

# Providence Forge Presbyterian Church

## Lenten Devotional Week Six: Love

*March 21, 2021*

God gave.....for God so loved the world that he gave.....He gave life instead of death and salvation instead of judgment.

God gave at the time of creation. God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Alpha and the Omega, the one true Triune God. God gave. He gave of Himself with the gift of embodiment as He became human. God gave and he continues to give, coming to us, in our brokenness.....again and again, always coming.

During this time of Lent, we are called to see God breaking through the ordinariness of life around every corner. If we look, we see that our salvation comes to us through God's love..... God gave His Son because He loved. God gave. He gave light instead of darkness. Everyone who raises their eyes to the face of Jesus is saved from condemnation, judgment and death. Salvation starts the very moment a person look eyes and give their "yes" to God.

God's love is there for us always – it is there for all who choose to raise their eyes to the raised body on the cross. No glittering image there—only Jesus. As we draw closer to the cross may we be mindful that our response and reflection during Lent is our response to God and how he loved the world.....He gave.

*By Lisa Ballou*

# Some Small Sayings

I believe churches are meant for praising God. But so are 2AM car rides, showers, coffee shops, the gym, conversations with friends, strangers, etc. Don't let a building confine your faith because we will never change the world by just going to church, we need to BE the church.

*Author unknown*

*Submitted by Barb Lore*

The purpose of life is not to be happy. It is to be useful, to be honorable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well.

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

*Submitted by Barb Lore*

God of all time and of every place, I lay myself before you in the newness of this holy day. I thank you for the protection of holy angels and the nearness of those whom I love. Fill the hours of this day with the light from above that all I do and think and say may be useful and kind. Keep me, O Holy Spirit, from the worship of gods that are not. Through the Sacred Scriptures and blessed sacraments, give me new desire to call You my God. In the suffering and death of Jesus, enable me to accept the mysteries of this life and of that which is to come.  
Amen.

*A cut-out prayer found in Lora Binns' Bible, origin unknown*

*Submitted by Margaret Adamson*

# His Eye is on the Sparrow

It's been a year since most of our lives were turned upside down as we navigated the twists and turns of the pandemic. Who hasn't felt the weight of worry, stress, or anxiety in their lives – especially in the last year? It is something we all deal with, struggle to cope with, and wish would disappear from our lives. Corrie Ten Boom once shared this truth that is good to keep in mind. She said, “Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow, it empties today of its strength.”

Corrie Ten Boom, the Dutch watchmaker who, along with other members of her family helped many Jews escape from the Nazis in World War II. She was captured and sent to a concentration camp. Her most famous book, *The Hiding Place*, recounts her family's story and the hope she had in God while imprisoned.

In Matthew 6:26 when Jesus was talking about worry he said, “Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?” The answer to his question is an obvious “YES!” Jesus then goes on to say, “Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?”

Despite circumstances we can't fathom, Corrie's quote illustrates what Jesus is saying in these verses. Why should we allow our worries to sap the energy, joy, and strength of this day, when it accomplishes nothing for today, tomorrow, or any point in the future. Rather we should place our faith in God to bring call to our lives, infuse our days with peace and deliver us from the things that tend to weigh on us.

Lent is a time for introspection, for us to examine our lives, our relationship with Christ.. Reflecting on this scripture, I think we are called to take our worries, our anxiety and our stress to Jesus. This sentiment is beautifully captured by Civilla D. Martin in 1905 when she wrote the following lyrics to “His Eye is on the Sparrow”

*“Let not your heart be troubled,” His tender word I hear;  
And resting on His goodness, I lose my doubts and fears;  
Though by the path He leadeth, but one step I may see;  
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me;  
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me.*

**By Lisa Ballou**