



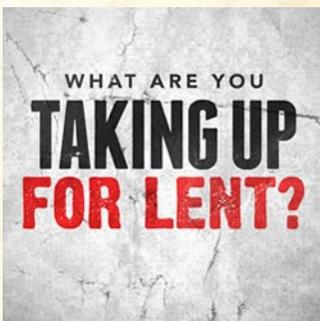
MARCH 2022 — VOLUME 53 — ISSUE 3

## WHAT ARE YOU “TAKING UP” FOR LENT?

Lent is the period of 40 days leading up to Easter during which followers of Jesus across the centuries have prepared their hearts to celebrate His resurrection. But have you ever wondered why people “give something up” for Lent? Well, it turns out that a key component of Lenten preparation has always been repentance and fasting. Turning from sin and abstaining from certain foods have been seen as one way that we can humble ourselves and identify with the sacrifice that Jesus made for us when he gave His life on the cross.

Over the years, of course, people have “fasted from” or “given up” all kinds of things. Some folks give up certain foods, like chocolate or caffeine. Others give up certain practices, like watching TV or scrolling through social media. But while there is great spiritual benefit in “giving something up” for Lent, perhaps we should devote similar attention to “taking something up” for Lent! After all, the Bible talks not only about “putting off” an old way of life, but also “putting on” a new way of life. And so, even as we give up sins like pride, anger, and greed; we’re also called to cultivate virtues like faith, hope, and love.

That’s the idea behind our pastor’s sermon series for Lent this year: “What Are You Taking Up for Lent?” By studying passages from Paul’s letters, we’ll consider the qualities of Christian character that can prepare us for Jesus’ resurrection by helping us to become more like Him. We hope that you can worship with us—especially now that the pandemic seems to be waning. And we encourage you to invite a friend, so that we can prepare together to “take up” the victory that Jesus promises to all who trust in Him.



## PANCAKE BREAKFAST



The Surry Baptist Men will host their next Pancake Breakfast in the Fellowship Hall of Calvary Baptist Church on Saturday, March 12. The event will begin at 7 o’clock in the morning and will run until approximately 10:30. All proceeds will support the Handyman Ministry, which allows the Baptist Men to share the gospel by building ramps, repairing homes, and providing other forms of assistance. Please mark your calendar and make plans to eat with us. If you have any questions, please contact Mike Francis.

# REST ~ REFLECT ~ RENEW: A CONGREGATIONAL JOURNEY

With Covid cases continuing to come down both in the US and abroad, plans are moving forward for this summer's pastoral and congregational sabbatical experience. Of course, a key part of the sabbatical—which extends from the last Sunday in May to the last Sunday in August—is the time that our pastor will have to take a break from the rigors of ministry so that he can replenish his personal, professional, and spiritual batteries. With that time, Pastor Alex will do some vacationing with his family and some touring in the United Kingdom; and you'll get to read more about his travel plans in next month's newsletter. This month, however, we want to remind you that the sabbatical is a congregational journey, too. And it will include some elements that you won't want to miss.

For starters, everyone here at Calvary will finally get to use the devotional guide to which so many people contributed when we first started planning for the sabbatical two years ago. With devotionals for every day—written by members of our congregation—the guide will allow us to encourage each other and pray for one another as we learn more about the role of rest, reflection, and renewal in the Christian life.

In addition, our church family will get to hear from several excellent guest speakers. Adam Mabry—the pastor of Alethia Church in Boston, Massachusetts, and the author of *The Art of Rest*—will join us in early June to conduct a Saturday seminar on “Finding Sabbath” and to speak about “Rest” in Sunday worship. In early July, Calvary will host Dr. Tracy Radošević—an internationally acclaimed storyteller, educator, and retreat facilitator—who will help us to “Reflect” by teaching us about the connection between God's Story and our own stories, and by sharing some biblical stories in worship. And finally, in early August, award-winning singer and songwriter Kyle Matthews will help us “Renew” our spirits with a Saturday night concert – and by sharing his musical and preaching gifts in our Sunday morning services.

Naturally, some of you might look at that list of speakers and think, “Okay, that's three Sundays. But what about the rest of the summer?” Well, we're happy to report that Dr. Roger Gilbert—the former pastor of First Baptist Church here in Mount Airy—has agreed to be our sabbatical interim pastor. Not only will he be preaching on the Sundays when we're not hosting an out-of-town guest; he'll also be available to help deal with any “pastoral emergencies” should they arise while our pastor is away.

Of course, there will also be some church-wide events and spiritual growth opportunities that will allow us to deepen our love for the Lord and to strengthen our fellowship with one another. And naturally, we'll also be getting some reports from our pastor as he takes his sabbatical journey. But as we said in last month's newsletter, what we get out of our sabbatical experience will depend a lot on what we put into it. That's why—beginning this month—you'll find a “Sabbatical Prayer Focus” in each week's Sunday bulletin. Won't you join us in prayer, asking the Lord to make this unique opportunity that He's given us a time to “Rest” for those who are weary, a time to “Reflect” on how God is at work among us, and a time to “Renew” our hearts, so that we can glorify Him and share His good news together?



## Sabbatical Q&A Sessions:

Sunday, 3/20

4 o'clock pm

&

Wednesday, 3/23

6 o'clock pm

## ENCOUNTER THE GOSPELS ON WEDNESDAY IN LENT

Did you know that if you read just three chapters a day, you can read through all four gospels in a month? That's what we're inviting you to do in the season of Lent! Join us as we read again these accounts of Jesus' life, paying special attention to the ways that He impacted others. Then, on Wednesday evenings between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday, we'll share a Bible study led by Carol Lowe in which we will discuss what they've learned and will pray for God's power to be revealed in and through us.



You can “give up” something for Lent (chocolate, coffee, technology, etc.). But why not “add” something instead? Let's read the gospels this Lenten season, and let's stretch our prayer muscles as we watch expectantly to see what God will do.

# A SABBATICAL DEVOTIONAL SAMPLE...

*We can't wait to share Calvary's "Rest ~ Reflect ~ Renew" Devotional Guide. But just to whet your appetite...*

**RESTING IN GOD'S FAITHFULNESS** by Carol Lowe (from a Visit with Marvin and Glenda Beasley)

*"Let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall" Hebrews 4:11.*

Have you ever been asked to perform a task that you felt was beyond your capabilities, or at least out of your comfort zone? What did you do? How did you handle it? How can we live out this verse in Hebrews and diligently enter the rest that only God provides, so that truly no one falls? Years ago, Marvin Beasley was faced with this very dilemma. Let's listen to his story:

"I was serving as an usher with Carl Snow and several others. This was a way of serving where I was very comfortable, and Carl had been selected to say the offertory prayer. When we got to the front of the sanctuary, Carl simply said, 'I would like to turn the honor of praying over to Marvin Beasley this morning.' There was nowhere to go and no time to hide. So I prayed a simple prayer that morning in front of the entire congregation.

"When I got home, I told Glenda, 'I had a big honor today at church, Glenda.' She of course asked me what happened. I shared with her that no one had ever presented prayer to me in this way—that it is a big honor to be called on to pray. And praying has never been a problem for me since."

But that's not the end of the story. Since that Sunday morning years ago, Marvin has encouraged many young men in our church family by reminding them that praying is a big honor. He has never forgotten the lesson that Carl Snow graciously taught him, and he has passed that message on to many others. Several have told him that they have never forgotten what he told them. Praying is a big honor.

Our ability to rest in God's provision for us is often stretched and strengthened by the faith and encouragement of others. Hebrews 10:23,24 says, "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He Who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds." Rest in the hope that we have in Jesus, and then share what God has taught you with others, so they, too, can come to rest more fully in Jesus. Just like Marvin Beasley, as God teaches you new truths, rest in them, yes. But be sure you share them with others and "stimulate them to love and good deeds" too.



## LET'S CELEBRATE!

- Calvary's Personnel Committee wants to congratulate **Billie Doyle** for 20 YEARS of service to our church! Billie will celebrate this anniversary on March 11, 2022. *THANK YOU for using your gifts in ministry to our church family!*
- Our very own Mount Airy High School swimmer **Matheson Williams** was recently crowned the 2022 NCHSAA 1A/2A 100 Backstroke State Champ. *Way to go, Matheson!*

## Memorials and Honorariums

### In Memory of Joleen Lawrence

Co-Ed 4 SS Class  
Ken and Barbara Nowlin  
Kenny and Amy Nowlin

## WORDS OF THANKS

Dear Calvary,

Thanks very much for your support, prayers and cards during my spine surgery and recovery. It is wonderful to have a caring church and staff.

With much thanks,  
Loretta Vaughn

Dear Calvary,

I'm doing fine. My birthday is March 29, I'll be 31, cards please. Thank you for the stocking and cards for Christmas and the Valentine's Day card with photographs. I am glad to be in the church family.

Love,  
Lauren Francis