

Journeys

A PUBLICATION OF CARVERSVILLE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



March 2022

WHEREVER YOU ARE ON LIFE'S JOURNEY, WE WELCOME YOU HERE.

THOUGHTS FOR THE SOUL

Gotcha!

Bill Clinton may have wished he'd deployed what's called the "gotcha defense" in 1992, when a reporter asked him if he'd ever violated international law. His response became infamous: "When I was in England," he said, "I experimented with marijuana a time or two, and didn't like it. I didn't inhale and I didn't try it again."

The "gotcha defense" is a tactic politicians use to avoid answering a reporter's question about some kind of content that they may not know anything about, or that they simply want to avoid. They respond by talking about something else, which is commonly something they

may not have thought through before speaking (like Bill Clinton's infamous words).

Jesus handled gotcha questions very well – so well, in fact, that his prowess helped boost his reputation.

The gospel writers portray Pharisees, Sadducees, political supporters of King Herod, and generic spies sent by the chief priests and scribes as the primary sources of gotcha questions aimed at Jesus.

This odd collection of bedfellows all wanted to trap Jesus and put an end to his growing popularity—a popularity that was dangerous to their power and privileges under the Romans. They wrapped their status in a blanket

of self-righteousness—posing as faithful interpreters of the law that governed Judaism.

One of the better known “gotcha” episodes is in Matthew 22. The question posed to Jesus aims to paint him into a corner.

“Teacher,” they said, “we know that you are genuine and that you teach God’s way as it really is. We know that you are not swayed by people’s opinions, because you don’t show favoritism. So tell us what you think: Does the Law allow people to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”

Resentment of Roman taxation had sparked pockets of revolt throughout Judea and Galilee for years. Taxation by and for a foreign power was a heated topic—one that could easily cause the crowds who resented the tax to turn against Jesus, on the one hand, or cause the Roman officials to take note of his revolutionary ideas on the other.

Some interpretations of this episode contrast the sacred and the secular, using Jesus’ explanation of the Roman coin with Caesar’s image on it. Others focus on Jesus’ ingenuity as he didn’t fall for the “gotcha” question posed by his detractors.

We don’t usually hear about Jesus’ critics, apart from their unsavory intent. Yet in this season of Lent, when we prepare ourselves to celebrate the Easter resurrection, those enemies merit our attention for a simple reason: we are more like them than we are like anyone else in the story.

It’s not that we’re out to get rid of Jesus as they are. How often, though, do we relate to others in a similarly self-righteousness way?

Jesus’ adversaries present themselves as sanctimonious religious authorities who know the Law. They want to trap Jesus with their “gotcha” question that sounds legitimate but that is really about their positions of power and perks.

Psychologists tell us that “with current media and political discourse rife with anger and resentment, it’s sometimes hard to tell how much of the rancor is due to polarization over deeper values and how much is a product of offended egos. . . .”

“Functionally speaking, ego is how we prefer to regard ourselves and how we want others to regard us. Though values are more central to the sense of self, ego disputes are usually more intense than value disagreements. . . .

“No longer about mere loss of status, ego-threats can seem wrought with danger. (Perceived threats to survival override dedication to values.) The adrenaline of anger creates a temporary rise in energy and confidence . . . [and] comes off as self-righteousness.”¹

That describes well a lot of what’s happening in families and communities across our country today. Pride and arrogance have generated a self-righteousness that destroys people’s ability to love their neighbors as they love themselves, let alone love God.

When we trust God, we are less likely to focus on ourselves. We concentrate instead on God’s purpose for us as we move into the future. Lent is a time of preparing for the new possibilities that we celebrate during the Easter season.

When God’s purpose governs our lives, we don’t get stuck on egocentric matters. It’s not that we don’t take care of ourselves. We do, but as part of preparing ourselves to help make God’s compassion and justice real for all God’s children. Lent is a good time to discover how we can fulfill God’s purpose in our individual lives.

¹Steven Stosny. Downloaded from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/anger-in-the-age-entitlement/202008/is-it-about-ego-or-values>

- from Pastor Fogal



ASH WEDNESDAY

Lent begins on Wednesday, March 2, with Ash Wednesday. May we each hear and heed the call for unity of all believers as Christ did so long ago. It is especially relevant today as we see such division within our own country and in the rest of the world.

We invite our members and friends to join us at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, March 2, in the church social hall. This will be a time of study, prayer and intinction of ashes as we prepare ourselves for the days and weeks leading up to Holy Week. (Please note: the service will be no longer than forty-five minutes and no meal will be served.)



COMMUNION

Our Communion service will be held on March 6. If you are participating from home, be sure to have the elements ready prior to the service.



LENTEN STUDY OPPORTUNITY

Beginning on Sunday, March 6, from 9:00 am-9:45 am, bring a cup of coffee (or tea) and join us in the conference room at church for a 6 week Lenten study entitled: Stories Jesus Told- How to Read a Parable. Each session will have an opening video followed by discussion. Don't miss this opportunity for Lenten spiritual growth and fellowship.



OUTREACH TO NAVAJO CHILDREN CONTINUES

Plans are underway to meet soon in our Fellowship Hall to work on making fleece blankets for shipment to another Navajo school sponsored by Americans for Native Americans (ANA). While our focus was on children at Tohaali Community School in 2021 where our congregation provided students' first Christmas stocking, we will be directing our attention to another school chosen by ANA's Board Chair, Mary Lee Reiff.

Our goal is to bring students at that school the same joy of receiving their first Christmas stocking as happened at Tohaali. I think we

have proven through our Tohaali outreach it is more blessed to give than to receive, and our congregation will once again find joy in enthusiastically opening our hearts to children at another school.

Fleece blanket kits have already been purchased with CUCC Mission funds, and a few blankets have been completed during our winter's hibernation. Watch for more information in upcoming newsletters to learn what school we will "adopt" in 2022 and when we will get back to knotting those blankets.

Let me know if you are interested in completing a blanket at home while winter is still with us. I will be happy to get a kit to you.

Barbara Burger, Missions Coordinator

oldbutfit@msn.com



OUTREACH TO HOSPICE PROGRAM

Doylestown Hospital's Chaplain, Maggie Ainslie, has extended her gratitude for our congregation's donations of handmade prayer shawls to her office. These are given by Pastoral Care Chaplains as a gift of warmth and care to patients in the hospital who are nearing end of life. While the need for prayer blankets (30" X 48") continues, the hospital's Hospice Program is requesting larger blankets for distribution to patients in their homes and in nursing homes. Sadly, the number of blankets

needed to keep up with the demand from Hospice and hospital patients continues to increase.

If you knit, crochet, quilt or sew, please consider making a Lapghan size of 36" X 48" for use in a chair, or a throw blanket 48" X 48" to 60" that can be used on a bed. Completed blankets should be washed and placed in a plastic bag for infection prevention measures.

I will be happy to deliver blankets to the Chaplain's office at the hospital. Please note that cost of blanket supplies can be reimbursed via Missions funds. Don't hesitate to contact me if you have questions.

Much appreciation goes to Jeanne Brown who has crocheted and donated seven blankets to the Chaplain's office at Doylestown Hospital.

Barbara Burger, Missions Coordinator

oldbutfit@msn.com or 215-345-1548



ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULED

This is your official notice for Carversville UCC's annual meeting. It will be held in-person-not virtually- on Sunday, March 13, following worship. Eat a big breakfast as we **WILL NOT** be serving lunch. It is important that as many members attend as possible -- this is your church.



EASTER FLOWERS

by Jeanne Brown

Think Spring! The flowers have been ordered. We will have the traditional arrangement of flowers in front of the altar on Easter Sunday. You can help to make the sanctuary beautiful for the worship service by purchasing these pots of flowers. They will bring a welcome bit of spring into your home. A friend or relative will appreciate receiving the flowers as a gift on the holiday.

Lilies	\$ 8.15
6-bulb Tulips	\$ 6.20
3-bulb Tulips	\$ 3.65
3-bulb Hyacinths	\$ 6.20
single Hyacinths	\$ 2.65
mini Daffodils	\$ 3.20

Several people have asked me about having dedications for the flowers, as we had previously done for many years. A list of people who purchased the flowers will be in the Easter Sunday worship program. If you would like a dedication included, please give me that information with your order.

The deadline for orders and payment is Sunday, April 3rd. Please make checks payable to Jeanne Brown. You may give your order to me

on a Sunday morning, mail it to me at 253 Colonial Heritage Park, Doylestown, PA 18901, or call me at 215-348-3614.

Please get your flowers following the service. If you are not comfortable coming to in-person worship, please come pick them up between 11:30 AM and 1:30 PM.

Thank you.



We are SOOO happy to welcome back Barb and Dave Gunn! They were very active members for many years before moving to Massachusetts. They are now back in Bucks County, living at 301 Blackberry Circle, New Hope, PA 18938. They rejoined the church on February 20. So good to have them with us!



THANKS, SCOUTS!

Despite some wintery weather, the Scouts of Troop 64 and their families showed up to participate in our church service on Scout Sunday, February 13. It was so nice to have them join us.



FOOD PANTRY UPDATE from Sue Wulf

Food insecurity still remains a serious problem in our community and we need to be aware that this need still exists. Due to the church being closed because of covid, our donations to the Doylestown Food Pantry are way down. Now that we're open for business again let's help fill local tummies by picking up an extra item or two when you shop. **Items most needed include: pasta sauce; canned tuna and chicken; cereal; juice; coffee; sugar and salad dressing.** Please check the expiration dates on products to make sure they have not expired.

Your donations may be left outside the church office during office hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 9 AM-1PM, OR on Sunday morning, OR Sue Wulf would be happy to pick items up at your home. Give her a call at 215-801-9142.

Thanks, little church with the BIG heart!



WHAT'S THE BOOK GROUP DOING? from Sue Wulf

Chris got our discussion started with lots of positive words from us for the goodies she baked! Yummy early morning treats are always a Book Group bonus! Thanks, Chris!

A brisk discussion about the book *The 100 Years of Lenni and Margot* by Marianne Cronin was our topic of conversation. The book painted the story of a combined 100 years of memories, tragedies and triumphs between 17 year old Lenni and 83 year old Margo. We took the opportunity to share many memories from our past. Still wondering how you fit square ice cream blocks into a round cone- even with a sour ball to stop leaking!

Our next book will be *Defying Jihad* by Esther Ahmad and Craig Borlase. We'll meet at Sue Wulf's home on Monday, April 11, at 9:15 am to share our thoughts on the book! We'd love to have you join us!

Happy reading!





PRAYING HANDS

Here is a list of those who would benefit from receiving cards. We encourage you all to reach out to these people as it will mean a lot.

Card List for March

Pearl Howard - c/o Future Care
Chesapeake, Room 208, 305 College
Parkway, Arnold, MD 21012
Jim & Sally Seeton- 1850 Lower Mountain
Road West, Furlong, PA 18925
Gordon Keckeissen- 555 N. Broad St.,
#508A, Doylestown, PA 18901
Jack King- 503 Windrush Bay Dr., Tarpon
Springs, FL 34689



Daylight Saving Time begins on Sunday, March 13. Time to set your clocks ahead an hour!

Articles for the April newsletter should be sent to Sue Wulf at slswulf@comcast.net and Cathy Price at cathyprice2@verizon.net by Thursday, March 17- St. Patrick's Day. Thanks!



CONTACT US!

Rev. Robert E. Fogal, Ph.D., Pastor
- Tues. & Thurs.: Office- 9:00 AM-1:00 PM
and by appointment
Cell: 610.945.4955
Email: pastorfogal@gmail.com

Chris Ochadlick, Office Administrator
- Tues. & Thurs.: Office- 9 AM-1:00 PM

Catherine Halper, Church School Supt.
Cell: 215.285.0551

Email: carversvilleucc@gmail.com
Website: www.carversvilleucc.org
Church Phone: 215.297.5166



Spring shows what God can do with a drab and dirty world.

- Virgil A Kraft

DOG WISDOM!!!!

