

THOUGHT TO PONDER

Verse of the Month

Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that." James 4:15

If place I choose or place I shun,
My soul is satisfied with none;
But when thy will directs my way
'Tis equal joy to go or stay.

GENUINE FAITH James 2:1-12
Scriptures are in red lettering. Footnotes are in black lettering.

1-7 **My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don't show favoritism. 2 Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in shabby clothes also comes in. 3 If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," 4 have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, my brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? 5 But you have insulted the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? 7 Are they not the ones who are slandering the noble names of him to whom you belong?**

1 In this chapter James argued against favoritism and for the necessity of good deeds. James's teachings are consistent with Paul's teaching that we receive salvation by faith alone. Paul emphasizes the purpose of faith—to bring salvation. **James emphasizes the results of faith—a changed life. NIVLASB**

1-7 James condemns acts of favoritism. Often we treat a well-dressed impressive-looking person better than someone who looks shabby. We do this because we would rather identify with successful people than with apparent failures. The irony, as James reminds us, is that the supposed winners may have gained their life-style at our expense. In addition, the rich find it difficult to identify with the Lord Jesus, who came as a humble servant. Are you easily impressed by status, while ignoring the "have nots? This attitude is sinful. God views all people as equals, and if he favors anyone, it is the poor and the powerless. We should follow his example.

2-4 Why is it wrong to judge people by his or her economic status? Wealth may indicate intelligence, wise decisions, and hard work. On the other hand, it may mean only that a person had the good fortune of being born into a wealthy family. It can even be the sign of greed, dishonesty, and selfishness. By honoring someone just because he or she dresses well, we are making appearance more important than character. If we say that Christ is our Lord, then we must live as he **acquires, showing no favoritism and loving all people regardless of whether they are rich or poor. NIVLASB**

5-7 When James speaks about the poor, he is talking about those who have no money and also about those whose simple values are despised by much of our affluent society. Perhaps the "poor" people prefer serving to managing, human relationships to financial security, peace to power. This does not mean that the poor will automatically go to heaven and the rich to hell. Poor people, however, are usually more aware of their powerlessness. Thus it is often easier for them to acknowledge their need for salvation. One of the greatest barriers to salvation for the rich is pride. For the poor bitterness **an often bar the way to acceptance of salvation. NIVLASB**

8-10 **If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right. 9 But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as law breakers.**

8 The *royal law* is the law of our great King Jesus Christ, who said, "Love each other as I have loved you" (John 15:12). His law, originally summarized in Leviticus 19:18, is the basis for all the laws of how people should relate to one another. Christ reinforced this truth in Matthew 22:37-40. And Paul taught it in Romans 13:8 and Galatians 5:14.

9-10 We must treat all people as we would want to be treated. We should not ignore the rich, because then we would be withholding our love. But we must not favor them for what they can do for us, while ignoring the poor who can offer us **seemingly so little in return. NIVLASB**

11 **For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.**

11 Christians must not use this verse to justify sinning. We dare not say: "Because I can't keep every demand of God, why even try?" James reminds us that if we've broken just one law, we are sinners. We can't decide to keep part of God's law and ignore the rest. You can't break the law a little bit; if you have broken it at all, you need Christ to pay for your sin. **Measure yourself, not someone else, against God's standards. Ask for forgiveness where you need it, and then renew your effort to put your faith into practice. NIVLASB**

12-13 **For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder," if you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.**

12-13 **Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, 21 because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment!**

12-13 As Christians we are saved by God's free gift (grace) through faith, not by keeping the law. But as Christians, we are also required to obey Christ. The apostle Paul taught "for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ:

1 Corinthians 5:10) to be judged for our conduct. God's grace does not cancel our duty to obey him; it gives our obedience new basis. The law is no longer an external set of rules, but it is a "law that gives freedom"—one we joyfully and willingly carry out because we love God and because we have the power of his Holy Spirit to carry it out (see 1:25).

12-13 Only God in his mercy can forgive our sins. We can't earn forgiveness by forgiving others. But when we withhold forgiveness from other after having received it ourselves, we show that we don't understand or appreciate God's mercy toward us (see Matthew 6:14,15; Ephesians 4:31,32). **NIVLASB**

YET I SIN

Eternal Father,
Thou art good beyond all thought,
But I am vile, wretched, miserable, blind;
My lips are ready to confess, but my heart is slow to feel,
and my ways reluctant to amend.
I bring my soul to thee;
break it, wound it, bend it, mould it.
Unmask to me sin's deformity,
that I may hate it, abhor it, flee from it.
My faculties have been a weapon of revolt against thee;
as a rebel I have misused my strength,
and served the foul adversary of thy kingdom.
Give me grace to bewail my insensate folly.
Grant me to know that the way of transgressors is hard,
that evil paths are wretched paths,
that to depart from thee is to lose all good.
I have seen the purity and beauty of thy perfect law,
the happiness of those in whose heart it reigns,
the calm dignity of the walk to which it calls,
yet I daily violate and condemn its precepts.
Thy loving Spirit strives within me,
brings me Scripture warnings,
speaks in startling providences,
allured by secret whispers,
yet I choose devices and desires to my own hurt,
impiously resent, grieve,
and provoke him to abandon me.
All these sins I mourn, lament, and for them cry pardon.
Work in my more profound and abiding repentance;
Give me the fullness of a godly grief that trembles and fears,
yet ever trusts and loves,
which is ever powerful, and ever confident;
Grant that through the tears of repentance I may see more clearly
the brightness and glories of the saving cross.
Amen.

Breakfast & BRUNCH

SPINACH SENSATION

- ½ pound bacon slices
- 1 cup (8 ounces) sour cream
- 3 eggs, separated
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry
- ½ cup (2 ounces) shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
- ½ cup dry bread crumbs
- 1 tablespoon margarine or butter, melted

Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray 2-quart round baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.

Place bacon in single layer in large skillet; cook over medium heat until crisp. Remove from skillet; drain on paper towels. Crumble and set aside.

Combine sour cream, egg yolks, flour and pepper in large bowl; set aside. Beat egg whites in medium bowl with electric mixer at high speed until stiff peaks form. Stir ¼ of egg whites into sour cream mixture; fold in remaining egg whites.

Arrange half of spinach in prepared dish. Top with half of sour cream mixture. Sprinkle ¼ cup cheese over sour cream mixture. Sprinkle bacon over cheese. Repeat layers, ending with remaining ¼ cup cheese.

Combine bread crumbs and margarine in small bowl; sprinkle evenly over cheese.

Bake, uncovered, 30 to 35 minutes or until egg mixture is set. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

Makes 6 servings

RANCH-STYLE SAUSAGE & APPLE QUICHE

- 1 (9-inch) pastry shell, 1½ inches deep
- ½ pound bulk spicy pork sausage
- ½ cup chopped onion
- ¾ cup shredded, peeled tart apple
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- ½ teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded Cheddar cheese
- 3 eggs
- 1½ cups half-and-half
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- Dash black pepper

Preheat oven to 450°F. Line pastry shell with foil; partially fill with uncooked beans or rice to weight shell. Bake 10 minutes. Remove foil and beans; continue baking pastry shell 5 minutes or until lightly browned. Let cool. *Reduce oven temperature to 375°F.*

Crumble sausage into large skillet; add onion. Stir over medium heat until sausage is browned and onion is tender. Spoon off and discard pan drippings. Add apple, lemon juice, sugar and red pepper flakes. Cook and stir on medium-high heat 4 minutes or until apple is barely tender and all liquid is evaporated. Let cool. Spoon sausage mixture into pastry shell; top with cheese. Whisk eggs, half-and-half, salt and black pepper in medium bowl. Pour over sausage mixture. Bake 35 to 45 minutes or until filling is puffed and knife inserted in center comes out clean. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

Makes 6 servings

Spinach Sensation



THE FORUM

BLACK HISTORY MONTH – A CELEBRATION

As a person of color, Black History Month should be the beginning of a Black History Year, not only in the African-American community, but throughout the year in the USA. Case in point – all Americans celebrate the birth of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in January, then February, “Our” Black History month. Then in March we mourn the death of Dr. King. Let’s continue the track record for April, May, etc., by honoring, praising and writing about other outstanding African-Americans. Let’s keep reminding the American people of the accomplishments our brothers and sisters have contributed to for the betterment of society in this country. Let’s start with the many achievements and works done in our nation’s capital centuries ago by black people. It is my opinion that if these audacious accomplishments by black folks are not kept in the public’s eye the nation as a whole will not value the African-American for any achievements.

MARCH FOR OUR LIVES/NEVER AGAIN

ENOUGH. A movement of inconceivable consequence inspired by young people who lost a friend, brother, sister or just a mate, in a horrific 6 plus minutes spray of gunfire by a deranged young man. The young and restless, not a TV drama, but a real-life movement on something their adult counterparts should have taken more serious years ago. The students have become the organizers of a following that may turn out to be the most powerful grassroots gun-reform movement in decades. This country must do more to get rid of the gun-culture in the USA. A few statistics: The USA has only 4.4% of the world’s population, yet 42% of the world’s guns. Also roughly 31% of the world’s mass shooters are American. Think long and hard on these stats, as this country is “supposed” to be highly civilized, educated and a symbol of decency throughout the world. Are you sure we are not becoming a “banana republic” gone mad. Enough – enough. Come join the movement – young and old, you will be glad you did.

GERRYMANDERING

The “carving up” of a legislative voting district or districts to favor one political party over the other or favoring any ethnic minority group. This is usually done by the political party in power every ten years as required by Article 1, Section 4 of the U.S. Constitution. This allows the drawing of a legislative map to be done by the State Legislature. Since 2010 the County of Berks was split into 4 of the most gerrymandered districts in the country. This was recently changed to 3 simple areas allowing a decent representative to be elected to represent Berks County. The Pennsylvania State Supreme Court disallowed the existing congressional districts and made a new map which would give Berks County a Representative for the area instead of having 4 Reps from the surrounding counties to rely on.

BITS – PIECES – STATISTICS

- While on the subject of voting districts, gerrymandering, etc., a kindly reminder- the last day to register for voting in the Primary Election is Monday, April 16, 2018. So trot on down to the County Service Center near the Court House and register to vote in the Primary Election, Tuesday, May 15, 2018.
- Men will live as long as women by 2032, per a study conducted by Cass Business School in London. Both are predicted to have an average life expectancy of 87.5 years at that point.
- Jesus loves those on the margins of society, touching those deemed untouchable, loving those deemed unlovable, welcoming everyone into God’s realm.
- **DO NOT FORGET** the upcoming Pancake Breakfast, Saturday, April 28, 2018 from 8:00 AM – 12:00 Noon. Spread the word.

If you see something suspicious say something. Dial 911.

Credits: Reading Eagle - Time



WHEN & WHERE

Saturday, April 28
8AM-12PM
715 N 10 St, Reading PA

HOW MUCH

\$5 For Seniors & Kids
\$7 For Adults (15 & Up)

WHAT ELSE

Ticket price includes all-you-can-eat pancakes with all of the fixin's (1 beverage, serving of eggs, meat). Grits & a la carte items available.

PANCAKES!

SATURDAY, April 28
8AM - 12PM

JOIN US FOR A MORNING OF
FOOD AND FELLOWSHIP—
DINE-IN AND TAKE-OUT
BREAKFASTS AVAILABLE.

PROCEEDS BENEFIT
WASHINGTON
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH AND THE
GREATER READING
COMMUNITY.



April 2018

* Denotes Birthdays

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
April 1 One Great Hour of Sharing Resurrection of the Lord/Easter Communion 10:00 Sunday Service	2	3 Diana Flood * Stephen Randall *	4 Bible Study – 10:00 AM Bible Study – 6:30 PM	5 Senior Choir Rehearsal 1:00 PM Donald Lewis *	6	7 Passover Ends (Sundown)
8 Self-Development of People Communion 10:00 AM Sunday Service	9	10 Worship Committee Meets – 9:00 AM	11 Bible Study – 10:00 AM Bible Study – 6:30 PM	12 Senior Choir Rehearsal 1:00 PM Holocaust Remembrance Day	13	14
15 Joash Chest 10:00 AM Sunday Service	16 Session Meets 6:30 PM	17 International Day of Farmers' Struggles Taxes Due	18 Bible Study – 10:00 AM Bible Study – 6:30 PM Demerik Benton-Weglinski *	19 Senior Choir Rehearsal 1:00 PM Jazzmine Foster *	20	21 Vivian Key *
22 Earth Day 10:00 AM Sunday Service	23 LaCinya Dianna *	24	25 Bible Study – 10:00 AM Bible Study – 6:30 PM Administrative Professional's Day	26 Senior Choir Rehearsal 1:00 PM	27	28 Corbin Scott *
29 Jayvian Phelps * 10:00 AM Sunday Service	30					

SICK, SHUT-INS AND BEREAVED FAMILIES

Joan Marshall, Teondré Morrison-Cooper, Claudette Carter, Justin Johnson, Kevin Herring, Joyce Beckett, Linda Hobbs (Pastor's sister), Marie (Flood) Rhodes, Maurice Alexander, LaKeshia Green & Family, Aimy McKnight, Ethel Kinkaid, Will Kinkaid (Tremont Rehab.), Cherie Spillane, Mrs. Thelma Winfrey, Derric Burden, Shirley Wilson, Shania Hunter (Janice's niece), Vickie Bowers (Pennside), Connie Lantz (Vickie's mother), Kiara Delgado (Penny's granddaughter), Katrina Boykin, Eric George, Henry Johnson, Dale Brown, Valerie Phelps, Kenneth Randall, Sabrina (Alex's friend), Oliver & Freida Carter, Nancy Kerper, Jimmy McKee, Rose Fletcher, Sharon Good (April's sister-in-law), Richard Newkirk, Marty & David Banks, Eddie Ramos, Jean Pingatore, Tommy Ridley, Nora Hartford, Mrs. Marjorie McNeill, Paulette Amprey's family, Nicholas (Amber's client), Kim Scott, Evelyn Morrison, Gary Patience (Khadri Saboor), Earl and Marilyn Hoch, Robert Nelson, Melba Stamm, Keith Stamm, Paul Lucia, William "Tune" Davis, Margret Joyce Randall, Thelma Jeanette Randall, Frederick Benton, Tomishia Johnson, Ava Marie Johnson (2 years old), Gail Scott, Hazel Kochel, Genease Brown, Alicia Lee, Linda Benton, Agnes Snead, Jennifer Seidel (Paulette's former coworker), Janice Johnson (Pauline's daughter), Penny Templin, Ella Jackson-Weathers (Harold's sister), Paul Kilpatrick (Ollie's great grandson), Norma D'Augustino, Jonelle Green and son, Langston (2 yrs. old-has cancer), Janice Greer, Rudy Rivera (Puerto Rico) and Diane Milshaw.

PRAY FOR THE BEREAVED

SCRIPTURES

April 1	Acts 10:34-43	Psalms 118:1-2, 14-24	I Corinthians 15:1-11
April 8	Acts 4:32-35	Psalms 133	John 1:1-2:2
April 15	Acts 3:12-19	Psalms 4	I John 3:1-7
April 22	Acts 4:5-12	Psalms 23	I John 3:16-24
April 29	Acts 8:26-40	Psalms 22:25-31	I John 4:7-21

STANDING COMMITTEES

Christian Concerns – April Coleman
Christian Education – Alexis Green
Evangelism – Yvonne Lewis
Finance – Alexis Green
Property – Stephen Greer
Stewardship – Sharon Davis/Yvonne Lewis
Worship Committee – Pauline Johnson/Alexis Green/LaKeshia Green

BIBLE STUDY – Wednesday 6:30 P.M.

LECTIONARY READINGS

John 20:1-18
John 20:19-31
Luke 24:36b-48
John 10:11-18
John 15:1-8

SESSION

Pastor – Rev. Laddie J. Benton
Clerk of Session – Barbara Davis
Church Treasurer – Alexis Green
Benevolence Treasurer – Sharon Davis
Club Fund Treasurer – Winnie J. Burden
Sunday School – Sharon Davis

ORGANIZATION

Men's Fellowship – Oliver Carter
Pastor's Aid – Toni A. Brooks/Winnie Burden
Personnel – Stephen Greer
Presbyterian Women – Alexis Green/LaKeshia Green

CHOIR REHEARSAL

Senior Choir – Thursday, 1:00 PM

**WASHINGTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH WILL ACCEPT DONATIONS
FROM ANYONE WHO WOULD LIKE TO HELP WITH OUR MISSIONS.**

WPC WEB PAGE: WPC1823.COM

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead...” (1 Peter 1:3)

From the Pastor's Desk
The Rev. Laddie J. Benton, Pastor

THE LORD IS GOOD

*O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
his steadfast love endures forever!*
(Psalm 118: 1 – New Revised Standard Version)

THE GOODNESS OF GOD WITHIN THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH

Dear members and friends of Washington Presbyterian Church (USA),

On each new day that God gives us; we should give thanks to God for God's goodness. Let us praise and give thanks to God for all of the wonderful gifts that God bestows upon us on a daily basis. Sometimes we become consumed with all that is happening to us in our own lives, and the things taking place in the world around us that we sometimes forget the goodness of God in which we are surrounded with love. We can be certain of this because it is written... "God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God love us so much, we also ought to love one another." (1 John 4: 9-11).

The Goodness of God is also revealed within the community of faith through God's compassion and mercy for us. For this reason the writer of Psalm 103 issues an exhortation for all to bless the LORD: "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits- who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the Pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good as long as you live so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's." (Psalm 103: 1-5).

"Eternal God, you have called us to be members of one body. Join us with those who in all times and places have praised your name, that, with one heart and mind, we may show the unity of your church, and bring honor to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen."

TO GOD BE THE GLORY

Your Brother in Christ,
Rev. Laddie J. ~~Benton~~, Pastor

STAND UP FOR JESUS!
STAND UP FOR WPC!

CHRISTIAN HERALD

WASHINGTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Rev. Laddie J. Benton, Pastor

APRIL NEWSLETTER

