

TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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BIBLE READING FELLOWSHIP
PO Box 380, Winter Park, FL 32790
by Mara McClain

Sunday, June 26

Acts 17:12-34 He got to know some of the Epicurean and Stoic intellectuals pretty well through these conversations. (v.18a The Message)

Paul spent the second half of his life zealously preaching the gospel to large groups. He also actively sought out believers of other gods to share the gospel with them. He took the time to go into the streets and find these people who spent their days discussing religion, and he conversed with them. By talking, I mean speaking and, in turn listening to them speak, he was able to get them intrigued by his faith. He didn't preach "at" this group because that wasn't the way to reach them. Paul respectfully discussed their religions and many gods with them, and then they asked about his God.

Paul's purpose was to share the gospel; his method was to treat the Athenians with respect and meet them where they were.

Father, I pray for courage and patience to seek out those who believe in false gods and share Your love for them in a respectful and relatable way.

Numbers 21:4-9, 21-35; Psalm 118; Luke 13:10-17

Monday, June 27

Psalm 106:1-18 But it wasn't long before they forgot the whole thing, wouldn't wait to be told what to do. They only cared about pleasing themselves in that desert, provoked God with their insistent demands. He gave them exactly what they asked for—but along with it they got an empty heart. (vv.13-15)

I am intrigued by the Israelites behavior after being led out of Egypt. They witnessed God perform so many miracles like the plagues, parting of the Red Sea, and the provision of manna for them to eat. Yet, they still doubted that God had a plan for them and would take care of them. They kept making requests to take control

of their lives. The Lord allowed them to have what they wanted, and they ended up with an "empty heart." They did not win by turning from God. They were worse off. An empty heart sounds like a sad and lost thing. I think we do that sometimes as well. We forget that God has a plan for us and is better at taking care of us than we are.

Lord, forgive me when I lose perspective and try to lead my own life. Forgive me when I forget all You have done for me and how You care for me. I know Your way, and Your plans are way better than I can imagine.

Numbers 22:1-212; Romans 6:12-23; Matthew 21:12-2

Tuesday, June 28

Numbers 22:21-38 When the donkey saw the angel blocking the road and brandishing a sword, she veered off the road into ditch. Balaam beat the donkey and got her back on the road. (v.23)

I have always believed that if you want something to happen, you can make it so. That can be positive or negative. Watching the Olympic athletes compete this week and hearing their stories of training and challenges has reminded me that you can achieve your goals with hard work and perseverance. Balaam's ride on his ass shows that you can push and push and push, but if it's not God's will, your ass will probably lead you into a ditch or a fence or a corner you can't get out of. The ass didn't want to continue, but Balaam had his plan.

Eventually, the Lord appeared to Balaam and revealed that he was acting foolishly and disobeying the Lord. Balaam repented and did what the Lord told him to. Forgive me, Lord, when I push my agenda and disobey You or don't seek Your guidance. I am foolish and get myself in situations I can't get out of.

Psalms 120, 121, 122, 123; Romans 7:1-12; Matthew 21:23-32

Wednesday, June 29

Numbers 22:41-23:12 Then Balak said to Balaam, "What have you done to me? I took you to put a curse on my

enemies but behold, you have actually blessed them!" (v.11 NASB)

Balak asked Balaam to petition God to help him defeat a group of people living on land that he wanted. Balaam sought the Lord, who said No, he would not support Balak destroying these people who were precious to him.

The world is a political powder keg these days. Christians aren't innocent in this. We fight over ordaining women, church property, who can attend church, and supporting one cause over another. We consider those who support beliefs different from our own to be enemies and wish to conquer and destroy them or, at the very least, have them banned from taking communion.

What if, instead of petitioning God for victory over our "enemies" who are fellow believers and therefore precious in the Lord's eyes, we sought wisdom from the Lord as to how we can work together?

Psalm 119:145-176; Romans 7:13-25; Matthew 21:33-46

Thursday, June 30

Romans 8:1-11 And if the spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who lives in you. (v.11 NIV)

After Christ's resurrection, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit, so that if we believe in him, the Holy Spirit lives in us. Such hope, such joy! It gives us a future. But what if we didn't know that?

Chris Cleave's novel Little Bee is about the unimaginable struggles of a young, illegal Nigerian immigrant living in London. Militants slaughtered everyone in her village over land rights; only she survives.

Little Bee grew up going to church and prays to God often as she continuously seeks safety. She explains her view of Christianity from living in a village with one partial Bible. "In our village our only Bible had all of its pages missing after the forty-sixth verse of the twenty-seventh chapter of Matthew, so that the end of our religion as far as any of us knew was 'My God, My

God, why have you forsaken me?' We understood that was the end of the story."

She goes on to say, "I was young then; I did not miss having a future because I did not know I was entitled to one." Little Bee's life epitomized what being forsaken by God must feel like. But she didn't learn the best part of the story, which gives hope, healing, and a future.

Numbers 23:11-26; Psalms 131, 132, 133; Matthew 22:1-14

Friday, July 1

1 Romans 8:12-17 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. (v.16)

I accepted Jesus into my heart as a 14-year-old at a Young Life camp in Colorado. I grew up going to church but never understood the gospel until a speaker presented the gospel to me at Frontier Ranch.

Like most teenagers, I was trying to figure out who I was and what group I was belonged to. Nothing seemed to fit until I heard at camp that I was a child of God. I realized that was the group I belonged to; that was my identity! It felt like I had come home. I knew my place now.

Working in student ministry, I felt it was so important, especially when students went off to college, that they knew they were children of God. Once they accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior, He would never leave them no matter how far away they felt from him.

Numbers 24:1-13; Psalms 140, 142; Matthew 22:15-22

Saturday, July 2

Matthew 22:23-40 Jesus said, "Love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer and intelligence.' This is the most important, the first on any list. But there is also a second to set alongside it: 'Love others as well as you love yourself.' These two commands are pegs; everything in God's Law and the Prophets hangs from them." (vv.37-40 The Message)

The most important commandment is to love God with everything we are. As if that isn't hard enough. The second commandment is to love other people as we love

ourselves. This commandment is a real challenge. Some of us love ourselves a whole lot!

Who are the "others"? People with a different skin color, who worship other gods, who chew with their mouths open, people escaping from different countries to make a better life, who make more or less than we do, who behave in ways we don't like, people who aren't always easy to love, who love people we disagree with, who have different political beliefs than we do; the list goes on.

The Lord calls us to do it anyway because He always loves us and, believe it or not, we aren't always easy to love. Today I challenge you to show love to someone different from you.

Numbers 24:12-25; Psalms 137, 144; Romans 8:18-25

In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer we pray for the Province of the Episcopal Church of Sudan

In the Diocesan Cycle of Prayer we pray for Grace, Goochland, St. Mary's, White Chapel, Trinity, Lancaster

CURRENT PRAYER LIST

Adam, Becky, Bob, Bonnie, Caroline, Carrie, Cathy, Christine, Colette, Connie, Craig, Dan, David, Davis, Debbie, Deborah, Debra, Dee, Doris, Elaine, Erik, Frank, James, Jan, Janet, Jennifer, John, Johnny, Jon, Josh, Kathleen, Kathy, Laura, Lauralee, Lissa, Mara, Marci, Marilyn, Mario, Michael, Mike, Nancy, Nanette, Nick, Paula, Phil, Rachel, Ralph, Ray, Raymond, Rich, Richard, Robert, Rusty, Samantha, Shannon, Sharon, Sonja, Steve, Tom, Vaughan, Veronica, Wendy, Wesley, Anne R. Adams, Dave Adams, John Allen, Susan Anderson, Chuck B., Maria Barnhart, Waldo Beck, Kevin Byrne, Angie Campbell, Mo Cowie, George & Martha Cox, John Crigler, Sharon D., Desiree Daniels, Alda Dell, Robin Dournaux, Neil Edwards, Bill & Pat Farr, Allan & Holly Feliciano, Betty Frizzell, Pearle Galatas, Rose Gallup, Dorothy Gassel, Alice Glover, Janice Graves, Tony Griswold, Barbara Harkins, Walt & Karen Harrison, Bernadine Hayes, Emily Hinkley, Barry Holliday, Edward Homendy, David Hunt, Russ Kidd, Scott Kizner, Lois L., Sophie

Manning, Karen Maxey, Jack McGraw, Godwin Nosa, Heather Cameron Ploen, Kelly Powell, Winifred Relyea, Tina Revis, Lorraine Richardson, David Roberts, Russell Roberts, Danny Sass, Marianne Simpson, Anne Smith, Karla Snellings, Sherry Tanner, John Thompson, May Jane Tillman, Rosemary Van Brunt, Susy Vargas-Soliz, Teara & Caia Venaglia, James Monroe Walls, Kelly Weber, Alda White, Alva Windham

BIRTHDAYS

June 29th - James Laird

June 30th - Elizabeth Cobey

July 1st - Selby McCash

July 2nd - Emma Gudowicz

July 5th - John Jenze, Cathy Smith

July 6th - Andrea Cedarleaf

July 8th - Scott Adams, Randall Clingenpeel

ANNIVERSARIES

June 28th - Derrick and Kathleen Williams

June 29th - Tom and Jackie Rorrer

July 1st - Mac and Heather Drane

July 2nd - John and Becky Murray

July 6th - Ed and Cathy Homendy

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday, June 26th - No Cafe Trinity

Rite I - 8:00 am in the Sanctuary

Rite II - 10:00 am in the Sanctuary

Rise Against Hunger - 11:30 am in the Barber Hall

Wednesday, June 29th -

RBG Book Group - 10:00 am in the Library

Mid-Day Eucharist - noon in the Ida Beck Chapel

Bible Study - the Gospel according to Mark - 5:30 pm brown bag dinner, 6:00 pm bible study in the Jamison Hall loft

Thursday, June 30th -

The Spirituality of Aging - 10:00 am in the lounge

***Monday through Friday - Morning Prayer 6:30 am, Compline 8:30 pm - via Facebook Live*