

7:22), his disciples' lifetimes of devotion and actions, his resurrection, and my personal experiences.

Genesis 29:1-20; Psalms 87, 90; Romans 14:1-23

Birthdays: Brianna Scully, Philip Anson, Liberty Ford,
Judy Bowes

Saturday's Calendar:

7:00 am	Hour of Power AA
9:30 am	Step Sisters Meeting
10:00 am	Bible Study ONLINE
5:00 pm	Holy Eucharist Rite II
7:00 pm	Schumann Quartet Concert
8:30 pm	Not Alone Group

Today's Ministry: Alpha Course

by Herbert Kierulff

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St. Mary's Episcopal Church

"Growing into Jesus - Reaching out with Love"

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ST. MARY'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Good News Daily

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Sunday, February 4

Mark 10:13-22 *"Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."* (v.15 NIV)

Like all little children, I was utterly dependent upon others for food, shelter, and clothing. When I was sick, others had to take care of me. If I were to learn, I had to have teachers and role models. In short, I could not have survived and successfully engaged the world around me without adult help. And I had nothing material with which to trade for all of these services. I could not do meaningful work I had no treasure to draw from to pay.

Yet I was happy and relatively carefree, and it is reasonable to assume that the children who gathered around Jesus were the same. Why is that? If I put myself back in time to childhood—and I need to do that to intuit the answer—it would be that I had faith. I had a childish intuitive faith that my family and others would meet my needs. I believe Jesus was referring to that kind of faith: mysterious, obscure, and felt deep inside that is needed to enter the kingdom of God.

Genesis 24:50-67; Psalms 93, 96; 2 Timothy 2:14-21

Birthdays: Mark Broderick, Bev Davis, Sarah Colon, Marnie Krause, Shari Fink

Sunday's Calendar:

7:30 am	Holy Eucharist Rite I
9:00 am	Contemporary Family Worship
10:30 am	Holy Eucharist Rite II

Today's Ministry: Stewardship Committee

Monday, February 5

Hebrews 13:1-16 *For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come* (v.14)

Hebrews 13 is a collection of exhortations designed to guide spiritual persons through life in the secular world. The one that has the most meaning for me encourages me to remember that my home is not in the city where I live now, nor in Jerusalem, nor in any other earthly place. A heavenly home awaits me and requires my attention now.

No matter what turmoil, temptation, or trial plagues me in my current earthly city, it pales in comparison to the wonders of the heavenly one. All the anxiety and trouble I may face today will be swept away tomorrow in that heavenly place. No matter how much prestige, power, or personal fortune I may acquire in my earthly city, it will not remain mine in the new Jerusalem. It follows that my attention should be laser focused on preparing myself for citizenship in my real home where anxiety turns to joy and love of God and others replaces personal possessions and pre-rogatives.

Genesis 25:19-34; Psalm 80; John 7:37-52

Birthdays: Shannon Daury, Eleanor Hanley, John Mucciolo

Monday's Calendar:

7:00 am Hour of Power AA
 10:00 am Praying Hands (1st & 3rd Mondays)
 3:00 pm Daughters of the King (2nd Mondays)
 5:45 pm ACOA

Today's Ministry: Sunday School

Tuesday, February 6

Psalm 78:1-39 *Their hearts were not loyal to him, they were not faithful to his covenant.* (v.37)

The psalmist is bemoaning the fact that the Israelites' relationship with God was cyclical. When difficulties arose and the people were experiencing trials and tribulations, they would remember His great deeds of old and seek Him out. When things were going well, however, they forgot His covenant (v.10).

I think this pattern continues in our own day. Sadly, I see it in the history of my own life. I was raised in a Christian home. But as I reached adulthood and noted that things were going well for me, God somehow became less and less relevant to my life. I was doing just fine, pretty much, all by myself. But in my thirties, some serious difficulties arose. Fortunately, I turned back to God and He came to my rescue. The temptation to turn away from the path to the kingdom is always there. O Lord, give me wisdom to recognize that temptation and the strength to resist it.

Genesis 26:1-6, 12-33; Hebrews 13:17-25; John 7:53—8:11

Birthdays: CJ Wagner, Jim Webert, Lauren Rabener

Tuesday's Calendar:

7:00 am Hour of Power AA
 9:30 am Women's Bible Study
 12:10 pm Healing Service

Today's Ministry: The Vestry

Wednesday, February 7

Psalm 119:97-120 *Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.* (v.105)

Whenever I reflect on this verse, some version of this vision comes to mind: It is night, and the air is cold. A fog swirls around my feet and legs as I trudge along a narrow, rutted, and rocky path. There is no

moon. I pull my long cloak around my shoulders to keep warm and dry. An old-fashioned oil lantern swings gently from my hand, lighting up the path in front. The way is obscure and difficult even as my goal is clear; I seek the heavenly city somewhere ahead.

The ruts and rocks are the trials and tribulations that accompany my life in this world. They make me stumble. The darkness and fog represent my ignorance, pride, and arrogance; they also reflect the obscurity of things spiritual. The lamp is the word, the Good News and the model life that Jesus lived for us. The word lights the way. My cloak is God's love.

Genesis 27:1-29; Romans 12:1-8; John 8:12-20

Birthdays: Bryan Garner

Wednesday's Calendar:

7:00 am Hour of Power AA
 9:30 am Centering Prayer & Anglican Rosary
 10:00 am Life Group
 4:30 pm Mary's Kitchen
 7:30 pm AA Daily Reflections

Today's Ministry: Ushers

Thursday, February 8

Romans 12:9-21 *Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.* (v.19)

Phrases like "don't get mad; get even" and "revenge is sweet" are common in today's culture. Revenge is a popular topic in books, plays, and TV shows. Heroes are men and women who avenge the damage done by evil doers. Those who refrain from exacting revenge are often considered doormats, or worse, cowards. Paul's command to refrain from revenge stands out to me because of its clear opposition to this preoccupation of today.

There is good reason for God claiming revenge as something uniquely His and not mine. I was created for the purpose of love and all that entails. And, as one spiritual leader wrote: "In the evening of life, we will be judged on love alone." I can't love while seeking revenge; the very act of so doing poisons my soul. I must be careful to mind my own business where things belonging to God alone are concerned, lest I disappoint Him and destroy myself.

Genesis 27:30-45; Psalms 83, 146, 147; John 8:21-32

Birthdays: Tricia Barr, Julie Sullivan, Sherry Pierson, Paul Gaydos, Julia Thurlow

Thursday's Calendar:

7:00 am Hour of Power AA
 7:30 am Men's Bible Study
 10:00 am Holy Eucharist Rite II
 1:30 pm Grief Support Group
 4:30 pm Life Group, Smith Hall

5:30 pm AA California Group
 7:00 pm AI-Anon- Stepping Stones

Today's Ministry: Youth Ministry

Friday, February 9

Romans 13:1-14 *The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not covet," and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."* (v.9)

How can I live up to that standard: to always want and actively seek the best for my neighbor? Even more difficult is Jesus' new commandment: "As I have loved you, so you must love one another" (John 13:34). Love others as Christ loves.

Here I am, a mere mortal at war with myself, experiencing "another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members" (Romans 7:23). On my own, it is not possible for me to obey Jesus' commandment and obtain the kingdom of God. All the powers of my heart and mind—my will (where desire/love resides), my intellect (where reason and faith reside), and my memory (where hope based on past experience resides)—are insufficient. And even those powers are gifts from God.

However: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). For these enormous blessings I give thanks with a humble heart and bowed head.

Genesis 27:46—28:4, 10-22; Psalm 88, John 8:33-47

Birthdays: Alexander Connolly, Duane Sonneborn, Janet Williams

Friday's Calendar:

7:00 am Hour of Power AA
 9:30 am Life Group
 8:00 pm AA Friday Nite Young People

Today's Ministry: Acolytes

Saturday, February 10

John 8:47-59 *"Very truly I tell you," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!"* (v.58)

What a remarkable statement! Jesus was saying that he preexisted all things; he was claiming to be God. In response, his audience tried to kill him. My response as an adult was to ignore the claim mostly because to accept meant a radical and ongoing restructuring of my nature. In my view, to ignore was a result of doubting or disbelieving; to accept was to be all in.

According to John Duncan, C.S. Lewis, and others, if I doubted or failed to believe, I would have to believe that Jesus was one or more of three L's: lunatic, liar, or legend. By legend is meant that either he or his "I am" statement never really happened. The only other alternative: he is truly Divine. After considerable research, thought, and prayer, I came to the conclusion that I must discard all of the L's. The deciding factors in my mind were Jesus' answer to John's question about who he was (Luke