**Day 12 Devotions, March 1:**

This week’s hymn is Amazing Grace.

Let’s begin by praying stanza one.

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me;

I once was lost, but now am found, was blind but now I see.

Lent is a time of repentance – listening to God -  and making changes where we may have been going in the wrong direction.  This time of repentance and reflection prepares us for the new life of Easter.

Lent calls us to deny ourselves and follow Christ – denying our selfish desires and following Christ to reach out to others.

During this week, pay attention to the things we DO or DON’T DO in order to help other people.  Perhaps we can pray for God to open our eyes to see someone we could help or encourage.

Scripture – Luke 15:1-10

*Meanwhile, the tax collectors and the “sinners” were all gathering around Jesus to listen to his teaching, at which the Pharisees and the religious scholars murmured, “This person welcomes sinners and eats with them.”*

*Jesus then addressed this parable to them:  “Who among you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, doesn’t leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture and search for the lost one until it’s found?  And finding it, you put the sheep on your shoulders in jubilation.  One home, you invite friends and neighbors in and say to them, ‘Rejoice with me!  I’ve found my lost sheep!’  I tell you, in the same way there will be more joy in heaven over one repentant sinner than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need to repent.*

*What householder, who has ten silver pieces and loses one, doesn’t light a lamp and sweep the house in a diligent search until she finds what she had lost?  And when it is found, the householder calls in her friends and neighbors and says, ‘Rejoice with me!  I’ve found the silver piece I lost!’  I tell you, there will be the same kind of joy before the angels of God over one repentant sinner.”*

There was a cartoon recently on Facebook that shows Jesus hold a sheep in his arms.  The rest of the flock is gathered around Jesus.  Then one of them shouts out to Jesus, “That sheep wasn’t lost.  I kicked her out.”  Jesus replied, “I know.  I found her.”

Are there some parts of yourself that you’ve kicked out, that you would rather ignore than embrace?  Are there parts of your life that you wish hadn’t happened?  That you wish would have been different?  I believe part of our life’s journey is to find those lost parts of ourselves along the way, to take a good look at them, and see if there is some redemptive quality that has come about in our life because of those lost parts.

I once was lost, but now am found; was blind but now I see.

Amen.