

# *The Master's Message*

## *The Newsletter of the Church of the Master*

### *March, 2025*

*Virtual Adult Bible Study*  
*Wednesday, 7:00 PM*  
*Saturday, 12:00*

*2783 Lafayette Avenue*  
*Bronx, N.Y. 10465*  
*718-597-6298*

*Sunday Worship*  
*Sunday 11:00 am*

[cotm47@verizon.net](mailto:cotm47@verizon.net)

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*Rev. Dr. Melva J. Hayden, Pastor*



We make choices every day—plenty of them. Our lives are really a set of choices, from what we are going to wear and eat to how we will treat others. By his words and by his example, Jesus has plenty to teach us about how to make the most important choices in our relationships with others. Lent is a good time for families to set aside some time to reflect on their choices together in light of Jesus' words.

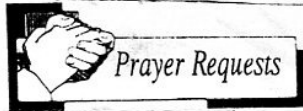
Jesus' message is not just about believing that God has a deep love for each of us. His message is also about how to live and to act. He called himself the Way. As we listen to what Jesus says and watch what he does, we see that following him isn't easy because it will lead us to the cross. But living and acting in the truth of God's deep love for all of us will also lead us to the new life of Easter.

Lent is a good opportunity to consider with others where the decisions we are making are headed and how those choices compare to those that Scripture urges us to make. As Christians, how do our lives reflect the saving love of our Redeemer?

## \*SPECIAL DATES\*

- Transfiguration of Our Lord, March 2nd
- Ash Wednesday, March 5th
- World Day of Prayer, March 7th
- First Sunday in Lent, March 9th
- Daylight Saving Time begins, March 9th
- Second Sunday in Lent, March 16th
- First Day of Spring, March 20th
- Third Sunday in Lent, March 23rd
- Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 30th

## \*News From the Pews\*



Continue praying for:

Allen Ford, Carole Mahon,  
Loretta Byrd, John Bruno,  
Alice & Alex Rivera

Everyone is invited to join our virtual "**Hour of Prayer Power**" every Friday at 7:00 PM. The conference call-in number is 605-475-4860, code: 371231#

Our **Online Bible Study** meets Wednesday at 7:00 PM and Saturday at 12:00. Contact Ron Rivera (917-716-8273) for information on joining



## CONGRATULATIONS

To Laura & JJ Thiebaud on the birth of their son, **Jacob Emmanuel** on February 3rd. Our special Congratulations to **Alice and Ron Rivera** on the birth of their first grandchild!!



It is with mixed feelings and heavy hearts that we share the sad news that our beloved **Ellen McCullough** passed away peacefully on February 24th, but we rejoice that she has transitioned home to be with the Lord Jesus. She will be missed.

## \*CHURCH CHUCKLES\*

After a night of swatting bugs on their camping trip, Keisha asked her mom, "How did two mosquitoes survive the entire trip on Noah's ark?"

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On their way to the church service, a Sunday school teacher asked her pupils, "And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?" One bright little girl replied, "Because people are sleeping."

\*\*\*\*\*

As Stuart tidied up the kitchen after dinner, he realized the broom had been left outside on the porch. "Cindy, go out back and get the broom, please." Cindy was scared and reminded her dad she was afraid of the dark. "Don't worry, Cindy, Jesus is out there to watch over you."

Cindy went over to the back door, opened it a crack, and whispered, "Jesus, could you please hand me the broom?"

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"I know what Mary sang when Jesus brought home pictures from school," Tony told his parents. "How Great Thou Art!"

\*\*\*\*\*

Father Jim and Father Dale liked to play golf together because there was always a priest nearby to forgive them for swearing.

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## Stop, look and listen

Lent, the season of the church year that's associated with repentance, begins on Ash Wednesday (March 5 this year). While some people deny themselves by giving up something for Lent, others prepare for Easter through special Bible studies or devotions.

Christians observe Lent for these reasons:

- It causes us to **STOP**. Lent says, "Stop and rest awhile," as well as "Stop doing wrong."
- It tells us to **LOOK**. Look inward for an honest self-examination. Look upward to see the cross of Christ offering healing and love. Look forward to the hope of the Resurrection.
- It tells us to **LISTEN**. Listen to the words of Christ. Listen to the voice of God. Listen to the winds of the Spirit of God.

Stop, look and listen. These three words aren't only important for our safety in travel; they're also helpful for our journey through the 40 days of Lent.

Sometimes, we forget how blessed we are.  
 My hot water works, I have groceries to eat, I  
 can still afford eggs, I have clean sheets on my  
 bed, I have family and friends that love me, and  
 I woke up today in my right mind.  
 If that;s not blessed, I don't know what is.



## Fear not

I wonder if fear is not our main obstacle to prayer. When we enter into the presence of God and start to sense the huge reservoir of fear inside us, we want to run away into the many distractions that our busy world offers so abundantly. But we shouldn't be afraid of our fears. We can confront them, give words to them, cry out to God and lead our fears into the presence of the One who says, "Don't be afraid. It is I."

—Henri J.M. Nouwen

## Unconditional love

No matter what sin we have committed, no matter how terrible it may be, God loves us.

—Billy Graham

*Special*  
 M • E • S • S • A • G • E

In our newsletters, we are sharing our financial reports with our readers so everyone is aware of our situation. The financial report for the end of 2025 was very disturbing. We had a deficit of -\$8,044.40!

We're trying to cut corners as much as possible but we need the help of our members, former members and friends. Our insurance has gone up \$1,890.00 and our Con Edison bills are over \$1000 each month. **As a member, if you miss a week or two, put your weekly offering in your envelope for that week and then bring those envelopes with you the next time you come to church. You may not be here for those weeks, but our expenses don't skip a week.**

Again, we thank our generous former members and friends who send us a donation, whether it's on a regular basis, occasionally during the year or during the holiday season. We really appreciate the donations, as well as hearing from you.

Our prayer is that we can continue to keep in touch with everyone and that will only be possible with your help.





Pastor's  
EASTER  
MESSAGE

March-April Newsletter Article \*

This year, the months of March through April bring more than merely windy weather and showers; they bring the Lenten Season, Holy Week and Easter Resurrection Sunday! As I mentioned during morning worship on the first Sunday in Lent, instead of giving up something only to go back to that thing I had temporarily given up for Lent, I have committed over the next 40 days of Lent to taking on something! I have health issues that do not allow me to fast as much and as long as I desire to do. So, the thing that I have committed to is making more time to devote to the Lord Jesus in my own personal one-on-one worship and devotion time with the Lord. Lately, I have noticed that I unintentionally allow other things (work, calls, emails, etc.) to distract me and take time away from doing my daily devotion and morning worship. My personal prayer and worship time is where I set aside time as soon as I open my eyes, to thank God for another day, and begin my morning ritual of praise, devotion and Scripture reading. It is my prayer and hope that this commitment will remain even after Lent to help strengthen my spiritual life and walk with Jesus.

I was reading the Gospel of John during my morning worship and devotional time and our Bible Study was also studying the Gospel of John. As I read the Gospel of John 3:16: "for God so loved that world that he gave his only Son that whosoever believes on him should not perish but have everlasting life," I am always struck by the depth of God's love for sinful humankind—that he gave his *only* son to die for humankind's sins and to reconcile us back to the Father following Adam and Eve's original sin! And, as I continued reading in John's gospel, I began to think of how the prevailing powers falsely accused Jesus, how he was betrayed by one of his very own hand-picked disciples, how his other hand-picked disciples could not remain on watch in the Garden of Gethsemane while Jesus went to pray, how his hand-picked disciples deserted him after Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus into the hands of the chief priests with a kiss and for thirty pieces of silver, how one of his closest hand-picked disciples, Peter, denied knowing Jesus three times before the cock crowed twice, how Jesus was tortured, mocked, spat upon, and brutalized for your sins and my sins, how He who knew no sin became the sin offering to satisfy the debt for sin that we humans rightfully owed, and how Jesus did not open his mouth or ask his Father to take him off the cross. I could not help but begin to weep! I pondered the question, if there was *only one person* who needed to be saved, would Jesus have still gone to the cross to die and atone for that *one* person's sins? As I prayed for an answer to my inquiry, the Holy Spirit brought to my remembrance that familiar hymn of the church, *Even Me*:

Lord, I hear of showers of blessings  
Thou art scattering full and free;  
Showers the thirsty soul refreshing,  
Let some drops now fall on me!  
Even me Lord,  
Even me  
Even me Lord

Even me  
Let some drops  
Let some drops  
Now fall on me

Everyone will need to ponder the answer to this question for him or herself. But, for me, the lyrics of this hymn confirm the answer to my question. Yes, I believe that Jesus would have gone to that old rugged cross for just one soul, even you, or even me! I pray that you all will have a meaningful fast and strength to keep your Lent commitments over these next 40 days. But most of all I pray that you will not merely temporarily give up something only to take it back up after Lent is over. Rather, I pray that you will seek to take on more of Jesus' characteristics during this Lenten Season that will have a lasting effect on you and for you well after Lent is over! Happy Easter Resurrection Sunday!

Shalom to you,

*Rev. Dr. Melva J. Hayden*

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\* Revised and Reprinted from 2019 Master's Message Newsletter

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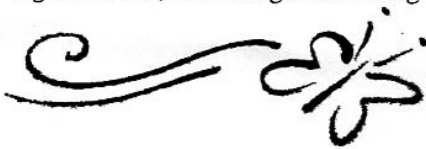
## In like the Spirit

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In many places, March is quite windy: "In like a lion ....!" Though I don't like the damp chill that's often part of the transition to spring, I love windy days. Something about the air's movement — a gentle breeze or ferocious gale blowing through trees, against the house, in my hair — breeds excitement in me, anticipation that something new is afoot.

How fitting that in conversation with Nicodemus, Jesus said, "The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8, NRSV). Like Nicodemus, we fail to comprehend the Spirit of God. But Jesus reminds us that though we can't see the Spirit, we feel his love, see his actions of justice and hear his sounds. These include kind words, bold preaching, weeping for another, shared laughter and songs of praise.

—Heidi Mann



• "A thorough knowledge of the Bible is worth more than a college education."

—Theodore Roosevelt