



## On the Journey

### Another Lenten Season

By now, we are well on our way through another Lenten Season. Are you excited? Or does it make you yawn and long even more for the donuts you vowed to give up for 40 days? Some people ignore the seasons of the church calendar, while for others, they look forward to this season. It gives opportunity to reflect more intentionally on Jesus' sufferings and death. And it is a good time to evaluate our own spiritual journey and walk with God.

Even though a 40-day period before Easter was practiced almost from the beginning of the early church, we in the Anabaptist tradition have not always paid much attention to Lent. It seemed a

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## Worship Preview

I will confess something here; I don't like roosters very much. Well, actually, I do like roosters if they are fixed the way mama fixed them. Crispy-fried! The thing I don't like about roosters is that they are so loud and so early in the morning. I like to decide when I get up in the morning, not have some crowing rooster decide for me. I doubt if Peter was very fond of roosters either. Roosters remind me that I should have gone to bed a little earlier, and roosters reminded Peter of his most famous failure. One of the things Peter is known for in the Gospels is something none of us would ever want to be known for, and that is for denying Jesus. That certainly is a seriously grievous thing, to deny that you know the one who would die for you!

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**Sermon Title:**  
**Peter's Three Denials of Jesus**  
**Sermon Text:**  
**Matthew 26:69-75**

**Sunday Worship - 9:00 am**

Worship Leader - Tim Eash

You can now join in the live stream of Sunday sermons by clicking onto You Tube, then typing in FMC INDIANA in the search box.

We begin at 9:00 am on Sunday mornings, but the livestream may not be fully available until 11 am.

**Sunday School - 10:30 am**

Music - Worship Team

BIRTHDAYS	
Virginia Hershberger	3/8
Gordon Kauffman	3/8
Vera Miller	3/10
Selena Kurtz	3/10
Ethon Tepen	3/14
Ruby Bontreger	3/15
Jake Schwartz	3/23
Linda Miller	3/25
Bernie Miller	3/28
Michelle Mullet	4/1
Al Yoder	4/3

**First Mennonite Church**  
**PO Box 508**  
**Middlebury IN 46540**  
**574-825-5135**

*Our mission is to extend  
grace, build peace, and share  
love within & beyond our  
faith community*

*Worship Service  
Sunday 9:00a  
Sunday School 10:15a*

*Office Hours*

*Pastor Phil  
Tuesday 9:30a—1:30p  
Thursday 1:00p—6:00p*

*Pastor Tim  
by appointment*

*Business Office  
Monday and Tuesday  
8:00a—5:00p*

## Outreach

FMW Sewing next project is for  
Christian Aid Ministries

Boy's Packs (ages 5-12)

1 notepad (5" X 7")

1 pencil

1 pen

3 tennis balls (no sponge balls)

1 comb

1 Matchbox sized car or truck

Please avoid things that look strange or unrealistic, items with TV, occult, military, sports or cartoon characters. While we want to promote God's word, no scripture verses please. These packs are sometimes distributed in security-sensitive locations.

Please place your items in the tote in the lobby by April 13th.



## Board

The Board and Pastor Phil is very much appreciative to everyone who turned in their Pastor Evaluation. It was a great confirmation that Phil is right where he belongs. We are continuing work on updating the Child Protection Policy. Bonneyville Church is closing. We encourage you to extend an invitation to any members you might know to join us for worship. LMC's Pastors from the Great Lakes District will be visiting FMC on June 20. If you are would be willing to provide lunch for them, please reach out to Pastor Phil.

## Discipleship

New Books & Books on Loan

*Faith Still Moves Mountains: Miraculous Stories of the Healing Power of Prayer*

by Harris Faulkner

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*Memoir of an Unimagined Career: 43 Years*

*Inside Mennonite Media*

by Melodie M. Davis

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*Justa's Escape: A Journey from WWII Ukraine*

by Justina Neufeld, Russell Binkley, & Beverly Olson Buller

~

*Rewired: An Unlikely Doctor, a Brave Amputee, and the Medical Miracle That Made History*

by Dr. Ajay K. Seth

A raccoon, a young lady, a delicate doctor and their battle for healing. A great faith story

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Discipleship wishes to thank Pastor Phil, Pastor Tim & Sonya for their leadership in Psalms. The attendance remained stable throughout. Many positive comments were expressed and the desire for another was stated. We are grateful for those who lead at FMC.



## Administration

### Stewardship Report for February 26 2023

Money Given to Budget YTD Money Given to Budget  
**\$ 3,815.00** **\$ 127,922.26**

Amount Needed Amount Needed Year to Date for Budget  
**\$ 5,047.52** **\$ 126,188.00**

## Worship Preview cont'd

As Matthew tells the story, Peter denied that he knew what the circumstances were that brought a gathering to Caiaphas' house in the middle of the night. And then Peter denied that he knew Jesus. And it was not just that Peter denied Jesus, but he denied him three times. Come on Peter, everybody knew you were lying. Everybody at Caiaphas' house that fateful night knew Jesus, and they knew exactly why they were there. They had captured Jesus, and everyone came to see what would happen to him. What did Peter think people were thinking, that he had gotten lost walking home in the middle of the night, and he just happened to wander into Caiaphas' house? Everybody there knew Jesus. And they knew why Caiaphas' house was all lit up in the middle of the night. Peter, you're going to need a better line than that. But, I suppose there may be a silver-lining in Peter's lie. It appears as though Peter wasn't very good at lying, it appears as though he doesn't have much practice at it. Peter, you do have that going for you! The truth is that Peter was overcome with fear, and people who are suddenly overcome with fear do irrational things. Peter just wanted to stay

alive, and Peter suddenly had some strange premonition that Jesus may not make it through the weekend. And he was right. Jesus didn't! But the strange thing is that, as filled with fear as Peter was, he didn't leave immediately. He hung around until he had denied Jesus three times, each time more intensely. And then like clockwork, that old rooster did what roosters do, it crowed in the morning.

Earlier that night, Jesus had warned Peter that he wasn't as committed to Jesus as he thinks he is. Yes, he loves Jesus, but he is also susceptible to fear, and before dawn, Peter would deny that he knew Jesus, and do it three times. We may think that the crowing of the rooster was to remind Peter that he had just denied Jesus, as though the rooster was programmed to crow when Peter completed his third denial. But that is not the case at all. Roosters naturally crow every morning. And way too early, in my opinion. That's just what they do. They crow. The crowing of a rooster was an alarm, before there were alarm clocks. It was a wake-up call before there were phones. Roosters crow to alert people that a new day is dawning. And that is exactly what the most famous rooster in the Bible was doing.

Background Scripture: Luke 22:31-34, 54-62

### LENT - 2023 "Revealed Secrets in the Passion of Jesus"

<b>March 12</b> – <i>“Peter’s Three Denials of Jesus”</i>	Matthew 26:69-79, Luke 22:31-34
<b>March 19</b> – <i>“The Three Signs at Jesus’ Death”</i> <i>Natural, Spiritual, Cosmic)</i>	Matthew 27:45-54
<b>March 26</b> – <i>“Jesus’ Three Trips into Jerusalem”</i>	Luke 19:28-48, 22:7-20
<b>April 2</b> (PALM SUNDAY)	
<b>April 6</b> (MAUNDY THURSDAY) – <i>“The Three Sacraments”</i>	Matthew 26:26-29, John 13:1-17
<b>April 9</b> (EASTER) – <i>“Jesus’ Three Days in a Tomb”</i>	Matthew 27:57-28:6
<b>April 16</b> – <i>“Three Appearances of Jesus on Easter”</i>	Luke 24:13-49, John 20:10-18
<b>April 23</b> – <i>“The Three Phases of the Human Body”</i>	Luke 24:1-6, I Corinthians 15:1-57
<b>April 30</b> – <i>“The Three Phases of God’s Salvation”</i>	Genesis 12:1-3, Revelation 19:9, 21:1-8

## On the Journey cont'd

little too Catholic for many. The Anabaptist's argument was that we should intently follow Jesus every day, not limit it to a 40-day period. And Jesus' instruction was to "Take up your cross and follow me," not just give up donuts and chocolate for a few days. That can hardly be equated with the kind of denial and suffering Jesus meant when He said, "Take up your cross daily and follow me." And since Anabaptist roots are buried pretty deeply in suffering, many over the years have found no value in creating some sort of "imitation suffering" for 40 days. They found nothing in their experience of persecution and suffering to celebrate, nor anything they wanted to ever replicate.

But in recent times, many in our faith tradition have found meaning in observing Lent as a special season of the year. And I am one of them. I like to observe Lent, and the reason is that it draws me back to the story, to focus on the Passion Narrative of Jesus again every year. And an amazing thing has happened. Every year, I see new things in the story that I never saw before. Every year, I gain a new appreciation for Jesus and all He is doing to save this disaster we call the world. Every year I grow to love Jesus more. Every year, I stand in awe a little more of the greatness of Jesus, and know that we are one year closer to the time when Jesus will return to the earth and bring His Kingdom in all its fullness and glory. One thing is for sure, the focus of Lent must be on Jesus, and not on me and the piddly things I choose to give up.

Lent is a great opportunity to walk through that last week of Jesus' earthly life with Him, taking note of what was yet important to Him at the end of His ministry, listening to His words for any sense of urgency, hearing last instructions to His disciples, finding last minute invitations to those who had not yet come to believe in Him

and follow Him, and bringing our own hearts to find hope in those final words and deeds of our loving Lord that can help us on our journey through this world. There are so many valuable lessons in that week, as Jesus prepares His disciples to live faithfully when He is not physically with them anymore.

During our Lenten Worship this year, we will be noticing things that we find in groups of three (Three crosses, three denials, three cosmic signs, three people weeping, etc.). What is the significance of there being three? There doesn't seem to be one pattern that fits all of the trifacta we find. For some, they represent a progression. And for others, they present 3 different perspectives on an object or event, representing (1) The Natural, (2) The World's Perspective, and (3) God's Perspective. God's perspective is almost always hidden from the world, revealed only through eyes of Faith. But all of these "Threes" reveal spiritual treasures hidden from the world, but revealed to those who have learned to see and live from the perspective of faith in God.

Won't you come and join us in worship this year and discover new insights into the old story, but most importantly, grow in your love for Jesus?

Written by Pastor Philip Yoder

## Preschool

Pleasant Oaks Preschool has an opportunity for you with their Spring Fundraiser! We're taking orders for Shirley's Gourmet Popcorn until March 22. Orders will be delivered the last week of April. With your order, you'll help preschool pay for their last new piece of playground equipment. Orders can be placed on the form located on the bulletin board. We appreciate your support!