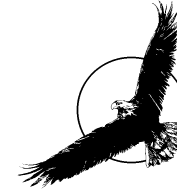


February 2012 CURRENTS

Monthly newsletter of Eagle River Presbyterian Church



Join us for Valentine's Dinner on Saturday, February 18. Martha Rogers of Peter's Creek Inn will be catering the meal. Please see the narthex for details and sign ups.

We do have a minimum we need, so please don't postpone signing up!

All are welcome to join the **Women's Book Group** as we meet on February 16th at 7 pm to discuss *Left Neglected*, by Lisa Genova.



- March *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer
- April *Major Pettigrew's Last Stand*, by Helen Simonson
- May Bring your favorite?, TBD



The date has been set for the **Annual Mission Auction: March 31st**. That gives us all plenty of time to build, bake, knit, quilt and handcraft something special to donate. This also gives you time to contact your favorite local merchant to see if they are willing to donate goods or services to our event. If you need a donation form with our tax ID for a vendor, please contact the Church Office. Consider asking a friend or neighbor to join us that evening for food and fellowship.

Dear Friends,

The calendar says February today, and it's snowing up a storm outside, but the church is beginning to look forward to



Easter. The six weeks before Easter is the time that the church gives every year to preparing our lives for the death and resurrection of Jesus, and this year Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 22. We'll begin it together with a service in our sanctuary, receiving the imposition of ashes as a reminder of our mortality and giving ourselves again to repentance and acts of charity.

Many people observe Lent with the discipline of giving something up – chocolate, alcohol, coffee, or watching television. The practice began in the Middle Ages, when the church asked believers to embrace the discipline of fasting to remind themselves of Jesus' time of temptation and fasting in the wilderness. Today the practice helps us remember that from time to time it's good to deny ourselves in order to remember Jesus' sacrifice for us.

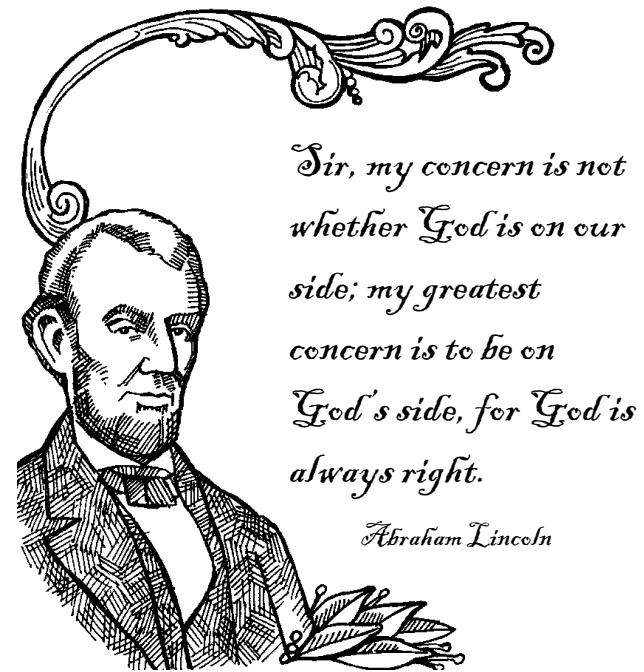
This week, though, I read an article in a preacher's magazine that suggested that maybe the best practice in Lent isn't giving something up. The author says that Jesus really only commanded us to do three things – to love the Lord our God and our neighbors with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, to go into the world and preach the gospel of God's kingdom, and to share the feast of bread and cup as we remember the Lord's death until he comes again. Jesus didn't command us to give up chocolate, or coffee, or the internet – only to follow Him.

“Here's the deal: *Lent is properly about three things: Ceasing to do wrong things, starting to do right things, and confessing one's failure at both.* That's why giving up chocolate and coffee is just silly and trivializes the season. Instead, I should take a close look at giving up what's important -- things like pride, arrogance, impatience, ingratitude--and the list could go on forever. I should also seize Lent as yet another opportunity to start doing what is right, and at the same time confess that I have failed to adequately do either one of these things.” (Timothy Merrill, *Homileticsonline.com*)

If giving up something helps any of us to remember to repent and to follow Jesus – then let's do that with a whole heart. If taking on something – an act of charity or a new friendship or a spiritual discipline like reading Scripture daily or fasting once a week – will help your walk with Christ, then pursue that with all the fervor you can. Either way, I pray that the six weeks of Lent will be a rich opportunity for spiritual growth for all of us, whether we're eating chocolate or not.

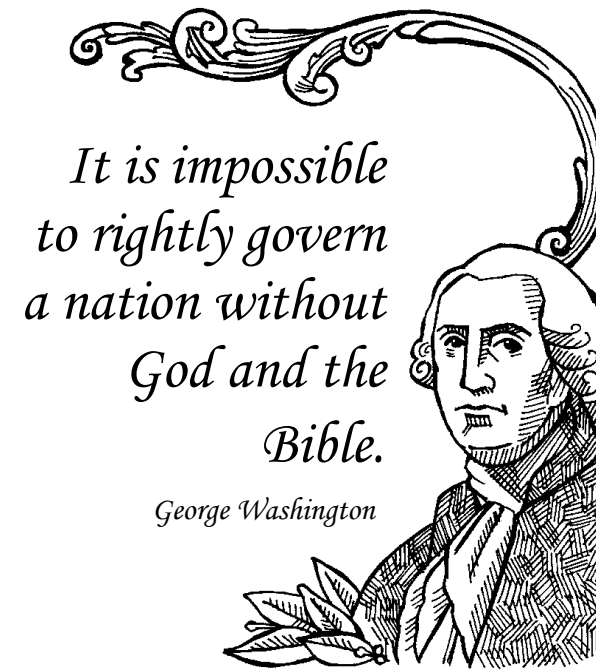
God's grace and peace be with you all, dear friends!

Piper



*Sir, my concern is not
whether God is on our
side; my greatest
concern is to be on
God's side, for God is
always right.*

Abraham Lincoln



*It is impossible
to rightly govern
a nation without
God and the
Bible.*

George Washington

If you have any questions about your 2011 Contribution Letter, please contact our Financial Technician, Robin Miller, at erpctreas@gci.net or leave a message with the Church Office.

**Sunday Worship Times are
8:30 and 11 a.m. Please join us!**



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