

“He is not here,  
*He has Risen,*  
just as He said.”

MATTHEW 28:6



**staying connected with God, each other, and ourselves**

## INSIDE:

MESSAGE FROM REV. GRANT	1
LENT MESSAGE FROM FRAN	3
REFLECTING ON THE LENTEN SEASON	4
LENTEN PRAYER	5
UPLIFTING THOUGHTS FOR LENT	6
WHAT DOES LENT MEAN TO YOU?	8
FEATURING OUR GREATEST STRENGTH - OUR RDLUC PEOPLE	12
YOUR LENTEN SMILE	14

## A Lenten Reflection

Kevin of Glendalough was a saint in the early Irish Christian community. And we are told that when he was old enough to tend the flocks, he was out one day in the fields, when some men came to him, asking for his help. He knew that his family relied on the sheep for their survival, but he also saw the hunger in the eyes of the strangers. So he gave them four sheep. But in the morning, when his father came to count the flock, there were no sheep missing.

I know that at times most people find Jesus challenging to follow. He was so loving, so generous, so open to meeting the needs of those around him, that often we feel that we just don't have that same spark of magnanimity that he displayed and called his followers to show. And this is especially true during Lent as we are called upon to examine our lives against the standards of Jesus. After all, he was even willing to give up his life for others.

But remember that his willingness to love was firmly based in his trust that it is God who provides. We so often see ourselves as short on talent, or skill or patience or strength. And this sense of inadequacy makes us hesitate to take on difficult tasks or to be as unselfish as we would want to be. We fear that if we are too generous, we shall not have enough for ourselves.



And so it is that the Lenten season is also a time when we should be thinking about how God does and will provide for us. Our heads tend to say that we should be very careful about giving of ourselves or our goods, as they are in short supply. But let's be open also to the message of our hearts, which look at life from the perspective of faith. God is generous. God does give us what we need. And, in fact, it is in our acts of kindness and self-sacrifice that we discover this truth most clearly. We shall look back on the support we have been able to give to our friends and neighbours and the love we have been able to share with the world, and then we'll realize that it was in those moments that our lives were most full, as we discovered most deeply the gracious generosity of God.

Grant



# LENT GREETINGS, DEAR FRIENDS!

We are entering a forty-day period in the Christian calendar whose title comes from the old English 'lencten', meaning 'springtime'. It begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday, when, indeed, the hope of coming spring is very real. Traditionally, Lent is a time of repentance, fasting, prayer, and preparation for Christ's resurrection, celebrated on Easter Sunday. Many use this time to engage in self-reflection. How can past wrongs be made right? What can we 'give up for Lent', symbolizing our intention to turn over a new leaf? How can we open ourselves to fresh awareness of the life transition that Christ's resurrection represents?

These are questions not just individuals, but the church as a whole, is grappling with these days. In our own RDLUC community, we see abundant evidence of both introspection and transition. The outstanding interim leadership given us by Rev. Grant Dawson, following Rev. Nick's departure, has come to an official end. How do we now deal with the current lack of ordained candidates wishing to step up and become our permanent minister?

With God's help, a solution has been found! We are thankful for the rotating leadership of three ministers from McDougall United Church: Rev. Bill Weaver, Rev. Joanne Anquist, and Rev. Danah Cox. Grant, as a fourth member of this group, will also lead services from time to time, much to our delight. The way to new beginnings has been paved!

And such happenings could never take place without the dedication and hard work of so many of you. Seeing teams of volunteers working together to arrive at board decisions, and to carry out such continuing congregational care activities as the preparing and delivery of food and literature to shut-ins and to those living alone, is as heart-warming now as it has ever been! In these and many other ways, RDLUC has demonstrated time and again that it is a caring, vibrant, and inclusive community.

May you reflect meaningfully during this Lenten period of transition, and may the journey take you joyfully into the Easter season of Christ's rebirth!

Fran



# REFLECTING ON THE LENTEN SEASON



People often don't look forward to Lent. Childhood memories of giving up candy or sitting through weekly 'stations of the cross' come immediately to mind. Words like "sacrifice," "discipline," and "self-denial" are often used in ways that suggest that Lent is something to be endured rather than a time of grace and spiritual growth.

Have you ever thought of Lent as a yearly second chance? Each year the Church gives us six weeks to take a long, loving look at our lives to see if our values and priorities are in line with God's desires for us. Since most of us find that we've wandered from God's path, Lent becomes that second chance, or do-over, to "return to God with our whole heart."

Source: Loyola Christian Press, Chicago

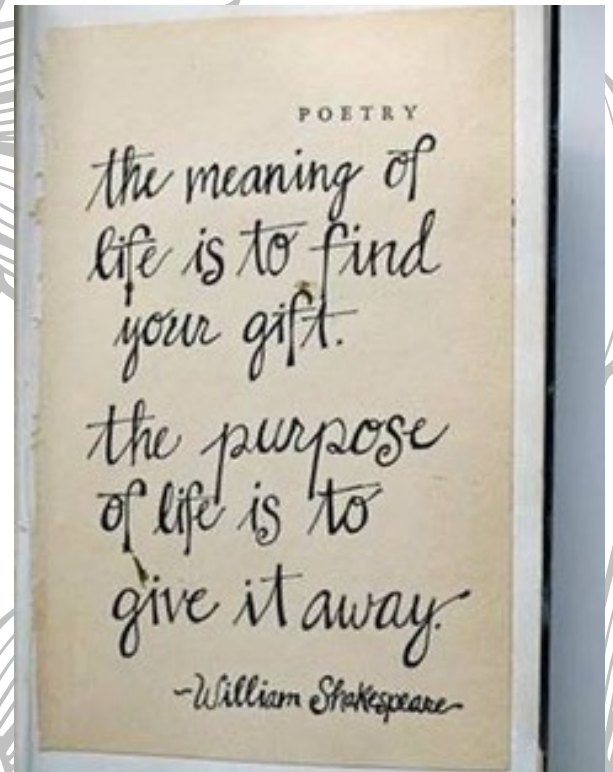
# LENTEN PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL RENEWAL

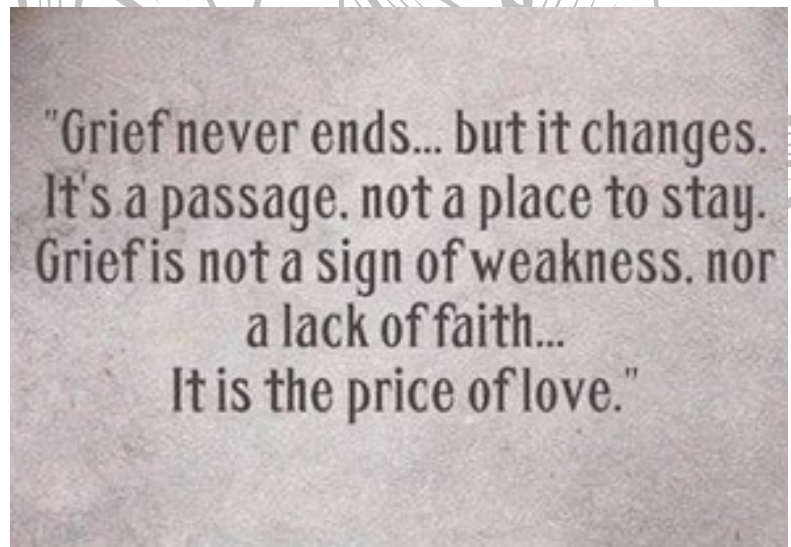


God, look upon me and hear my prayer during this holy season of Lent. By the good works you inspire, help me to discipline my body and to be renewed in spirit. Without you I can do nothing. By your spirit, help me to know what is right and to be eager in doing your will. Keep me from sin and help me live by your commandment of love. God of love, bring me back to you. Send your spirit to make me strong in faith and active in good works. Open my heart to your love and prepare me for the coming resurrection of Jesus. During this Lenten season, nourish me with your word of life and make me one with you in love and prayer. Amen.

Taken from resources at Xavier Jesuit University, Ohio

# UPLIFTING THOUGHTS FOR LENT





# WHAT DOES LENT MEAN TO YOU? CLERGY AND CONGREGANTS WEIGH IN!

"I remember a friend saying that Lent is when you 'sweep out the cobwebs' of your soul. It is a time of honest reflection about where you're at on your spiritual journey, and how you're doing. What are the things in your life that encourage abundant living? What are the things that get in the way? To me, when you give up something for Lent, it's not really about sacrifice. Every time you go to do that thing, it reminds you that you are in Lent, and you've made a choice to put your spiritual well-being first. For some, it might be just as meaningful to add something to your life that will encourage your spiritual journey, as to take something away. We do this to ponder and practice new life & renewal that is coming at Easter!" – Rev. Joanne Anquist

"I wear purple (the liturgical colour of Lent) which reminds me that this is a sober time, and also reminds me of the things I need to do for self-improvement." – Wilma Clark

"I associate Lent with getting ready for Easter." – Marj DenHoed

"It's a time of quiet reflection." – Jocelyn Churchill





"Lent is the period in which I feel I'm motivated to focus on what is significant in my life." – Martin Claydon

"It's about giving up something for forty days." – Bill Holman

"Lent is the reflective time just before Christ is reborn." – Peggy Kett

"To me, Lent is about renewal and grace." – Lori Wilson (Children's Program Leader)

"It's the sombre period, just before we sing our hallelujahs." – Shelby Chibry (Children's Program Leader)

"I think of it as the serious time that comes right before Easter." – Eileen Tillett

"You sacrifice something during Lent, to prove your good intentions." – Melvina Nagy

"Lent is about showing devotion by giving up something meaningful." – Constance Jackson

"Stinting, tightening your belt, and being moderate instead of overly lavish, are what Lent means to me." – Isolde Eitle



“Where I grew up, there was the Catholic as well as the Lutheran influence. Partly fashioned by these, I learned to think of this period as one of introspection and preparation for what is to come.” – Gary McKinnon

“Lent, for me, is the promise of what is on the horizon.” – Carolyn McArthur

“When I consider Lent, several images come to me. I see thoughtful communion among friends, the gathering in that upper room, and the stone rolling away from the tomb. All these point to sorrow that is about to give way to joy and celebration.” – Doug DenHoed

“I view Lent as self-discovery through reflective thinking, and through reading. I have a book from 2001, *Spiritual Discernment-I’d Say Yes, God, If I Knew What You Wanted*, by Nancy Reeves. I think the stories it contains would be a good fit for Lent.” – Gloria Wall

“it’s a time of preparing to live our lives as better people.” – Kessa DenHoed

“For Lent, you give something up. You ask yourself what activity or thing you might be prepared to sacrifice for the sake of your faith.” – Gayle Worden

“It concerns deep thought and making ready for renewal of life.” – Al Pollock



“Lent ends with Easter, which is all about resurrection—that time in the church calendar that corresponds to the coming of spring, which is also all about resurrection.” – Andy Porter

"I remember growing up Catholic and the page of 40 footprints, to represent the 40 days of Lent. It was to be taped to the underside of my desktop that lifted, so only I could see it. I was to colour in each footprint for the days that I was good and had fulfilled my Lenten promise. (Always something I had to give up.) But if I was bad and did not do what I said I would, I was not to colour in the footprint. At the end of Lent, I was supposed to show my footprint page to the nun." – Anne Welsh

"I haven't a clue. You can use that." – Morris Baskett

And last, but not least: "It's what my neighbour did when he let me borrow his lawnmower last summer." – Dave Churchill (*There are smart alecks in every crowd!* – Ed.)



# FEATURING OUR GREATEST STRENGTH — OUR RDLUC PEOPLE

This series of monthly articles will profile—with their permission, of course—one of the individuals, couples, or families that make our church the unique and special place it is. Who is ‘important’ enough to be featured here? Everyone! This month, we get to know **Kathryn Matrosovs**.

Kathryn, who grew up in Michigan but married a Canadian, settled on a Priddis acreage in 1974. Before long, she found RDLUC, a true ‘little country church’ in those days. Its warmth and friendliness attracted her to join almost immediately. “Those qualities have never changed,” she smiles. “To this day, I feel comfortable and at-home at Red Deer Lake.”



Kathryn’s love of music and her talents in that area led her to take over as our choir director in 1976. At first, she was assisted by an accompanist, but when that accompanist moved away, she herself accompanied the choir on the piano—and she did this for nearly twenty years, usually donating the payment she received back to the church! She also started up a children’s choir that practised after Sunday services, and she took great pride in finding and at times presenting musical selections that adults and children could sing together.

“We would also dedicate pieces we sang to specific individuals,” she recalls. “If someone had recently passed away, we might choose as our choir anthem that person’s favourite song and sing it in that person’s memory. Many found that very moving.”

What does Kathryn think about church music today? “Well, I know times have changed,” she admits. “I love all music, but there’s a nostalgia in my heart for the traditional. Mostly, though, I’d like to see us hire another music director and go back to having a more formal music program than we do now, whatever its nature.”

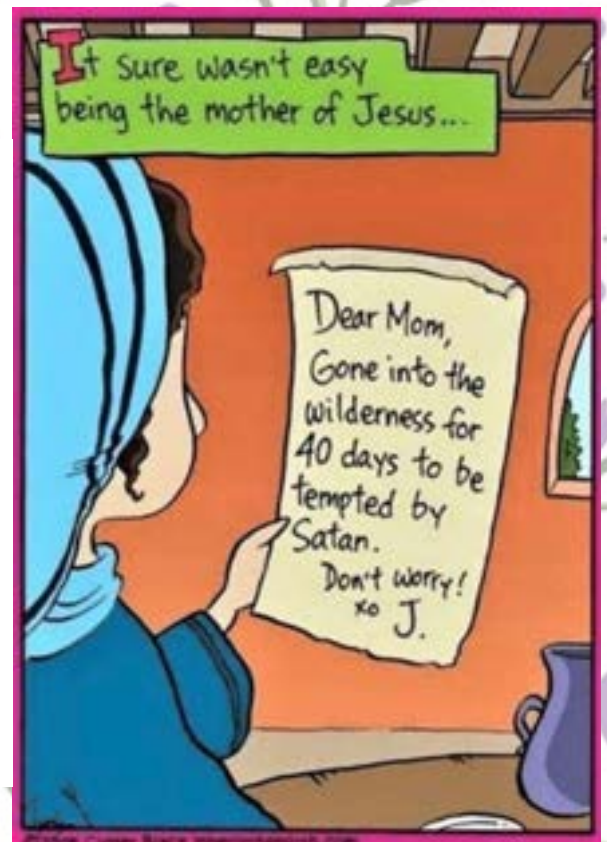
Unfortunately, health issues prevent Kathryn attending church as regularly as she used to, and from assuming a more active role in church life. “However, I love receiving the food and literature regularly delivered to my home,” she says gratefully. “Through these, I continue to feel connected and cared for. My children are grown now, and my husband is in a care facility, so I’m on my own. Sometimes I need to travel to medical appointments, and the church has helped me there as well, by giving me taxi chits. It’s great to feel my church family is behind me in so many ways. RDLUC is my home. My mother’s ashes are in the Memorial Garden, and another reason I take solace here is that I feel near her. She, too, loved our church from the time she moved from Michigan some years ago to live with our family.” What a wonderful testimonial!

You will know Kathryn when she attends, by her continuing to wear a mask due to her compromised immune system. Now you also know how much she has contributed to us and how much she loves being a member of RDLUC. Thank you, Kathryn, for all you do and are!

Our thanks to Fran Porter for this submission



# YOUR LENTEN SMILE



# WE ARE RED DEER LAKE UNITED CHURCH



We are an inclusive and affirming community of faith – people of all ages, perspectives, and stories, who gather to connect with God, each other, and ourselves, and find in Jesus a new way of being human and alive in the world.

**you're welcome, wanted,  
and accepted. join us on  
the journey.**

## **Red Deer Lake United Church**

96187 Spruce Meadows Green SW  
Foothills, AB T1S 2R9

e: [office@reddeerlakeuc.com](mailto:office@reddeerlakeuc.com)

p: 403-256-3181

w: [reddeerlakeuc.com](http://reddeerlakeuc.com)

 red deer lake united church

 reddeerlakeuc

## **our staff & ministry team:**

### **ministers**

Rev Joanne Anquist

Rev Danah Cox

Rev Grant Dawson

Rev Bill Weaver

### **congregational care counsellor**

Anne Welsh

Wilma Clark

[ccare@reddeerlakeuc.com](mailto:ccare@reddeerlakeuc.com)

### **children's ministry**

[kids@reddeerlakeuc.com](mailto:kids@reddeerlakeuc.com)

### **administrative manager**

Angie Johnston

[office@reddeerlakeuc.com](mailto:office@reddeerlakeuc.com)

### **communications administrator**

Jennifer Aldous

[info@reddeerlakeuc.com](mailto:info@reddeerlakeuc.com)

### **bookkeeper**

Carrie Styranka

[accounting@reddeerlakeuc.com](mailto:accounting@reddeerlakeuc.com)

### **custodian**

Bill Holman

### **CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:**

Monday - Thursday

9am - 3pm

Do you have a story to share? A memory? A poem? A photograph? We would love to publish it in the next issue of this magazine.

Please call us at **(403) 256-3181** or send your submission to [f.porter@shaw.ca](mailto:f.porter@shaw.ca)