solomon Conference Center in Loranger, Louisiana. Instead of baking a cake, the ECW wants you to donate \$10.00 for your "no bake, no calories" cake for this project of the ECW in the Diocese. Letters will go out this week and you can mail your donation in the envelope provided with the letter or drop it in the offering plate at church. Make checks to Grace ECW, in the memo line put "No Bake Sale" and mail to Sharon Gauthier, P. O. Box 668, St. Francisville. Thank you for your support for a Youth Center at SECC becoming a reality soon.

Grace Church
of West Feliciana Parish
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Sunday Ministry Assistants & Calendar

Sunday February 11, 2018

Acolytes: Paul Opperman, Mathilda Fox-Smith,
Fiona Tully, Charles Fox-Smith
Chalice bearers: 7:30am: Bryan McClendon
10am: Maria Gerry, Sara Klein
Ushers: Rob Reinhart, Joe Savell
Lectors: Rachel Howell, Dixie Blue
Vestry Rep: Leslie Daniel
Altar Guild Team 1
Altar Flowers: Ronnie and Pat Martin
Sanctuary Candle: Tapper and Betty Sessions
Coffee Hour: Leslie and Edward Daniel
Babysitters: Sarah Roldan, Marleigh Jaehnel

Sunday, February 18, 2018

Acolytes: Paul Opperman, Elizabeth Hughes,
Lilly Higgins, Clara Jane Hughes
Chalice bearers 7:30am: Carol Stamey
10:00pm: Rucker Leake, Mark Mulkey
Ushers: Dwight Singer, Robert Singer
Lectors: Ellen Klein, Rucker Leake
Vestry Rep: Sue Steib
Altar Guild Team 2
Altar Greenery: Bill and Genie McClendon
Sanctuary candle: Penny and Don Reinhardt
Coffee Hour: Miles and Missy Higgins
Babysitters: Shelby Griffin, Landry Higgins

February 11, 2018

7:30am - Holy Eucharist
Bible Study
10:00am - Holy Eucharist
Coffee Hour

February 18, 2018

7:30am - Eucharist
(Grace and St. John's)
Bible Study
10:00am - Holy Eucharist
Coffee Hour

Ash Wednesday, February 14

7:00am - Eucharist
5-7pm - Youth Group
5:15pm - Eucharist
6:00pm - Supper & Lenten Bible Study
6:15pm - Church Mice

Thursday, February 15

9:15am - Morning Prayer
10:00am - Worship: SF Country Manor

Friday, February 16

7:00am - Eucharist
8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study

Sunday, February 18

7:30am - Eucharist (Grace & St. John's)
9:15am - Bible Study
10:00am - Holy Eucharist
Coffee Hour

12:15pm - Youth Group Service Day

Wednesday, February 21

9:00am - Lenten Bible Study
5-7pm - **No Youth Group**
5:15pm - Eucharist
6:00pm - Supper & Lenten Bible Study

Thursday, February 8

9:15am - Morning Prayer
10:00am - Worship: SF Country Manor