

## The Reverend's Ruminations - March 2021

"In like a lion and out like a lamb" goes the old saying. But what happens to that proverb if March comes in more like a lamb? Let's hope that the two animal metaphors are not automatically reversed! In the end, weather will be what it will be, and we will do our best to adapt—whether that means bundling up against the bitter below-zero temps of a few weeks ago, or pulling out the shorts a little earlier than expected.

As I alluded in last month's "Ruminations," this year's mid-week Lenten services are going to stay online. I know this was a disappointing decision for some, but part of what has made them such meaningful times of reflection in the past has been the opportunity for a smaller, more intimate gathering in our chapel. Even with COVID gathering restrictions being loosened a bit lately, I felt that the number of people who regularly attended in past years pointed toward an even smaller group this year, and gathering in a small space would be a risky proposition.



Ash Wednesday affirmed that the option of a virtual service can be a real blessing during these crazy times. With an extra "share" to some friends and relatives, our Ash Wednesday service enjoyed nearly 250 views on Facebook! I know that it is not ideal for everyone in the congregation because of internet access, but if there is a way I can provide a printed copy of a sermon or a DVD copy of a service, please contact the church office and we'll try to oblige.

As we move forward in our Lenten journey, our family finds itself contemplating not only a spiritual journey, but health. Despite our best efforts and an overall healthy year amid the pandemic, Ellen ended up testing positive for COVID-19 on Tuesday, February 23. She wisely chose not to attend worship the previous Sunday, so it is unlikely there is any risk to the congregation. She has not encountered any respiratory issues thus far, but has battled intermittent fevers and reports that the body aches are the worst she's experienced since undergoing chemotherapy fifteen years ago! As of this writing, Cameron and I are symptom-free, but of course will be tested after the appropriate delay in accordance with CDC guidance. My prayer for Ellen, as well as any who have (or may) contract this insidious virus, is that they feel God's presence with them even as they monitor their own symptoms, and that it quickly run its course without any lasting side effects. We must all do our part to slow the spread, so please continue your individual protective measures and get vaccinated when it is available to you!

One of our lectionary passages in March is Psalm 107. A portion of it recalls God's healing actions and offers thanksgiving for deliverance from affliction. Perhaps it can help focus our prayers during this year's Lenten journey:

*Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress;  
he sent out his word and healed them, and delivered them from destruction.  
Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love, for his wonderful works to humankind.  
And let them offer thanksgiving sacrifices, and tell of his deeds with songs of joy.*  
(Psalm 107:19-22, NRSV)

Lent helps guide us toward the joy of Christ's resurrection on Easter, but it is attained only through the forty days of his temptation, trial, and crucifixion. Stay healthy and trust that God is with us amid all the trials of life!

Yours in Christ's service,

*Rev. Cory Germain*