

Trail Guide -- Week of February 17, 2020

Two weeks ago, in Matthew 6, we were “introduced” to the “Three Pillars” in Judaism and in Christianity: Alms-giving, Prayer, and Fasting. There are many spiritual practices in both religions, but these three are central. Interestingly, they are also included in the “Five Pillars” in Islam, which adds recitation of the Shahada, or profession of faith; and, pilgrimage to Mecca.

During Lent, all LUMCers are encouraged to take on these three spiritual practices in a new way. We’ll be sharing some creative ways to incorporate these practices individually and as a family, as we focus during Lent on Matthew’s recounting of times that Jesus spent “at table” with his disciples, “tax collectors and sinners”, Pharisees, and even surprise guests. For the first three hundred years following the Resurrection, Christianity spread throughout the world not by building large churches and cathedrals, but through sharing with others around the table – meals that included “the bread and the cup” shared in remembrance of Christ. In sanctuary worship and in our homes, may the Three Pillars of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving serve to grow our faith during this holy season of Lent that begins Ash Wednesday, February 26.

Copies of “The Three Pillars: LUMC’s 2020 Lenten Devotional” may be picked up in Wesley Hall, Asbury Hall, and AG-1 & 2.

Mon, 2/17 **Luke 11:1** – “Lord, teach us to pray...” the disciples asked Jesus. And so he did. He gave them a *pattern* for how they could and should formulate their prayers. Ultimately, it was up to them to take this model of prayer and apply it to their lives by putting it into practice. Take the phrases of the Lord’s Prayer (vv.2-4) one by one. What is the main point being expressed? How can you express it in your own way? Try writing your own “Lord’s Prayer” using this pattern.

Tues, 2/18 **1 Chronicles 29:10-15** – Read through this first part of King David’s prayer prior to the building of the first Temple in Jerusalem. What do you see? What do you not see? Imagine you are there and this is your prayer. Pray these words aloud.

Wed, 2/19 **1 Chronicles 29:16-19** – Read the second part of King David’s prayer. For what, and for whom, does he pray? Circle or underline words or phrases that catch your attention. What can you learn from David’s prayer to help your praying?

Thurs, 2/20 **1 Chronicles 29:20** – When David was through, he spoke to the people and basically said, “It’s your turn to pray.” And they did. If you are a parent or grandparent, one way to teach your children and grandchildren is to first speak your prayer, then invite them to pray in their words – mealtime, bedtime, cartime, anytime. Grow their prayers and yours at the same time as you pray *with* them as well as *for* them.

Fri, 2/21 **Acts 12:12-16** – In one of the funniest stories from the book of Acts, the believers were gathered together in a home praying for Peter who had been thrown into prison. Peter suddenly shows up because he has been miraculously set free and had come to that place. A servant answered his knock and flabbergasted, closed the door and left him standing there to go and tell the others. When she told them, they did not believe her. Wow! Has that ever been you?

Sat, 2/22 **Colossians 1:3-ff, 9-12** – Verse 3 is the beginning of what in English turns out to be a long, run-on sentence emphasizing that Paul has been praying for the Colossians. Verse 9 begins another run-on sentence (almost as long) that speaks to *what* Paul has been praying and is praying for them. Compare your usual prayers for others, with what Paul prays. What can you add to your praying from his example?

Pray for our worship, fellowship, learning, and serving on Sunday. Invite someone to join you!