

From Pastor Chad

In last month's edition of the newsletter I suggested that, "Prayer, when we get down to it is an intimate, uncomfortable, awkward, and unexplainable experience even when we are alone in our bedrooms." After 28 years of being committed to following Jesus I have found that this is still quite true for me. To share more resources for praying and look deeper at the many ways the bible shows us prayer seemed like a pretty good idea. In the spirit of adding new practices during Lent it also seemed like a good idea to preach about different prayer practices.

Well, we've made it half way through Lent and our exploration into prayer has probably felt a bit overwhelming to most of us. In hindsight I'm not so sure my preaching plan was a good one. Even I feel like from week to week our look at prayer has been too much like trying to get a drink of water from a fire hose.

In the past three weeks we've explored: simple prayer, the prayer of examen, and Meditative and contemplative prayer. In the next three weeks we'll be taking a look at: unceasing prayer, petitionary and intercessory prayer, and healing prayer. So, if the first three weeks of Lent haven't seemed like drinking from a fire hose to you I'm sure by the time we're finished you'll be sufficiently soaked and still somewhat parched.

The amazing thing about our whole Lenten prayer journey, overwhelming as it may be, is that we've only begun to scratch the surface of prayer practices and opportunities to grow closer to God through them. It is my hope that this short incursion into prayer will serve as an invitation to begin a lifetime journey into a deeper relationship with God.

If you've found the sermon series overwhelming I want to give you permission to just focus on one of the suggestions I've made. It is dangerous, but I suppose I'm suggesting that you can forgo the next three sermons and just focus in on one of the past three. Ok, maybe I'm not suggesting you tune out on Sunday mornings for three weeks (there may be some benefit to squirreling away the wisdom of the coming scripture passages), but in terms of a daily or weekly experiment with prayer just focus on one type for the rest of Lent. Pick simple prayer, or prayers of examen, or *lectio divina* and stick with it for a few minutes every day for the rest of Lent.

The goal is not to take on all the possible prayer practices we can, but to try something we haven't tried, to expand ways to experience a deeper connection with God. In general, I don't think handing out books is the best way to help people with prayer, but I'll suggest two that I've found especially helpful:

[*Long Wandering Prayer: An Invitation to Walk with God, David Hansen*](#) (especially for those who can't sit still, fall asleep, or feel guilty about not being successful at praying the way we think we're supposed to)

[*Sleeping with Bread, Holding What Gives You Life, Denis Linn, Sheila Fabricant Linn, Matthew Linn*](#)
(a short, simple, and very helpful introduction to the Ignatian practice of *The Examen*)

We'll finish up Lent with three more weeks on prayer, but we'll also give ourselves grace knowing that we can't master it all in one season. We'll look at the next few weeks as an opportunity to learn about other prayer suggested by scripture which can be filed away for a time when they are needed.

Finally, during Lent other explorations into prayer have been undertaken outside of Sunday worship services. Our Session, middle schoolers, and high schoolers have gathered to pray through the use of prayer stations (see page 5 for some photos). This has proved to be a meaningful experience and I'd like to invite everyone to join us during our Maundy Thursday service. We will still gather for Maundy Thursday worship in

Continued from previous page

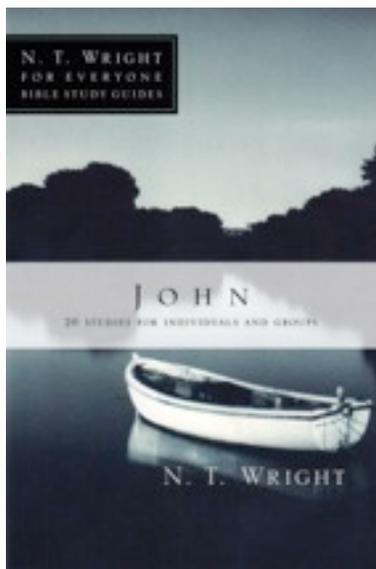
the Parish Hall and celebrate communion, but things may look a bit different this year. Children and families need not fear, I've found over the years that children can pray quite sincerely through the interactive activities that will be part of our time together. I'll look forward to joining with you in prayer and worship as we remember Jesus' last supper with his disciples and prepare our hearts for Good Friday and the joy of Easter Sunday.

May the rest of Lent be an exploration into a deeper relationship with God through prayer.

Chad

NEW! Men's Fellowship

Men of all ages are invited to join our new Men's Fellowship group which meets on Saturday mornings from 8 - 9:30 a.m.



Nursery Care Subs

Need a baby/toddler fix? The nursery is in need of a few substitutes we can call when Colleen won't be able to make it. Please e-mail Kim at chadandkimrodgers@gmail.com or call at 892-0141 to let her know. Thanks!

The BRAB group (Building Relationships Around Books)

We are a group of ladies that meet on the 1st Monday evening of each month. We enjoy snacks & wine while having an informal & lively discussion on member-chosen books. For more info, please contact Kim Rodgers at chadandkimrodgers@gmail.com.

Used Book Sale

We are hosting a used book (and DVD) sale in the Parish Hall on **Saturday, April 12th from 10a.m. - 3p.m.** Check out our selection of adult and children's books, as well as a selection of used DVDs. All items will be available for purchase for \$1.00 or less. All proceeds will benefit the LVPC Appalachia Service Project. If you would like to help organize and/or work the sale, please contact Abby Ernst at abigailernst@gmail.com. We hope to see you there!

Building and Grounds Clean Up

On **Saturday, May 3rd from 9 am - noon**, we'll be raking, trimming bushes, planting, sweeping walkways, and cleaning windows. Please bring your favorite garden tools, rakes, shovels and a little elbow grease! Contact Warren Newman with questions.

Evening Circle

The next meeting of the Women's Evening Circle will be on **Wed., April 16th at 7 p.m. in the Getz Library.** We will be continuing the Presbyterian Women's study, "Abiding Hope." Our lesson is entitled "God Provides," and it is based on Exodus 15:22-18:27. All women are invited to join this informal evening of study, prayer and fellowship. Bring a simple snack to share if you would like to do so; we will be brewing tea or coffee. Many of us are working on prayer shawls, so bring them along! (Photo of parishioner, Sylva Burd, wearing her shawl made by Madeleine Argue). Please call Joni Nodes, 236-7996, or Nancy Knight at 537-4347 for more information.



Come Garden With Your Friends and Neighbors!

We will again be hosting a Community Garden open to the public and benefiting Open Cupboard Food Pantry. Last year was a huge success! The seasonal garden preparation workday is scheduled for March 29th 9:00 a.m. until noon (rain date: April 5th). We are hoping to open the garden on April 5th so we can all get our peas and lettuce in early. There is 1 bed still available (as of printing of this newsletter), registration forms are can be found on the church website.

We encourage everyone to help in Open Cupboard Food Pantry beds out in the garden whether you're a registered gardener or not.

Children's Ministry

It is time to sign up for VBSplus+ 2014! Bible School will be July 13 – 17, from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. starting with dinner each night. Planning workshops for adults will be May 4, and May 18. Last year our first multigenerational Bible School was such a success that we are doing it again! Flyers with a sign up portion will be available in the sanctuary soon. Mark your calendars and join the fun.

The Sunday School Teacher Breakfast Retreat will be April 5, from 9 a.m. until noon in the Parish Hall. If you are interested in teaching Sunday School next year, please join us. Respond to

Kim Rodgers or Linda Stetler. Babysitting will be available.

Sunday School students and their families are encouraged to attend the Maundy Thursday Service in the Parish Hall at 7 p.m., April 17. The children have been learning the stories of Lent in their classrooms; the service will enhance their understanding of the Lenten Season.

The Califon Moms

Moms with young children get together weekly to talk, support each other & let the kids interact/play. We usually meet in the mornings one day a week at parks or one another's homes. This group was started by a few ladies at LVPC, but has branched out to include other moms in the Califon area. If you'd like to join us, contact Natalie Gast at gast.natalie@gmail.com.

Prayer Chain

The Prayer Chain is an email distribution group of people from our LVPC family. Prayer requests are forwarded to Wendy Garcia and then Wendy forwards the prayer to the entire group. If you would like your email address added to the Prayer Chain, please send Wendy an email at kwgarcia@msn.com.

Newsletter Options

Please help us save on postage and copier paper costs by receiving the newsletter via e-mail. Also, by receiving an e-mail version, you will be able to enjoy any photos in color! If interested please e-mail Claudia at: lowervalleyipc@embarqmail.com. The newsletter can also be viewed on our webpage: lowervalley.org.

Parish Life

We'd like to invite everyone to come to Easter sunrise service on April, 20th at LVPC. Breakfast will be served after worship in the Parish Hall. We are looking for some early risers who would be able to help prepare breakfast. Or, if you'd like to make something and drop it off Saturday that would be great too. Time for the service will be announced in April.

A big thank you to everyone who has contributed to the wonderful time we share at Coffee and Conversation. Thanks to those who set up, clean up, bake, cook, bring food and drink and most of all everyone who comes. It's become a great way to get to know each other. And, now give thanks at the beginning of each meal.

If you have any questions about the above you can contact Lisa Coffaro at coffaro423@comcast.net or (973)713-4870.

Join us for Fellowship!

Come and get to know your church family at Coffee & Conversation every Sunday after service in the Parish Hall. Eat, talk and let your kids have fun. Help support this fun time by sharing the load. Set up, bake, bring a favorite dish or help clean up. Sign up at the table in the Parish Hall.

Camp Johnsonburg

Summer camp 2014 is just around the corner. Don't miss out on the sessions you want for you and your family. Go to campjburg.org to register today! If you are a recent camper, you may have received an email with a Login and Password for you to use to expedite your registration. If you need assistance with this, please call the office at 852-2349.

Here's What's Ahead:

Spruce up Day — Saturday, April 26. Be part of the crew to help get the camp ready for summer!

Open House — Sunday, May 4. Bring your family and friends to meet the staff and see what's new around the camp.

Contact info:

Phone: 908-852-2349
Email: office@campjburg.org
Web: campjburg.org
Facebook: [facebook.com/campjburg](https://www.facebook.com/campjburg)

Lost in Yonkers

Fairmount Presbyterian Church and the L.A. Players proudly present *Lost in Yonkers* by Neil Simon on May 2, 3, 9 and 10 at 7 p.m. with a May 4 matinee at 1 p.m. at Fairmount Presbyterian Church Community House. Tickets are \$15. Refreshments will be available. Appropriate for ages 10 and older. For ticket information, please contact Roberta Brassard at 251-2939. Tickets will also be available at the door.

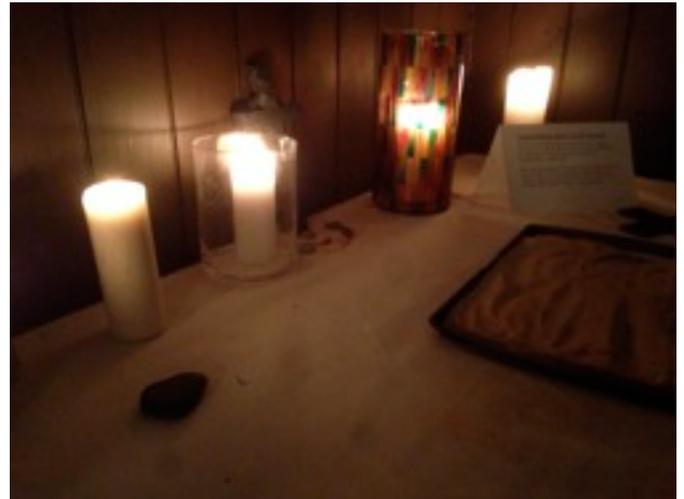
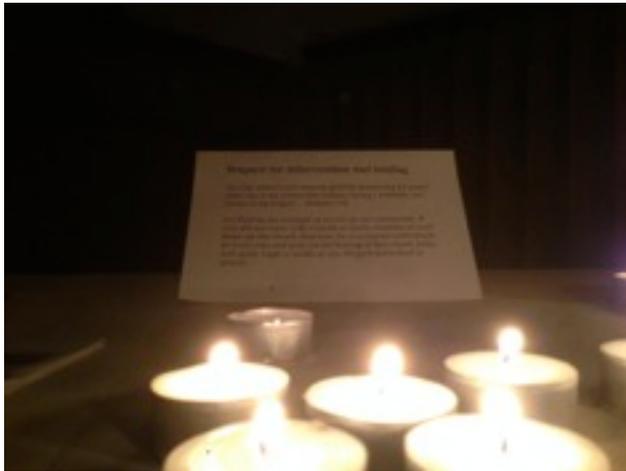
Offering Envelopes

Please remember to pick up your 2014 offering envelopes from the table in the narthex.

Monthly Calendar

This month's calendar can be found on our website: lowervalley.org

Our Lenten Prayer Journey



Holy Week Schedule

Maundy Thursday:

Communion Service at 7 p.m. in the parish hall

Good Friday:

Sanctuary open from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. for prayer and reflection

Easter Sunday:

Sunrise Service at 6:30 a.m. with breakfast following in the parish hall

Family worship at 10 a.m. with fellowship following in the parish hall

Easter Flower Order Form
(orders are due with payment by 4/15)

If you would like to order Easter Flowers to decorate our sanctuary, please fill out the order form below and drop it in the offering plate or send it to the church office. Please indicate the desired quantity and enclose payment with your order.

Name: _____

In memory of: _____

In honor of: _____

Flower	Price	Qty	Total Cost
Mini Daffodil	\$2.60	_____	_____
Daffodil (6")	\$5.50	_____	_____
Easter Lily (4-5 blooms)	\$7.50	_____	_____
Tulip (6 blooms)	\$5.00	_____	_____
Tulip (8 blooms)	\$8.25	_____	_____

Church Info:

Phone: 908-832-2933

E-mail: lowervalleyipc@embarqmail.com

Website: www.lowervalley.org

Office hours: W-F, 8:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Pastor Chad's Contact info:

Cell phone: 892.0044

E-mail: revchadrodgers@gmail.com

Art Table Schedule for Family Worship

4/20: Kim Rodgers, Natalie Gast and Linda Stetler

5/25: Donna and Erika Leddie

Children's Message Schedule

4/27: Ron Schildge

5/18: Tracy Heuneman

Upcoming Servers

Date	Liturgist	Ushers	Communion Servers	Fellowship Host(s)
April 6	Warren Newman	Karen and Warren Newman	May Saxton Terry Hoffman Warren Newman Sue Huntington	Harris
April 13 Palm Sunday	Dick Kline	Janet and Gary Kipp		Gartelmann Rodgers
April 20 Easter Sunday Family Worship	Judy Eckwielen	OPEN OPEN		
April 27	Stephanie Donlon	Anne Underhill Madeleine Argue		O'Keefe Ernst
May 4	OPEN	Judie and Adam Ambielli	Judy Eckwielen Renee Ollerenshaw OPEN OPEN	
May 11	May Saxton	Terry Hoffman Ed Getz		
May 18	Nancy Knight	Lisa Coffaro Isabel Roppolo		
May 25 Family Worship	Marilyn El-Zahr	Donna and John Leddie		

If you are able to serve in an OPEN spot please contact the church office.

If you are unable to serve in an assigned spot please try your best to find a substitute and let the office know of any changes. Thanks so much!

April 2014

Lower Valley Presbyterian Church
445 County Road 513
Califon, NJ 07830

The Vision of our Church

Lower Valley Presbyterian Church is a community of believers who worship God in word and deed, nurture each other through prayer, friendship, and education, and seek to serve others in the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Our four areas of ministry are faith development, caring for each other, outreach ministry and supporting ministry.