

Reflect. Give. Serve. Restore.



Manor Presbyterian Church
Lent 2018

March 18 – March 24, 2018,
Part 5

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Lent 2018

“Preparing Our Hearts for Easter”

What is Lent? The word “Lent” comes from the Old English word “lengten,” which simply means “spring” — when the days lengthen and new life springs forth. It is a time in which we anticipate the victory of the light and life of Christ over the darkness of sin and death. It is, to borrow a phrase from C.S. Lewis, a season of a kind of “happiness and wonder that makes you serious.”

It is our prayer that as you journey with us from Ash Wednesday to Easter, you would be reminded of the reality of our broken humanity, but as days grow brighter, you would experience with greater abundance the reality of God’s redeeming grace. And so, just as we carefully prepare for big events in our personal lives, such as a wedding or commencement, Lent invites us to make our hearts ready for remembering Jesus’ death and resurrection.

Our ultimate goal is to **KNOW** the LORD: **the God** who made us and loved us before the creation of the world; **the Son** who gave his life to redeem us and broke the bonds of death giving us eternal life; and **the Holy Spirit** who dwells in us, teaches us and comforts us.

This year we will be following and reflecting on Christ’s journey to Jerusalem. Throughout the gospel of Luke, Jesus had a fruitful ministry. Early in chapter 9 He sends out the Twelve, so that they might experience the ministry of the gospel; He feeds the five thousand; and Peter confesses that Jesus is “the Christ of God.” Jesus takes Peter, John and James up onto a mountain where they witness the glory of the transfiguration and then He completes the healing of the boy with the evil spirit that the disciples were unable to do.

Even with this success, darkness is beginning to gather. *“Listen carefully to what I am about to tell you: The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men (9:44).”* And then, of all things, his disciples have a squabble about which of them would be the greatest.

Even so, he never loses sight of the mission for which he came. *“As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem (9:51).”* He begins His journey to Jerusalem to accomplish our salvation, and along the way he teaches and models discipleship.

So, to that end we invite you to journey with us through this Lenten season. This journey is in four parts – all of which help us to **KNOW** the LORD better. The included daily devotionals help us **REFLECT** on the Lord and his Word. There is one devotional for each day of the week, beginning Wednesday, February 14, 2018, and ending Easter Sunday. They are short and focused, containing a portion of scripture, a thought and a prayer. You may want to use these for family devotions.

Another part of our journey is to **SERVE**. We serve because Jesus served:

“He [Jesus] served: we serve. Really, he serves through his body, the church, us. Without the ministry of mercy, the body is so incomplete. As though without an arm, a leg, the church seeks to stand, walk, run, but falls in confusion and uncertainty. In diaconal ministry we work out the salvation of the Lord with fear and trembling, until we see how that great gift touches everything and everybody that we touch. **At every point of contact with his body the world sees and senses the love of God in Christ Jesus, love which commends and commands a ministry of mercy, diaconal ministry.**

Dr. George C. Fuller
The High Calling of Deacon
(Emphases by the editor)

We are encouraging each Christian, each family, each small group to take part in acts of service during this Lenten season. We are trying to make it as easy as 1, 2, 3: **One**– take part in a service project (Serve your community and a local nonprofit by signing up for a coordinated project or taking action on your own); **Two**– this year we will be asking the church to take part in *Notes of Encouragement*, writing a personalized card for a teacher or staff person from our public schools; and **Three**– bringing a monetary gift (\$3 per child, or \$30 per adult) to be collected to support “Getting Ahead,” a program empowering those in poverty to build resources for themselves and their communities.

The final part of the journey is to share the stories of how you’ve been blessed by serving others or something that God revealed to you in the devotionals. What an encouragement for the church to see the church serving the community. Send an email to office@manorpresbyterian.com with “1,2,3” in the subject line. We’ll post your stories. We can’t wait to share the results with you.

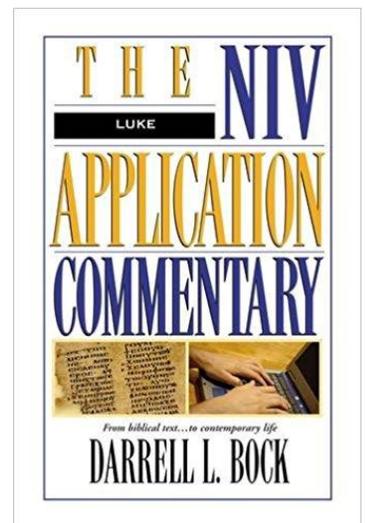
So that’s it: REFLECT, GIVE, SERVE, RESTORE, so that we might KNOW Him better through this Lenten season. Enjoy the journey!

Blessings.

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Editors note: I have included only brief excerpts from Mr. Bock’s commentary for this devotional. If you have found the insights provided to be thoughtful and helpful, I would encourage you to consider the obtaining this wonderful volume. It is material that is accessible enough for daily devotions and challenging enough to encourage us in our discipleship.

It is available through Christian Book Distributors and Amazon.



Reflect.

What About The Temple Tax?

Luke 20:20 Keeping a close watch on him, they sent spies, who pretended to be sincere. They hoped to catch Jesus in something he said, so that they might hand him over to the power and authority of the governor. **21** So the spies questioned him: “Teacher, we know that you speak and teach what is right, and that you do not show partiality but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. **22** Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”

23 He saw through their duplicity and said to them, **24** “Show me a denarius. Whose image and inscription are on it?”

“Caesar’s,” they replied.

25 He said to them, “Then give back to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.”

26 They were unable to trap him in what he had said there in public. And astonished by his answer, they became silent.

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This text is the closest to a political statement Jesus makes. In many ways Jesus’ handling of this question shows that he is not interested in the political agenda of changing Rome. He is not a zealot. He is more interested that Israel be a people who honor the God they claim to know than being concerned with their relationship to Rome.

A basic principle about church and state is also in view here. Governments, even a pagan government like Rome, have the right to exist and to expect its citizens to participate in contributing to its functions. Supporting such a government, including taxes, does not violate one’s commitment to God.

But Jesus is after something far more fundamental and comprehensive than dealing with a specific government. He desires to call out a people from Israel (after his death, from the nations) who will walk with God and witness to him before a world across national lines. Jesus will not issue an attack on Rome. In fact, his earlier entry into Jerusalem showed that he came humbly as a king who represented peace and the hope of directing a people into righteousness. What he seeks to build transcends national lines. That is partly why he can urge that taxes be paid to a government that was pagan. Jesus’ work involves spiritual transformation and the establishment of a distinct colony of God in the midst of Israel and the nations. There he hopes to manifest God’s presence, showing others how people should live in community before him (Eph. 1:22-23; 1 Peter 2:13-17). This distinction is essential as we contemplate how the church should function in the world.

The church today risks looking for God’s nation in the wrong place. That Christian nation is not in a political capital like Washington, London, Berlin, Tokyo, Guatemala City, Lagos, Sao Paul, or Moscow. That nation is the community Jesus has formed to be the world’s light, a citizenship whose roots are in heaven (Phil. 3:20-21) and whose call is to reach out to people in every nation and tribe to be part of this community.

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, help me to be careful to keep my eyes on what you want, not what I think you want. You desire a people who will answer the call to reach out to people in every nation and tribe, to be the world’s light. Steady my heart with your Word and Spirit. Here I am, send me.*

§§§§§§§§

Questions About Resurrection

Luke 20:27 Some of the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Jesus with a question. **28** “Teacher,” they said, “Moses wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies and leaves a wife but no children, the man must marry the widow and raise up offspring for his brother. **29** Now there were seven brothers. The first one married a woman and died childless. **30** The second **31** and then the third married her, and in the same way the seven died, leaving no children. **32** Finally, the woman died too. **33** Now then, at the resurrection whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?”

34 Jesus replied, “The people of this age marry and are given in marriage. **35** But those who are considered worthy of taking part in the age to come and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage, **36** and they can no longer die; for they are like the angels. They are God’s children, since they are children of the resurrection. **37** But in the account of the burning bush, even Moses showed that the dead rise, for he calls the Lord ‘the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ **38** He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive.”

39 Some of the teachers of the law responded, “Well said, teacher!” **40** And no one dared to ask him any more questions.

Insights: The NIV Application Commentary: Luke, Copyright © 1996 by Darrell L. Bock

The resurrection is a central teaching of the Christian faith because on it hangs three central issues: accountability before God, judgment, and eternal life. Without a resurrection, death would be the end, our accountability to God would be limited at best to this life, and judgment and eternal life would become meaningless concepts. ...It has often been said that death is the great equalizer, since we all must die. Yet resurrection is the great opportunity, since we all have a chance to enter into eternal life.

...a particular advertisement years ago...summarizes twentieth-century popular philosophy: “You only go around once in life, so grab for all the gusto you can get.” This saying, theologically, is an example of a mixed bag.

Life is not like elementary school, where a person can repeat a grade if failure occurs. Rather than grabbing for all the gusto one can, the uniqueness of our journey means that we should pay careful attention to our one chance to walk with God. We should live as we have been created to live. The reality of resurrection and the prospect of being “considered worthy of taking part” in it, means we should be careful what we believe and how we respond. Jesus is challenging the Sadducees to realize that there is more to that life than what exists on this side of death. You only go around once in life, so grab for all of God’s goodness you can get.

Life after the resurrection takes place in a transformed community, where sin no longer exists. We live in a world so full of sin, including our own, that it is hard to appreciate how wonderful such an existence will be. Yet God assures us that he will make us like himself. It is not just where we are going that makes the hope so great, but who we will be when we get there.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank you for the hope and the reality of the resurrection. What an unfathomable joy to realize that we shall be like you – no sin, just your goodness and righteousness. Hallelujah!

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Jesus' Question About Messiah and Two Types of People: Scribes and the Poor Widow

Luke 20:41 Then Jesus said to them, "Why is it said that the Messiah is the son of David? **42** David himself declares in the Book of Psalms:

" 'The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand **43** until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." ' **44** David calls him 'Lord.' How then can he be his son?"

45 While all the people were listening, Jesus said to his disciples, **46** "Beware of the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and love to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets. **47** They devour widows' houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. These men will be punished most severely."

Luke 21:1 As Jesus looked up, he saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. **2** He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. **3** "Truly I tell you," he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others. **4** All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."

Insights: **The NIV Application Commentary: Luke, Copyright © 1996 by Darrell L. Bock**

In those forms of Western culture where kings no longer function as genuine sovereigns, it is hard to appreciate the force of such texts. The image of a regal figure installed and worthy of honor is lost in a world of elected leaders. But Jesus' presence in heaven at the side of his Father enables him to dispense divine blessings (Acts 2:30-36). It also enables him to be appointed "as judge of the living and the dead" (Acts 10:42; 17:31). His rule does not emerge through congressional committee, nor does he serve as the whim of humanity. His commission comes from a higher call and functions at a permanent plane.

Here is the One whom God invests with authority to give us all the blessings of grace. He is the One before whom all enemies will submit. Our responsibility to him is greater than to any other being, and we stand before him not as peers but as servants.

Jesus calls the widow's gift the greatest gift of those that his disciples have been observing. What others give comes out of their excess, and they will hardly miss what they toss in for the temple. But this woman is giving out of her poverty. She gives what little she has, even though she needs it to live on. Jesus calls that real giving.

No one is too poor to give. The issue is not the amount but participation. In one sense, this woman's gift would not have been missed had she kept her two copper coins to live on. But what would have been missed was her sense of participation in the community where God was being honored. Had she walked by the temple and kept the coins, she would have been the loser. On the other hand, by contributing her two coins, she communicated an appreciation and trust for God that few others experience. Jesus' remark memorializes her courageous act and urges us to do the same.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, no matter what people may say or do, you are sovereign – you are the dispenser of divine blessings, the judge of the living and the dead, invested with authority and the One before whom all enemies will submit. And yet you recognized the devotion of the poor widow, and held her up as an example of real giving, giving from the heart. Help me to submit my head and my heart to your leadership.

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Jerusalem's Destruction and the End

Luke 21:5 Some of his disciples were remarking about how the temple was adorned with beautiful stones and with gifts dedicated to God. But Jesus said, **6** "As for what you see here, the time will come when not one stone will be left on another; every one of them will be thrown down."

7 "Teacher," they asked, "when will these things happen? And what will be the sign that they are about to take place?"

8 He replied: "Watch out that you are not deceived. For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am he,' and, 'The time is near.' Do not follow them. **9** When you hear of wars and uprisings, do not be frightened. These things must happen first, but the end will not come right away."

10 Then he said to them: "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. **11** There will be great earthquakes, famines and pestilences in various places, and fearful events and great signs from heaven.

12 "But before all this, they will seize you and persecute you. They will hand you over to synagogues and put you in prison, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name. **13** And so you will bear testimony to me. **14** But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves. **15** For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict. **16** You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers and sisters, relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death. **17** Everyone will hate you because of me. **18** But not a hair of your head will perish. **19** Stand firm, and you will win life.

20 "When you see Jerusalem being surrounded by armies, you will know that its desolation is near. **21** Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those in the city get out, and let those in the country not enter the city. **22** For this is the time of punishment in fulfillment of all that has been written. **23** How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! There will be great distress in the land and wrath against this people. **24** They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

25 "There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. **26** People will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. **27** At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. **28** When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

29 He told them this parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees. **30** When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. **31** Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near.

32 "Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. **33** Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

34 "Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you suddenly like a trap. **35** For it will come on all those who live on the face of the whole earth. **36** Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man."

37 Each day Jesus was teaching at the temple, and each evening he went out to spend the night on the hill called the Mount of Olives, **38** and all the people came early in the morning to hear him at the temple.

One reason this discourse is so important for the disciples to hear is because Jesus wants them to understand that before the end arrives, believers will experience rough times.

...the disciples will be “witnesses” for Jesus. The theme of the witness is a major one in Acts, beginning with Jesus’ instruction and promise of the Holy Spirit in Acts 1:8. There is hardly a role more important for the disciple than that of witness. Sometimes the most effective witnessing takes place in the crucible of pressure about one’s faith. In such moments faith is seen as a central, serious, and even exceptional aspect of a person’s life. These disciples will have the chance to step up to the public microphone and testify to him.

This passage tells us something about God, about Jesus, about Israel, and about ourselves. Twila Paris wrote a popular song whose title beautifully proclaims “God Is in Control.” This is an important message in an era with so much human chaos. Jesus, in this discourse, asserts God does control the direction of history. He calls us to be patient and to use our time in presenting the gospel of God’s grace to others.

This text reveals the righteousness of God. When he judges, his judgment will be comprehensive. No defense lawyer will sit at the celestial table to argue the merits of our case on the basis of our own righteousness. The only righteousness that will triumph is that of Christ. Thus, a decision to be without God and go one’s own way means missing the opportunity for eternal salvation that God has so graciously provided through Jesus.

In her persecution of God’s children, Israel paved the way for her own judgment in A.D.70. Jesus teaches that the measure by which one measures, will be the measure received in judgment. The standard held true for the nation, but the lesson was not for them alone.

Christ’s followers need to have resolve to endure, a resolve that grows in the face of the assurance that God will indeed do what he has promised. He will vindicate his children. Thus, we must continue to walk with trust. Trust means continuing to hope in what we cannot see (Heb. 11:1). Yet even though we cannot see it, we can see Jesus, the author and defender of our faith, who promises that one day he will return for us in great power and glory. So looking to him, we serve and with great expectations.

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, it is hard to wrap our head around this passage and all that you are trying to communicate to us. Give me the ability to simply believe what you said and trust that you will fully accomplish your purposes. Help me to be busy with the work that you gave me to do – to be a witness – until the time of your coming.*

§§§§§§§§

Judas' Plan to Betray

Luke 22:1 Now the Festival of Unleavened Bread, called the Passover, was approaching, **2** and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for some way to get rid of Jesus, for they were afraid of the people. **3** Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve. **4** And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus. **5** They were delighted and agreed to give him money. **6** He consented, and watched for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them when no crowd was present.

Insights: **The NIV Application Commentary: Luke, Copyright © 1996 by Darrell L. Bock**

Jesus spent most of the journey to Jerusalem preparing his disciples for his coming absence. The time has come to face the cross. The disciples will need to conduct their faith walk in light of his departure. The moment of truth for all has come.

The Jewish leadership has been powerless to do anything about Jesus because of his popularity. All of that changes when Judas, one of the Twelve, steps forward. What they cannot generate on their own becomes possible through this disciple. The irony in most of the events surrounding Jesus' arrest, trial, and crucifixion is that those who appear to be in control are not. They happen only because Jesus allows them to proceed. As will become clear, Jesus is fully aware of what Judas is doing.

We see vividly how Jesus was rejected and betrayed. The actions of his enemies are a graph of how sin does its work. In the background stands the presence and influence of Satan. The event reminds us that people can be led by forces that pull them in destructive directions (cf. Eph. 2:1-3). All the plotting and intrigue show how much effort and deceit went into the destructive plan to get Jesus. The hypocrisy of celebrating the Exodus and plotting Jesus' death adds to the pathos of it all.

What is so tragic is that if we stop and analyze the role of sin in our own lives, we see the same types of behavior and choices. One sin often leads to more sin in the effort either to set it up or to cover it up. The deceptive nature of sin hatches plots in dark places and attempts to do its work in secret or highly private locales.

This event also discloses the fact that Jesus is of concern to cosmic, evil forces. Satan attempts to do everything he can to stop God's plan of salvation from advancing. The narrative underscores this point by revealing that there are forces at work beyond Judas. One should also remain sensitive to the fact that this diabolical opposition is not yet finished. If Satan opposed Jesus here, he will oppose the church.

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, my heart grieves at Judas' betrayal. Yet, my sin blinds me so that I don't see the betrayal in my own heart. Help me to repent daily, seek your forgiveness and resolve to root out my sin in all its varied forms. Help me to truly love you.*

§§§§§§§§

The Last Supper

Luke 22:7 Then came the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. **8** Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover."

9 "Where do you want us to prepare for it?" they asked.

10 He replied, "As you enter the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him to the house that he enters, **11** and say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher asks: Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?' **12** He will show you a large room upstairs, all furnished. Make preparations there."

13 They left and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover.

14 When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. **15** And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. **16** For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God."

17 After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you. **18** For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

19 And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

20 In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."

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Now Jesus takes control of events. He sends his disciples to prepare to celebrate the festal meal of the Passover at a house that is ready to host them. Note how Jesus continues to celebrate the festivals of the Jewish faith right until the end. Nothing about his piety in worshipping God can be challenged.

Everything about this event reflects the calmness of Jesus and the control of God present in the activity. Jesus directs all the activity, knowing how each detail will fall into place. Though the Passover meal is being celebrated, in another sense the Passover Lamb is preparing to offer himself after this one last meal with his disciples. Nothing catches him by surprise. The disciples faithfully follow the instructions of their teacher. He, in turn, leads by example, trusting that the Father will lead him to complete his course.

Jesus' sacrifice reminds us that our response to him should be the sacrifice of a life honoring to him and drawing on the resources of the new covenant (Rom. 8:1-17; 12:1-2). The spiritual service of worship involves more than sharing in the elements of his death, for his death means a new life for us. So, the ultimate application of sharing at his table is to serve him faithfully with the new life he obtains for us. We should, therefore, celebrate with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, and shed malice and wickedness (1 Cor. 5:7-8). The ultimate commemoration of the Lord's Table is a righteous life. If new life comes through this death, new life is what should be manifested in response.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I sit in amazement, realizing how God planned each detail of the plan of salvation. Absolutely nothing was left to chance. Thank you for this portion of scripture. Thank you for the Lord's Supper. Thank you for drawing your people together to gather around the table to remember you.

§§§§§§§§

The Last Discourse

Luke 22:21 But the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table. **22** The Son of Man will go as it has been decreed. But woe to that man who betrays him!" **23** They began to question among themselves which of them it might be who would do this.

24 A dispute also arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. **25** Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. **26** But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. **27** For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves. **28** You are those who have stood by me in my trials. **29** And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, **30** so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

31 "Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. **32** But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers."

33 But he replied, "Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death."

34 Jesus answered, "I tell you, Peter, before the rooster crows today, you will deny three times that you know me."

35 Then Jesus asked them, "When I sent you without purse, bag or sandals, did you lack anything?"

"Nothing," they answered.

36 He said to them, "But now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don't have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one. **37** It is written: 'And he was numbered with the transgressors'; and I tell you that this must be fulfilled in me. Yes, what is written about me is reaching its fulfillment."

38 The disciples said, "See, Lord, here are two swords."

"That's enough!" he replied.

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Jesus notes with the sharing of the meal that the hand of the betrayer is at the table. He is fully aware of what is taking place, and he goes to his death willingly. This course has been decreed for the Son of Man. But "woe" awaits the one through whom Jesus is betrayed.

Ironically, as Jesus faces his death and Judas engages in betrayal, the disciples worry about their status before Jesus. They are concerned with their role in any future kingdom Jesus brings in. Power, not service, dominates their thinking.

The discussion of humility and greatness touches on the topic of service among Jesus' disciples, especially those who function in roles of leadership. Real leadership does not concern itself with status or rank, but with service. Jesus' own ministry indicates how central this perspective was in his thinking. He ministered to the poor, the rejected of society, the sick, those of different race and gender, children, or anyone who had a need. Position and status meant nothing to him. The church still needs such service and such an attitude today.

Leadership is not attaining a rank that allows one to exercise authority with one's own interests in mind. Leadership is a responsibility and a trust to exercise one's skills and energies to serve those who are led.

The nurturing of communities through prayer, counseling, instruction, compassion, and other forms of service is not a matter of wielding power, but of sharing spiritual resources and energy in a way that leads by example. Real leadership serves, even when no one is looking. God exalts those who humble themselves, even as they lead by service.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, you who knew no sin were numbered with the transgressors. Help me to comprehend the depth and beauty of the plan of salvation. Give me the heart and strength to tell others. Let me serve you through serving those who you bring to my attention.



Serve.

This year Manor has become part of the Constellation Network, a group of local churches in the area that have joined to serve together. What is the Constellation Network? Here is how they introduced themselves last year:

“A multi-church project during the season of Lent (**February 14-April**) encouraging everyone to love and serve their community in three tangible ways, from **donating time** through a service project, **writing notes of encouragement to teachers and staff of the local schools** and **a small donation** for an inspiring project –*Getting Ahead*, a program empowering those in poverty to build resources for themselves and their communities.

“We were inspired by the impact of [Be Rich](#) from [North Point Ministries](#)! For this initiative, we’re taking on the ... **1-2-3 Challenge**”

In their words, “We believe that all people are made to thrive. And that when we work together where we already are - every man, woman, and child in our community can have the opportunity to flourish. We know that we can only revitalize our community and create opportunities for all of our neighbors to thrive through leveraging the strengths of many. We do this as a backbone organization by accelerating good work already being done in the community, incubating new concepts, and collaborating with individuals, community organizations and churches.”

The constellation we envision is a network of people and organizations that work together to advance the common good.

On the following page is a description of how we would like to implement the program this year and some ideas from the Constellation Network on service projects:

1. Service Project

We can show our love for our neighbors and towns by **giving of our time and energy**. Get involved by **signing up for a coordinated project** as the Deacons advertise them or **taking action on your own**.

Children are highly encouraged to participate! There are great opportunities to demonstrate kindness toward neighbors or classmates. Get creative! Regardless of how you serve — individually or as a group, on your own or with a planned project — **be sure to tell us how it went!**

If you have an idea for another coordinated project, **let the Deacons know!**

Give.

2. Notes of Encouragement

Write a personalized card for a teacher or staff person from our public schools. We will be providing more information, along with names and addresses, during our Lenten season.

3. \$3 Dollars (Kids) / \$30 (Adults)

Donations will benefit *Getting Ahead*, a program empowering those in poverty to build resources for themselves and their communities. Bring your donations to Manor on **Easter Sunday, April 1, 2018**.

GET IDEAS

Service Projects

The challenge is 1 service project, and that includes serving the people in your immediate community, like your neighbors and co-workers. Here are lots of ideas for how you can serve on your own, and we believe that all of these acts of service will add up to big impact! If you take the initiative on a project by yourself, with your family, or in a group, **let us know!** We're excited to hear about your creativity and share your ideas.

Projects "On Your Own"

2018 Lenten Work Project Ideas

1. Visit church shut-ins, those no longer able to come to church.
2. Send cards to shut-ins.
3. Take a meal to someone who needs encouragement.
4. Volunteer at one of our local ministries:
 - The Parkesburg Point (610-857-3393) 700 Main St, Parkesburg, PA 19315
 - The Lighthouse Youth Center (610-467-6000) 245 Commerce St, Oxford, PA 19363
 - The Bridge (610-869-9500) AG Chr. of the Nazarene, 240 State St, West Grove, PA
 - Pregnancy Resources at Cornerstone (717-442-3111) 5380 Lincoln Hwy., Gap, PA(Contact any of the ministries above and ask for available opportunities to volunteer. Some of the ministries require clearances from the state of Pennsylvania.)
5. Provide supplies at one of our ministries above. (Call to find out what they can use)
7. Provide baby supplies at the Crisis Pregnancy Center.
8. For an elderly neighbor:
 - Do a project in the home (outdoor, ironing, cleaning)
 - Pickup groceries
 - Provide transportation
9. Send emails or cards of encouragement to missionaries.
10. Develop a list of neighbors and begin praying for them.
11. Babysit for a young mom so she can get out without the children.
12. Do extra cleaning at the church. (Contact RE John Rosecrans, 610.659.6708)
13. Take pizza or doughnuts and coffee to the second or third shift police on duty.

Additional Project Ideas

Make something

- Collect supplies and make hygiene kits (combs, toothbrushes, shampoo, etc) for [Ronald McDonald House](#), [Sunday Breakfast Mission](#), or another local shelter.
- Make a meal for a friend or neighbor who lost a job, had an illness, or recently had a baby.
- Make (and deliver!) valentine cards for senior citizens.
- Make a meal or cookies for the people who serve you, like postal workers, firefighters, police officers, librarians, and trash pick-up.

Give time

- Take a neighbor who can't drive to run errands or go grocery shopping.
- Spend time with a sick or elderly neighbor.
- Plan a board game night at a nursing home.
- Write and deliver thank you cards for people who serve you.
- Help at a local library.
- Volunteer at an animal shelter.
- Go on a prayer walk in your neighborhood.
- Visit a nursing home and talk with the residents about their favorite memories.

Give a service

- Become a mentor at The Parkesburg Point.
- Provide repair work on a neighbor's house.
- Babysit for someone who needs rest.
- Rake leaves, clean up sticks, or shovel snow for a neighbor.
- Wash a friend's car.
- Pick up litter on a local street or in a park.

Give away things

- Collect clothing and donate to the [Kennett Clothing Closet](#), [The Bridge Compassionate Ministry Center](#), or [Oxford Area Neighborhood Services Center](#).
- Collect sheets and towels and donate to local animal shelters.