

## Main Identity

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**From:** <pastor@calvarypresbychurch.org>  
**To:** <friends@calvarypresbychurch.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 09, 2010 9:43 PM  
**Subject:** Chocolate Newsblast

No intro here. No warm fuzzies. Just a LISTEN TO ME!! HEAR ME NOW OR LISTEN TO ME LATER!!!!!!

You have reminded me of the reality that few – and perhaps that is too many – people actually read all the way through an email from the pastor of the church they attend regularly or irregularly. It is one reason that I find great joy in leaving the jokes until last [NO! Don't zoom to the end! No joke awaits you. I am too much of a Zen kind of guy for that!]

Golly! So here we are, you and me, on a cold Tuesday night on the eve of the big storm, wondering what tomorrow's weather will bring. Or, rather, not caring much because we will find out tomorrow and tomorrow will be soon enough. Besides, I really do have more important things to talk with you about this evening, Theophilus.

What do I mean? I mean that Lent is coming. Just a week away. . . Ash Wednesday. The beginning of the beginning of something great. You can feel it, I know.

I won't beat around the bush or anything like that. Here's the deal – Lise Worthington, a friend, a chef, a DMin candidate at Hebrew Union, a candidate for ordination, and all that fancy stuff, will be joining us for service this Sunday. YOU DO NOT WANT TO MISS IT! If you have other plans, cancel them. YOU DO NOT WANT TO MISS THIS SUNDAY!

I know, I know . . . I'm subtle.

Briefly, here are other Lent things:

Praying through Lent with heart, Soul, Mind and Body is the snazzy name for the Lenten Devotional Guide published by that august group at Presbyterians Today [Not to be confused with Presbyterians Yesterday or Presbyterians Tomorrow [thanks to the frozenness of chosenness, you may deem them to be fresh enough for Todayness. But who knows?]] It is a great guide. My personal challenge to you is this – take this guide seriously for the next 40 days, do what it says or suggests with your whole heart, and see if it has “changed” your way of seeing. If it has not, burn it and never do a devotional again. If it does/has, step into the River and let go. I'll give you the guide at service on Sunday. If you're not there, I will mail it to you with the same challenge. Give out of your scarcity – give of your time and talent . . . try it! If it doesn't work, you'll get double your money back!

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, February 17th. As we did last year, we'll host an Ash Wednesday service at 7:30 p.m. and begin together this important time of self-examination that leads to rebirth at Easter. We receive the sign of the cross on our foreheads to focus our attention on who we really are.

Ash Wednesday Retreat, for women will be hosted by the Presbytery from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Stony Point Center. Led by The Rev. Nancy Asbury the retreat's theme is Praying Through Lent with Heart, soul, Mind and Body. Bring a sandwich; beverages, fruit, and cookies will be provided.

The annual Community Lenten Series will run for six weeks, February 17 through March 24. The half-hour service which begins at 12 Noon each Wednesday is Hosted by Grace United Methodist Church at 468 Broadway. A luncheon follows. The year's theme is Finding Hope in Troubled Times. Here's a list of the dates, topics and speakers:

- February 17th - Looking at the Heart, Rabbi Larry Friedman, Temple Beth Jacob
- February 24th - Listening, the Rev. Dr. Coleman Briggs, New Hope Baptist Church
- March 3rd - Non-Conformity, the Rev. Dale Ellen Krazmien, Gardnertown United Methodist Church
- March 10th - Caring for Each Other, the Rev. Deborah Dresser, St. George's Episcopal Church
- March 17th - Doing what God is Calling You to Do, The Rev. Byron Williams, Baptist

Temple.

March 24th - Seeing Christ at Work, the Rev. Steve Ruelke, Calvary Presbyterian Church

If you're a member of Session, Deacons, the GodTalk crowd, Circle of Conversation, or someone I've drawn a bead on, I'll have a copy of Diane Butler Bass's book Christianity for the Rest of Us for you on Sunday.

We're going to read it between now and Pentecost Sunday. Yes – WE! The truth is that you and I and we are called now to become and to be. We need to refocus and rededicate ourselves and to step out there beyond the now and all that Occidental crap [can a pastor say that?] and be . . . and then do.

You see, we are the ones we have been waiting for. You do, don't you?

Good! Great actually!

So here, Theophilus, we are at this week's gospel lesson [at Lise's request, we're doing the whole – beyond Transfiguration – gospel section].

Luke 9:28-43

28Now about eight days after these sayings Jesus took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. 29And while he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became dazzling white. 30Suddenly they saw two men, Moses and Elijah, talking to him. 31They appeared in glory and were speaking of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. 32Now Peter and his companions were weighed down with sleep; but since they had stayed awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. 33Just as they were leaving him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three dwellings, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah" —not knowing what he said. 34While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were terrified as they entered the cloud. 35Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!" 36When the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and in those days told no one any of the things they had seen.

37On the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, a great crowd met him. 38Just then a man from the crowd shouted, "Teacher, I beg you to look at my son; he is my only child. 39Suddenly a spirit seizes him, and all at once he shrieks. It convulses him until he foams at the mouth; it mauls him and will scarcely leave him. 40I begged your disciples to cast it out, but they could not." 41Jesus answered, "You faithless and perverse generation, how much longer must I be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here." 42While he was coming, the demon dashed him to the ground in convulsions. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the boy, and gave him back to his father.

43And all were astounded at the greatness of God.

Go figure.

Where are you – where are we – in all of this?

God bless you big.

Steve