



February - March 2021

When There is Nothing Good to Say to Jesus



I wrote a couple of weeks ago in the Candle about how we lost Andrea's father, David, in late January. He died from a brain injury he sustained falling off a ladder while cleaning ice out of the gutters of their family home.

Andrea's dad was a careful person and in good health. The gutters he was cleaning were on a one-story house. Dave even had someone below spotting for him while he was up there on the ladder.

Ninety-Nine times out of 100, a fall like the one that Dave experienced would have led to maybe a fractured bone, a bruised ego, and definitely some finger wagging about how we need to be careful when climbing on ladders. But there always is the 100th time, when everything goes just wrong in a tenth of a second and it can't be undone.

In the time between Dave's accident and his death, the prayer ministries of at least two entire churches (ours of course, and the Williams' family church in Moline) were praying for healing. Dave got the best medical care at a university hospital that specialized in brain injuries. In the end, he just faded away from us anyway.

Even as a Christian and a pastor, I don't know what exactly to say to this. It wasn't time (at least our time) for Dave to die. He didn't "deserve" it in some way. He wasn't even being particularly foolish. Not to brag, but I have done dumber things than what led to his fall many, many times in my life.

The only scripture that really speaks to me about it right now is John 11, when Lazarus dies. You may remember this moment. Jesus hears that his friend, the brother of Mary and Martha, is sick. But instead of rushing off to heal him, Jesus "*stayed two days longer in the place where he was*" (v. 6).

By time that Jesus arrives at Mary and Martha's home in Bethany, Lazarus is dead and buried. Martha goes to meet Jesus at the edge of town, but John says Mary didn't. Mary remained seated in the house. I am probably reading too much into this, but it sure looks like Mary just

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doesn't have it in her to face the man that failed to show up when he was needed. That is a feeling I understand right now in a new way. Martha does go out to meet him, though, and it seems part of the reason why she does have something she wants to say to Jesus. *"Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died"* (v. 21).

Those are words I want to say to Jesus right now. Maybe they are words you have needed to say to Jesus at some point in your life as well. "Jesus, if only you had shown up on time!"

Now, in John 11, Jesus weeps for his friend, Lazarus, and ultimately raises him from the dead. In the end, I know that Jesus weeps with us now, and will raise Dave up as well. That's the promise. As Jesus says here in John 11, he is *"the resurrection and the life"* (v. 25). For Lazarus. For Dave. For all of us. I believe it. There is nothing else worth believing in this death-broken world. But right now, at this moment in our lives, Jesus hasn't quite gotten here yet.

The waiting isn't easy. Right now, I feel as though like Martha, I may have some things to say to Jesus when he shows up, too. At the same time, the hope I don't let go of is that I am waiting for someone who is indeed on the way. I am waiting for Jesus who has the power to bring the dead to life.

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Ash Wednesday Worship Online or In-Person, Drive-up for Ashes.

Ash Wednesday is February 17 this year. We will be offering two services both in person and on the livestream. Services will be at noon and 7pm. Bishop John has given us permission to offer ashes to those who are worshipping with us on the livestream. To make that possible, a clergy person will be available at the front doors of the church between 1-5pm on February 17. Just drive up. If you are planning on attending worship in person, please sign up here: <http://anglican.pub/febworship>



Getting our Hip out of Joint



Naming your children with names that are both pleasant to hear, to say and have meanings that match up with a positive character is generally a good idea. Biblical names, in particular, seem to be loaded with meaning. So, it is no surprise that in Genesis when Isaac and Rebekah name their struggling twins, Jacob gets a name that means “Supplanter” because although he was born after his brother Esau he was grasping Esau’s heel. Jacob further tarnished his name by his deceitfulness. The “Cheater” or “Grabber,” lived up to *that* meaning with brother Esau, father Isaac and father-in-law Laban. We know him as manipulative, deceptive and aggressive. If the story stopped there, we would surely have written him off as how **NOT** to behave. But all of that changes one night as told to us in Genesis 32. The fascinating story involved Jacob physically wrestling with a divine being, a most curious encounter.

24 This left Jacob all alone in the camp, and a man came and wrestled with him until the dawn began to break. 25 When the man saw that he would not win the match, he touched Jacob’s hip and wrenched it out of its socket. 26 Then the man said, “Let me go, for the dawn is breaking!” But Jacob said, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.”

That’s when Jacob discovers that he has actually been wrestling with God and has prevailed (v28). Instead of winning by deceit or trickery, Jacob held on to a divine-like figure as if his life depended on it. The trophy he got for this match was a life-long limp, an ever present reminder of that night. And it is out of this weakness that God is able to establish Jacob as a nation that would bless the world.

So, how did he get a new name, **Israel**, almost like a new identity? Jacob had been alone, unprotected, from the usual possessions, family and distractions. This prepared him for the kind of encounter that would end up changing him for the rest of his life. God changed Jacob’s name to Israel, which means “He strives with God.” So, even though we had seen a tenacity of spirit with Jacob before, here his tenacity and his striving was directed in a positive direction: Striving with God.

But Jacob does not become Israel without personal cost, a pain-filled cost. The thing is, that even for ordinary folks like you and me, it is not uncommon to be wounded in our journey with God, but not out of spite or judgment. See, God is so concerned to take us through the hard stuff of life to conform us to the image of Jesus and that means painful lessons. We might naturally shrink back from both wrestling with God and being wounded, but the Lord sometimes gets us to the point that wounding is the only way forward, if we have managed to hold on long enough!

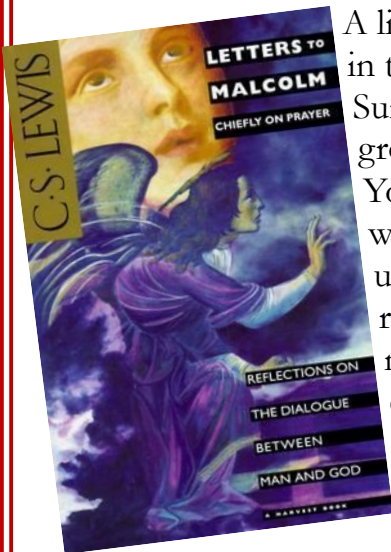
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Let me offer an example. Many years ago when David and I were doing church planting in Turkey, I felt the call of God to preach but our teammates were not so sure that was a biblical option. The ensuing discussions, Bible studies and decisions were incredibly painful for me, and not one that I would have chosen to endure. But I held on to the belief that preaching was going to be a way that God wanted to use me for his kingdom so, with tenacity, I held on to that conviction. To this day, I count it to be one of the most difficult periods in my life, even feeling like God was wounding me in it. I have that memory in my past and I walk with a metaphorical limp, like a hip out of joint. But what I learned is that God has a purpose for the world and a purpose for us individually, and sometimes that requires changing the prevailing direction of our character. We might be used to skimming on the surface of our spiritual lives, just trying to survive when God decides that it is time to go deeper, to challenge some of those superficial tendencies. When the wound comes, we might be tempted to deny it, to cover it up, to get angry with God or to blame others. I am not suggesting all painful things in our lives were directed by God as a sordid kind of masochist scheme. God is never cruel. We know that **Jacob was not broken, but he was changed in a profound way.** The question for us becomes, are we willing to cling to God in the midst of the pain until God brings about the dislocation and the re-orientation to a deeper, more godly character?



Young Adult's Home Group



A little more than a year ago, the young adults, married and single, folks in their twenties and thirties began getting together every other week on Sunday nights at 4:00. There were eight of us who gelled together as a group and we had hopes of having fun, casual times together as well. You know the rest of the story by the time we hit March last year. But we have managed to stay together even through the summer and the upheaval, even weathering the loss of three people to new jobs requiring moves. In the Fall we lost a little momentum when I started needing to have Sunday early evenings dedicated to the children. That didn't stop us though so we decided we wanted to get back into regular meetings in January. Currently we are talking about prayer, digging in with some of our deep questions while reading C. S. Lewis' Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer. Let Mother Pamela know if you are interested in joining us. pmeeks@epiphanyanglican.net



The Rt. Rev. John Guernsey visit to Epiphany on Epiphany Sunday, 2021



Missions Update: Sat-7

Epiphany is glad to contribute to SAT-7, a Christian TV ministry dedicated to “support[ing] a growing Church in the Middle East and North Africa, confident in Christian faith and witness, serving the community and contributing to the good of society and culture.”

SAT-7 Strives to Serve All, Especially Those in Need



“As the pandemic and lockdowns continue, women, members of minorities, and people with disabilities in the Middle East and North Africa are even more vulnerable to oppression. SAT-7 shines a light on the struggles and strength of these communities and answers God’s call to serve them. From women in rural North Africa whose lives are so restricted they feel they were ‘born to die’; to impoverished children in Iran made desperate as the pandemic destroys their chance for education; to people with disabilities denied a place in society, and refugees who live in stateless limbo, a lack of freedoms destroys hope, and it destroys lives.

But in God’s eyes, no human being is relegated to the margins; to Him, every person is precious. So, He calls and equips His children to ‘proclaim freedom for captives’ (Isaiah 61:1).

SAT-7’s holistic programming answers this call in three ways. First, as we share the Gospel across the region, our viewers of all backgrounds find freedom in Christ; true, life-changing freedom from spiritual darkness and despair. Second, our programs give marginalized people the freedom to be heard – meaning millions encounter the otherwise side-lined voices of women, children, Christians, and ethnic minorities. Finally, SAT-7’s programs begin discussions needed to transform homes, families, and communities. They lead viewers through stigma and struggle as they take steps to overcome life’s challenges.”



SAT-7’s viewership was up 30% in 2020, showing that “God was on the move in

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extraordinary ways.” According to SAT-7, “the growth in engagement was especially marked for the channels that serve Arabic-speaking children and Turkish viewers, as well as SAT-7 ACADEMY education programs. Audience engagement for SAT-7 KIDS climbed by 90 percent (to 47,300 contacts). Contacts for the Turkish channel, SAT-7 TÜRK, rose 120 percent (to 25,300), and audience engagement for SAT-7 ACADEMY soared by 328 percent (to 47,500).”

Aside from good metrics, SAT-7 has many personal success stories to share. A recent report gave two examples:

“In situations that seem hopeless, Jesus shows up in a mighty way. Osama from Egypt shares, ‘Jesus saved me from darkness. When I called out to Him, He intervened and saved me from death and brought me to life. I am here now because of his love and grace.’

A woman from Afghanistan relays her own powerful testimony. ‘I gave my life to God, and my husband wanted to have me arrested. I treated him with love. Now he accepts my being a Christian and has stopped threatening me. Give thanks for this change and pray that even more change will come.’”



Couples Connection



Why is Virginia for lovers? Who receives the most Valentines? If you know the answers to these questions or even if you don't, please join Epiphany couples for some romantic and interesting trivia games. Grab your sweetie, invite your friends, and mark your calendar for **Saturday, February 6, 2021** (day before the Super Bowl), **4-6 pm on Zoom**.

[Sign up here to participate!](#)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

- 1 Lyn Adams
- 2 Doug Greenwood
Timothy Stromberg
- 3 Brody Hanger
- 6 Victoria Monroe
- 7 James Derrick
Barbara Noble
- 9 Bethany Hait
Larry Pantzer
- 10 Thomas Cummings
Patricia Meyer
Liliauna Whitlock
- 11 Jeffrey Rhoads
- 14 Faith Turner
- 17 Nancy Knight
- 20 Alex Peake
- 22 Ragu Nadarajah
Jim Wolfe
- 23 Gary Hall
- 24 Pat Schreiner
- 26 Samuel Phillips
- 27 Molly Carey Frost
Jonathan Meeks
Helen Norton

- 3 Andrew Long
Charlie Monroe
- 4 CJ Easton
Don Monaghan
- 6 Ross Cummings
Colin Zimmerman
- 8 Diane Driscoll
Robin Rauh
- 9 Sally McNeely
Tress Navarrete
- 10 Faith Fisler
Christian Navarrete
- 14 William Turner
- 15 Gail Haddock
Hailey Merrill
- 17 David Schreiner
- 20 Scott Boncher
- 22 Brad Johnson
- 23 Megan Rhoads
- 27 Haiyan Croft
- 29 Gary Lawson
- 30 Christina Fishburne
- 31 Laura Menzel

Happy Anniversary



February

- 3 Gail Haddock & Don Holt
- 14 Maggie & Ran Cottingham
Molly & Christopher Frost
- 18 Beth & Charlie Monroe
Debby & Ralph Morris

March

- 18 Andrea & Charles Morello
- 20 Courtney & Daniel Turner
- 22 Margaret & Merle Stromberg



Here at Epiphany we emphasize:

- ✦ Encountering God through beautiful worship and believing prayer
- ✦ Building a multigenerational congregation that loves children and families.
- ✦ Equipping every member to publicly proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Resources

Epiphany Staff	Email
The Rev. Peter Frank, Rector	pfrank@epiphanyanglican.net
The Rev. Pamela Meeks, Associate Rector	pmeeks@epiphanyanglican.net
The Rev. David Welch, Parish Deacon	dwelch@epiphanyanglican.net
The Rev. Sally Hoover, Parish Deacon	shoover@epiphanyanglican.net
Jimmy Crawford, Music Director	jcrawford@epiphanyanglican.net
Janice Monaghan, Financial Director	jmonaghan@epiphanyanglican.net

<u>2021 Vestry</u>	<u>Vestry Officers/Committee Chairs</u>
Lisa Baehr Jim Boggs Christina Cummings Kelly Derrick Bill Hoover Leslie Johnson Carole Menzel Pat Meyer Geoffrey Seroka Margaret Stromberg	Senior Warden Lisa Baehr Junior Warden.....Geoffrey Seroka Registrar..... Carole Menzel Home Group Ministry Coordinator.....Leslie Johnson Vestry Liaison to Mission Committee.....Jim Boggs Vestry Liaison to Benevolence Committee Kelly Derrick Vestry Liaison to Finance Committee..... Carole Menzel Finance Committee ChairmanTom Miller* Treasurer.....Tom Miller* Assistant Treasurer.....Charlie Monroe* ChancellorDavid Reed*
	*Non-vestry members

Intercessory Prayer Letter
 Requests can now be submitted by email at a secure site,
prayer-request@epiphanyanglican.net
 or written and left in the prayer request box in the Fellowship Area.
 All prayer requests are collected after the Sunday morning services and prepared for Monday morning distribution. For more information or questions, contact Faith Fisler by email at mizfiz34@gmail.com.

Publishing Information

The ***Epiphany STAR*** is published bi-monthly and contains articles and information about what God has and is doing in us and through us as the Epiphany Family. It is intended to encourage each of us in our ministry and discipleship by relating how God is working in the midst of us.

The ***Epiphany Candle*** is published weekly by email, highlighting what is coming in the days ahead at Epiphany and other information that the staff and vestry feel is important to emphasize.

Articles and Subscription requests: star@epiphanyanglican.net
candle@epiphanyanglican.net
jcrawford@epiphanyanglican.net (for weekly bulletin)

Deadlines: STAR: 21st of the January, March, May, July, September & November.
Bulletin: Monday, 8 AM • Candle: Wednesday, 8 AM



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Visit our website at www.epiphanyanglican.net

Encountering God, Building a multigenerational congregation, Equipping every member.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

February

3, 10, 24	12:00 PM	Midday Eucharist In-Person.
7, 14, 21, 28	8:30 AM	In-Person Worship.
7, 14, 21, 28	10:15 AM	Holy Eucharist - Livestream
17	12:00 PM; 7:00 PM	Ash Wednesday Service

March

3, 10, 17, 24, 31	12:00 PM	Midday Eucharist In-Person..
7, 14, 21	8:30 AM	In-Person Worship.
7, 14, 21	10:15 AM	Holy Eucharist - Livestream
28	TBD	Palm Sunday Services

Look for us online:

Church of the Epiphany: <https://epiphanyanglican.net/>

Church Calendar: <https://epiphanyanglican.net/events/>

**Sign up for In-Person Worship
Services**

**Look for the link in the weekly
Candle**

*Due to current circumstances,
many of the normal activities have either
moved online or have been **postponed**.
Check with your Ministry Organizer
for details relevant to your specific activity.
See the weekly Candle for the
most current information.*