



The Temptation in the Wilderness, Briton Riviere, 1898

FROM THE PASTOR

The Lenten season begins *Ash Wednesday*— scheduled for February 17th at 6 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

Lent is the period of 40 weekdays prior to Easter. It was originally a time to *prepare* candidates for baptisms and became a period of *penitence* for baptized followers of Jesus Christ.

How do you navigate Lent during a *period of pestilence*?

Quite honestly, in these present times, I would prefer cancellation of Lent and instead celebrate Easter from February to May.

And my suggestion is short-sighted and based on bad theology. The calling for a period of introspection and preparation is indispensable to your spiritual formation.

This is a period of reflection and discipleship which assists forming you into the image of Christ.

Lent is a season in the wilderness.

And if you put in the work and discipline, you can emerge from this period with renewed passion and creativity.

The best known Scriptures of encouragement and blessing are created through wisdom discovered in a wilderness.

To that end...three resources are available to enhance your spiritual formation:

- Please plan to connect each Sunday at 11 a.m. (in-person or through social media). **Worship** is crafted to assist, guide, and encourage you during this challenging period.
- Wednesday, February 17th to Wednesday, March 24th you're invited to participate in **Lenten Discipleship Series** each Wednesday at 6 p.m.

The guide for our reflection is *Land without Borders: how God guides you through the wilderness*, by John A. Beck (adjunct faculty member at Jerusalem University College in Israel).

Beck's expertise is using the Scriptures physical landscapes to heighten your spiritual experience. All will receive Zoom invitation.

- **Every Kinda People** is a weekly podcast available each Monday, beginning February 21st through Easter. Third members and community leaders in Saint Louis will offer wisdom and practical applications for your Lenten journey.

Let's travel through this winter season, knowing spring and new life are just around the corner.

This lesson is found in nature and the term for **Lent**: Middle English *lenten*, "spring" from Old English *lenten*, "to lengthen [daylight]."

Parker Palmer is a go-to resource in these matters:

"In the Upper Midwest newcomers often receive a classic piece of wintertime advice: "The winters will drive you crazy until you learn to get out into them"...If you live in the Midwest long enough, you learn that a daily walk into the winter world will fortify the spirit by taking you boldly to the very season you fear." (Palmer, Let Your Life Speak)

Are you ready to walk boldly into the winter?

How will you change when the season of winter gives way to spring?

Grace and peace for your journey ahead,
Tommy

Family Ministries

This Lenten season I'm going to ask our families to join in a strange and ancient practice.

Prior to the printing press the Scripture we had was hand copied by scribes; errors, doodles in the margins, and all. We call this, "Illuminated Scripture."

Lent is a wonderful time to practice a discipline. As Lent coincides with winter, a continued sheltering due to COVID, and search for distractions from the mess of our world, I have stumbled upon folks who have started their own "Illumination Projects," and have started my own.

Here's an example:

<https://www.christiancentury.org/article/first-person/i-was-scribe-chicago-illuminated-scripture-project>

I am asking our students and families (and anyone else interested) to spend some time reading scripture together and copying it. I'll send a Lenten passage each week. You pick a favorite translation and get some plain paper and your favorite writing utensil then write and "illumine" as inspiration strikes. It will be nice to have a collection of "translations" on Easter that we can share together.

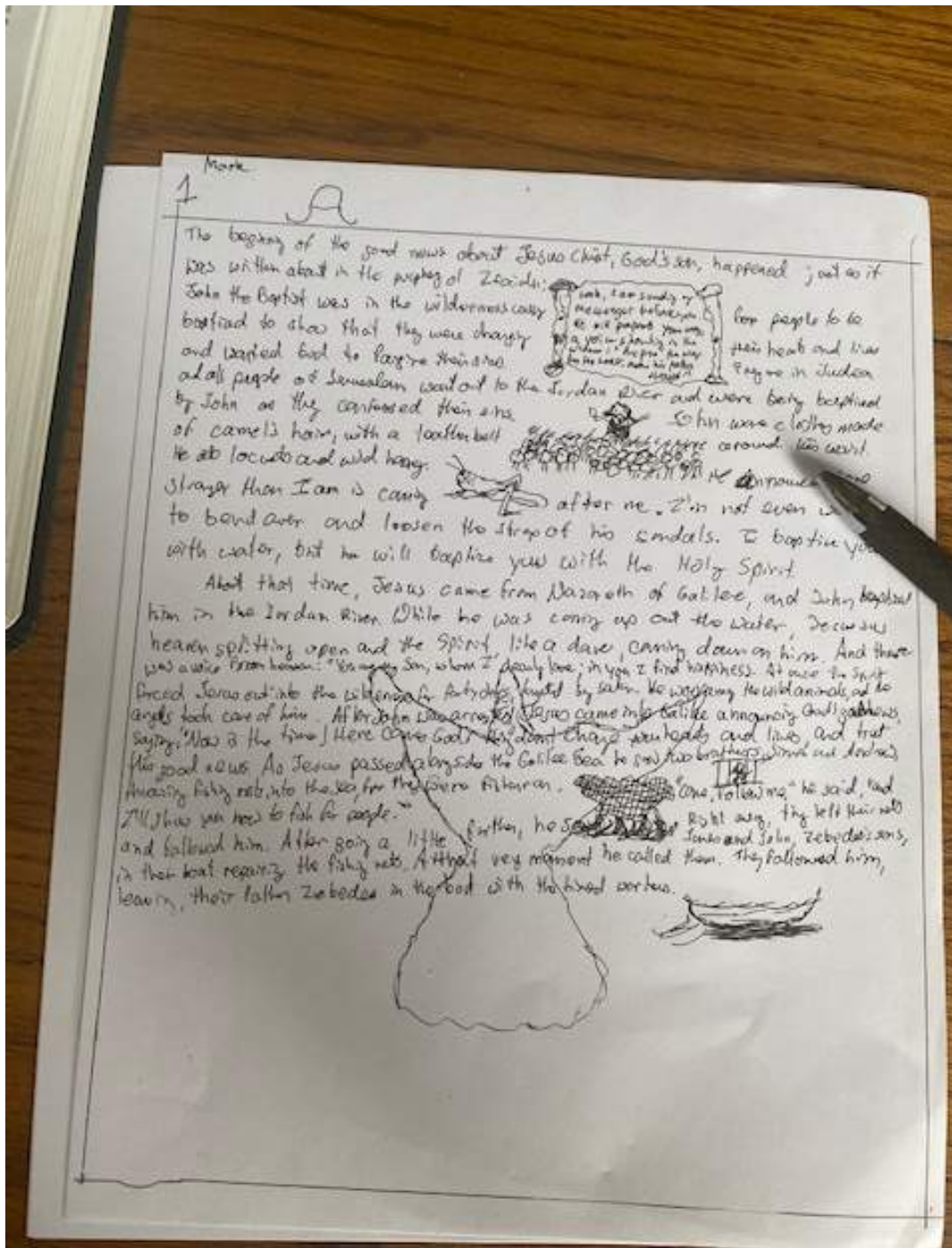
This is the most recent "Illumination" project that was sanctioned and published in several hundred years: <https://saintjohnsbibnotle.org/>.



Rev. Drew Phillips
Minister to Families



Full disclosure, my penmanship is notoriously atrocious, you know this if you've seen it. I don't possess or claim artistic ability. And yet I am finding some peace and meaningful reflection in the slow, long work of hand-writing scripture and "doodling" with it. Below is my own attempt take on the first part of Mark's Chapter 1.



We will continue our Godly Play on Zoom: Sundays at 4:00 p.m. for our children, and Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. for Youth Group. Please let Drew know if you'd like an invite: dphillips@third-baptist.org.



LENTEN SERMON
SERIES:
*SORTING THE
SHEEP FROM THE
GOATS*

The Music Department

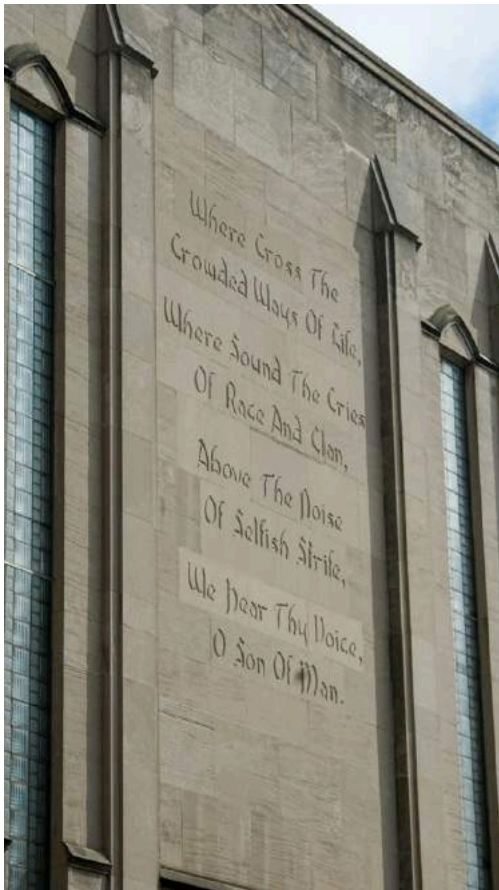
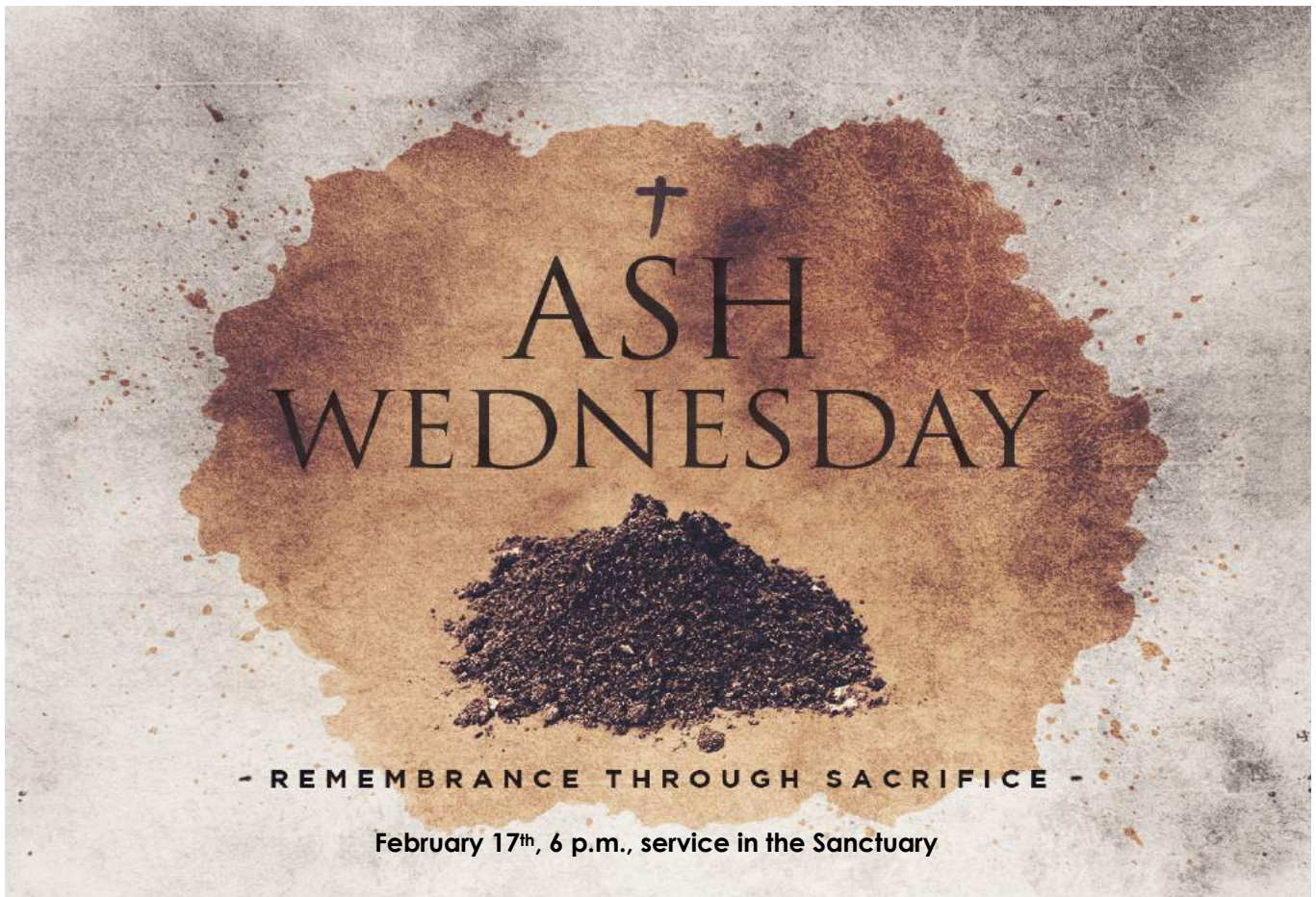
Dr. Phillip Barnes, Director of Music

At the end of 2020 we bade a sad farewell to Rebecca Margolis who has served as our Alto section leader for three years. Becca is moving to the warmer climes of Pasadena (CA) where we have no doubt her pure tones will enrich many a choral group, once the coronavirus abates!

We send her on her way with a 'bon voyage' and thank her for all she brought to our choir and worship. Her extended duet with Nathan Brown in Britten's canticle, *Abraham and Isaac*, was the defining feature of our final service before the onslaught of COVID, back in March 2020.



Pops Jackson, Gene Dobbs Bradford, and Steve Johnston helped TBC celebrate the Christmas season with their performance of ***What You Gonna Call Your Pretty Little Baby?*** for the December 27th service!



Birthdays in February

- 2 • Verla Richman
- 4 • Michelle Campbell
- 6 • Delilah Canning
- 6 • Maria Gray
- 9 • Melinda Jackson
- 10 • LaVerne Graham
- 11 • Beverly Odell
- 12 • Kaelyn Smithers
- 16 • Carl Moritz
- 17 • Donna McDill
- 20 • Gene Dobbs Bradford
- 21 • Rick Lay
- 22 • Edward Sharpe
- 23 • Deborah Watson



In the city for good!

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