

The Daily Walk



**Trinity Presbyterian Church
Berwyn, Pennsylvania**

April 9 - May 12, 2007

April - May, 2007

Dear Daily Walkers,

The season of Easter is the time to reflect on the meaning of the resurrection stories. Much in the stories is similar from one gospel to another, yet each gospel offers its own unique perspective. I invite you to join with me in a reading of the resurrection stories, attending to the images and challenges of new life presented in Scripture for the next few weeks.

The reflections shared here have been guided by several different resources, including reflections "recycled" from previous years. The Word continues to live, and shapes us each day. May you experience the Resurrected One this season.

In Christ,
Jay Wilkins



You're invited to an informal gathering to hear
DUANE AND SALLY MALM
speak on their recent trip to China:
THE DYNAMIC CHANGES IN CHINA
Friday, April 13

7:30 PM at Catherine & Jay's: 593 Watford Rd. in Berwyn.
Call the office to reserve a seat or to share a refreshment. 610-644-0932



MUSIC NOTES



On April 15 at 3:00 PM - a special performance by Larry Langhans' friend, Anita Walton, who has sung for us as a summer soloist. She is preparing a recital for her own church on the 22nd and will sing it for us with Larry as her accompanist. Anita has requested that a free will offering be received for Trinity's Mission Honduras.

LECTIONARY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

April 9 --15, 2007

How the resurrection happened remains within the realm of mystery. On that first Easter morning, the experience of the risen Christ was real but the meaning was not yet fully evident. Slowly but surely, however, the significance and power of this central truth of Christianity became clear. Down through the centuries it has brought new hope and belief to countless believers. With these first witnesses and Christians everywhere we raise our voices and proclaim with joyous hearts: "Alleluia! Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Alleluia!"

MONDAY, April 9: Acts 5:27-32

The apostles have been preaching the good news in the temple at Jerusalem despite many threats by the authorities. They have been dramatically changed by the events of Easter. Where once they would have fled in terror they now stand boldly before their accusers saying, "we must obey God rather than men." They have been so transformed that they are willing to face punishment and even death to serve the God who has given them "new life."

TUESDAY, April 10: Psalm 118:14-29

This hymn of praise is to the God who saves and whose "steadfast love endures forever." Martin Luther viewed Psalm 118 as "My own beloved psalm." Verse 17 is read by some as an affirmation both of the resurrection of Jesus and of believers. In verse 24, Christians are reminded that every Sunday is a celebration of the resurrection. Overall, Psalm 118 shows the continuity between the Old and New Testaments: God was active in the exodus, God was active in returning the exiles, and God was active in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The early Christians found this psalm helpful in placing Jesus Christ within the history of God's saving acts.

WEDNESDAY, April 11: Psalm 150

This burst of praise is a fitting ending to the book of the Bible which expresses the full range of human experience and emotion, every sort of frailty and faith. But this psalm is no mere shout of superficial and empty praise. It sounds the praise from the heart of a world that has discovered the cost to God of the world's redemption, and that has in fact glimpsed that in the heart of the Living God there is a cross. It calls us in turn to praise God not only with our lips, but also with our lives.

THURSDAY, April 12: Revelation 1:4-8

This book was written by John who was exiled to the island of Patmos (off the West Coast of Asia Minor) because of this faith. He wrote of things he saw and heard in a revelation granted him by Jesus Christ. This book reminds us that our faith ancestors faced extreme hardships and persecution. It is thought to have been written in the latter years of the reign of the Emperor Domitian - about A.D. 95. The early Christians were punished because they were unwilling to engage in emperor worship. It was to these persecuted and harried Christians in the churches of the Roman province of Asia, that John addressed this strange and wonderful book. He stressed the lordship of Christ, the overruling sovereignty of God, and his eventual final victory over the forces of sin and evil.

FRIDAY, April 13: John 20:19-31

The disciples probably continued to meet in the Upper Room. They feared the Jewish authorities and met behind locked doors. They had heard about Mary's meeting the risen Christ, but they didn't understand what this meant. Imagine their surprise, no, shock is more accurate, when the risen Christ appeared before them. Once he had convinced them of his identity, he said, "As God sent me, so I send you". Then according to John, Jesus breathed upon the disciples in the same manner that the Spirit of God breathed life into the first humans. This scene marked the beginning of the church as a community inspired by the same Spirit that was in Jesus and links this beginning directly with the resurrection.

SATURDAY, April 14: John 20:19-31

The story of Thomas is well known to all of us, probably because we can all relate to his feelings of doubt. Jesus does not judge him harshly. In fact the story is one of forgiveness and compassion. The gospel writer, though, makes sure that we hear the next words of Jesus: "How happy are those who believe without seeing me!" Suddenly this gospel speaks directly to our own doubtful hearts and fills us with hope.

LECTIONARY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

April 16 -- 22, 2007

Peter and Paul were both radically changed by their encounters with the risen Christ. From angry, frightened individuals they became Spirit-filled, loving, empowered people who devoted the rest of their lives to sharing their love for Christ. Christianity is full of the stories of people who have been able to start over again, changing old patterns and being released from the bondage of old oppressions. The possibilities are no less available today than they have been at any other time in history! Is there anything stopping us from starting over — even now?

MONDAY, April 16: Acts 9:1 - 20

Saul, a zealous Pharisee, specialized in persecuting Christians (he was there for the stoning of Stephen which led to a coordinated campaign to exterminate the church). As Saul travels with murderous intent to Damascus, the ascended Lord appears to him in a blinding light, confronting him with the truth of the message .he has been trying so vigorously to obliterate — the risen Jesus is Messiah indeed

TUESDAY, April 17: Acts 9:1- 20

Jesus took steps to transport Saul, one of his greatest enemies; by making him totally dependent on him. He told Saul to get up, go to Damascus, and wait for further instructions. Eyes open, but seeing nothing, Saul was forced to depend on Jesus through depending on others to get to Damascus. After three days of cleansing and emptying (v. 9), Jesus forced Saul to learn that dependence on him and interdependence with others enables us to accomplish God-given tasks and to experience the fullness of Christian love and godly relationships. Through Ananias, once a target of Saul's persecution, Jesus changed Saul's life (vv. 15-16, 18-20). He regained his sight, was filled with the Holy Spirit, and was charged to preach the good news to the Gentiles. This amazing new beginning and change of direction was symbolized by changing his name to Paul.

WEDNESDAY, April 18: Psalm 30

This liturgical psalm gives thanks to God for turning death into life, and for taking away sorrow and replacing it with joy. With the stories of the new beginnings in the lives of Paul and Peter, this psalm helps us reflect on such changes in our own lives.

THURSDAY, April 19: Revelations 5:11-14

R. H. Charles quotes Christina Rossetti on this passage: “Heaven is revealed to earth as the homeland of music.” Here *is* the greatest chorus of praise the universe can ever hear. Here is the truth that heaven and earth and all that is within them is designed for the praise of Jesus Christ; and it is our privilege to lend our voices and our lives to this vast chorus of praise, for that chorus is necessarily incomplete so long as there is one voice missing from it (Barclay).

FRIDAY, April 20: - Revelations 5:11-14

The death of Jesus Christ was *universal* in its benefits. It was for men and women of every race. There was a day when the Jews could hold that God cared only for them and wished for nothing but the destruction of other peoples. But in Jesus Christ we meet a God who loves *the world*. The death of Christ was for all, and it is the task of the Church to tell all of it. He made us kings. He opened to all the royalty of God. We have always been children of God by creation; but now there is a new grace open to every one.

He made us priests. In the ancient world the priest alone had the right of approach to God. When an ordinary Jew entered the Temple, he could make his way through the Court of the Gentiles, through the Court of the Women, into the Court of the Israelites; but into the Court of the Priests he could not go. It was thus far and-no farther. But Jesus Christ opened the way for all to God. Every one becomes a priest in the sense that we have the right of access to God.

He gave us victory. His people shall reign upon the earth. This is not political triumph or material lordship. It is the secret of victorious living under any circumstances. “In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). In Christ there is victory over self, victory over circumstance and victory over sin. When we think of what the death and life of Jesus Christ has done, it is no wonder that the living creatures and the elders burst into praise of him. (From William Barclay)

SATURDAY April 21: John 21:1-19

In chapter 21, Peter (who caught fish to “pay the bills”) learned that his fulltime vocation was to be a Christian... a disciple... a shepherd of the flock. Jesus asked, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these others?” This penetrating question was asked three times in all (21:15-17) as if to say: “Christian, whom do you work for...really?” Once that issue is settled in your mind you will have no trouble with the command: “Feed my little sheep!”

What did this love bring to Peter? It brought him a *task*. “If you love me,” Jesus said, “then give your life to shepherding the sheep and the lambs of my flock.” We can prove that we love Jesus only by loving others. Love is the greatest privilege in the world, but it brings the greatest responsibility. It brought him a *cross*. Jesus said to him: “When you are young you can choose where you will go; but the day will come when they will stretch out your hands on a cross, and you will be taken on a way you did not choose.” The day came when, in Rome, Peter did die for his Lord; he, too went to the Cross, and he asked to be nailed to it head downwards, for he said that he was not worthy to die as his Lord had died. Love brought Peter a task, and it brought him a cross. Love always involves responsibility, and it always involves sacrifice. We do not really love Christ unless we are prepared to face his task and take up his Cross.

LECTIONARY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

April 23 – April 29, 2007

What does it mean to be Easter people? What claims do we make about ourselves, about our faith and about God because of Jesus' resurrection? To me, it means that we live in a time of assured victory. God's love for humanity is so great that God broke into history in the person of Jesus Christ to enable us to experience the healing power of resurrection. Now, nothing can separate us from God. Not pain, not suffering, not even death. Like sheep in the loving care of a Good Shepherd, we are forever in the presence of God when we acknowledge who God is, when we listen for and recognize God's voice, when we follow and trust God, and when we allow God to be the guide of our lives to springs' of life-giving water.

MONDAY, April 23: Acts 9:36-43

It looked like death had gotten the upper hand in the situation at Joppa. A woman named Tabitha, who was a disciple known for her good works and acts of charity, had taken ill and died. Her friends and fellow disciples 'prepared her body, and then two of them went in search of Peter who was visiting in a nearby town. Exactly what the expectations were of Peter's coming is not clear, but upon Peter's arrival, he was taken to the room in which Tabitha's body was laid. Her body was surrounded by her weeping friends, full of grief at her death. What did they expect Peter to do? Would they have been weeping if they knew Peter could raise Tabitha from the dead? Amazingly, God worked through Peter to accomplish just that miracle. This story is a wonderful testimony to the power available to believers through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The situations that you and I face daily may be ones of death, but more often are family crises, disappointments, unexpected illnesses, and other difficult times. Our lives, our very beings, are in need of restoration and renewal. Like Tabitha and her friends, we too can find joy in the unexpected grace of God. For "... when we call on the risen Christ in the presence of the Holy Spirit to be with us, power to overcome the greatest of obstacles is in our midst. For he still works miracles." (Joseph Daniels)

Most gracious God, continue to work in our lives and in our hearts to bring about your renewal and restoration Amen.

TUESDAY, April 24: Psalm 23

Ask friends to name their favorite passage from the Bible, and I would hazard to guess that the majority would mention today's reading. This is not just a favorite

psalm, but is a key selection from the whole Bible for many people. Most likely written by King David, a former shepherd, this psalm summarizes our relationship with, trust in, and dependence upon God. In our human frailty, in the midst of our physical and spiritual needs, God is our provider - our Good Shepherd. Like a kind shepherd would care for his vulnerable flock, God is involved in all aspects of our lives; we have no wants. God can and will meet all our needs. With God, we feel a sense of joy and security even during the most difficult and darkest of times. As we “dwell in the house of the Lord for ever,” we have nothing to fear. Why? Because God is with us!

Thank you Lord for caring for all our needs and for being always present in our lives. Amen.

WEDNESDAY, April 25: Revelation 7:9-12

The palm branches mentioned in today’s reading are reminiscent of the branches waved during Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. At that moment, and for ever and ever, Jesus deserved the blessing, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honor, power, and might listed in verse 12. But instead, Jesus became the Lamb, the sacrifice. He died on the cross for our salvation. These verses were written by John to inspire the believers of his day to remain loyal to their faith in Christ. John encouraged the early Christians, and us, to persevere though the difficult times, for as William Barclay explains, “God will never be in any man’s debt, and God will make it up to those who suffer for His cause and for His name” God will save the faithful People from every nation will become as one flock when God brings them through adversity to victory.

Lord of our salvation, we praise you and thank you for making the perfect sacrifice, for providing the Lamb, Jesus Christ Amen

THURSDAY, April 26: Revelation 7:13-17

Coming to greater understanding of our Christian faith sometimes arrives through paradoxes. For example, in the verses for today, clarity of faith is gained by contemplating robes made white by washing them in blood, and the Lamb who is also the shepherd. At first reading, these statements appear puzzling and contradictory. According to Barclay, the white robes signify the purity and victory that can be ours when we acknowledge all that Jesus Christ accomplished for us in his life and death - through his blood. This costly sacrifice can restore our broken relationship with God. The means for restoration and cleansing are provided (Christ’s blood); however, the washing is not done for us. Rather, we must take an active role in the process, for to do

so enables us to stand before God's throne and find shelter and safety in God's presence.

The fundamental Christian doctrine of the incarnation maintains that Jesus Christ is both fully human and fully divine, two distinctly different characteristics in one person. Jesus is both God and man. Likewise, Jesus is also both Lamb and shepherd. The sacrifice of the Lamb, as mentioned above, reconciles us with God, while the shepherd leads and shelters us. With the Lord as our shepherd, we are guided to life-giving springs of water. But the Good Shepherd does not merely address our physical needs. "As He nourishes our bodies so He also comforts our hearts, for it is true that without the help, the presence, and the comfort of God the sorrows of life would be unbearable, and without the strength of God there are times *in* life when we could never go on." (Barclay)

Most Loving God, you reach out your hand to wipe away every tear from our eyes. We give you thanks that with you we find comfort in our sorrows. Amen.

FRIDAY, April 27: John 10:22-30

These verses continue the theme of Jesus as the God Shepherd, and if you read ahead one more verse, you will discover what trouble Jesus stirs up by making these comparisons: some Jews are poised to stone him. What claims did Jesus make to elicit such a drastic reaction?

Solomon's Porch was an area in the Temple for prayer, meditation and doctrinal discussions. It was a natural setting for the Jewish leaders to question Jesus about his faith. But, Jesus makes it evident that the inquirers are not seeking answers to questions of faith. Rather, they are trying to trap Jesus into making a statement that could be used against him. Jesus confronts the questioners with their unbelief. For if they were true believers, they would already know the answer to their question. The answer is evident from Jesus' words and works.

Dear God, we give you thanks for calling us to you through Jesus Christ, through all he accomplished by his life and by his death. Amen.

SATURDAY, April 28: John 10:22-30 ...

On Monday, we read how God accomplished wonderful and powerful things through Peter. He brought Tabitha back to life. Peter's reliance on prayer stemmed from the example of Jesus Christ who was able to do amazing works in his Father's name. We come to believe in Jesus Christ through his words and his works. As we've read this week, the loving deeds of a Good Shepherd speak for themselves, and the sheep come to fully trust the Shepherd. Like the flock, we need to listen for God's

voice. God knows us and calls for us to follow. If we obey, we are promised eternal life and unity with God. We should look towards the examples of Jesus and Peter. Jesus claimed, "I and the Father are one" (vs. 30). "Jesus is one with God, because as no other ever did, he obeyed and loved him. His unity with God is a unity of perfect love, issuing in perfect obedience" (Barclay). Likewise, Christians can be one with each other when 'we follow Jesus' example.

Unite us, Lord into one loving and obedient body, your church Amen.

make your plans

"STEPS TOWARD PEACE"



**Sunday, May 6
11:30 A.M**

Donegal Presbytery's Peacemaking Team

shares their stories from Israel & Palestine

**sponsored by Trinity's Presbyterian Women & Adult
Education Committee**

"a salad 'n sandwich affair"

LECTIONARY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

April 30 – May 6, 2007

God creates a new way of life and invites us to take part. In these visionary passages of Peter and John from Acts and Revelations, we see possibilities for a transformed life. As Easter people, we are called to embrace this radical newness.

MONDAY, April 30: Acts 11:1-18

Can't you just hear the people criticizing Peter for being not only a guest in the home of uncircumcised Gentiles but eating with them? Peter calmly related the vision he had and the voice he heard from God saying, "Do not consider anything unclean that God has declared clean." He went to the house of Cornelius, and preached about Jesus to his family, who were filled by the Holy Spirit as a result of his preaching. Peter gave credit to God for initiating the visit to the Gentiles and baptizing them in the name of Jesus Christ. When Peter's listeners heard this, they stopped their criticism and praised God. The bottom line: God's love has been poured out for all who believe. It is beyond anything we can do. We only need to accept the Spirit's amazing movements. This surely should be a show-stopper for criticism and a real motivator to praise God.

TUESDAY, May 1: Psalm 148

This psalm is a call for the whole universe/cosmos to praise God. It reflects the all inclusive spirit of Peter's vision. It is a joyous call to glorify God. The poetic symmetry reflects the wholeness of God's creation and affirms everything within it. All have their place and all give glory to God. Praise the Lord!

WEDNESDAY, May 2: Revelation 21:1-6

John's vision continues the mood established by the psalm and further develops the inclusive vision of God's realm presented by the apostle Peter in Acts. The passage provides a wonderful vision of a new future with a new heaven and a new earth. "The old things have disappeared." It is a vision of a world where the presence of God is recognized everywhere. "God will wipe away all tears from their eyes. There will be no more death no more grief or crying of pain." Placed in juxtaposition with Peter's ground-breaking dream, the phrase "old things have disappeared" reverberates strongly. Through Christ, God is bringing about a future that will involve many changes! For those who strongly uphold the traditions that have been passed down, this can be very difficult to accept. It is helpful to remember that the Judeo-

Christian tradition has never been about preserving the past. It is about passing along the living faith that enlivened the past, enlivens us in the present, and will surely enliven the future. This living faith is in fact about a tradition of radical newness.

THURSDAY, May 3: Revelation 21:1-6

The Revelation to John was written at a time when Christians were being persecuted because of their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord. The writer's main concern was to give hope and encouragement. This message comes through with the vision of a new heaven and a new earth where sin is vanished (the sea was the enemy in the mythological beliefs of John's time). The new Jerusalem would fulfill the Jew's dream of the restoration of their holy city. Here John was influenced by Greek thought with Plato's idea that, in the invisible world there existed the perfect form or idea of everything on earth. All things on earth were imperfect copies of heavenly realities. The ideal actually exists... God is the source, the first, the Alpha, of all ideals. The ideal is a challenge which, even if it is not worked out in this world, can still be worked out in the world to come, the end. (William Barclay)

The central theme is clear: through Christ, the Lord, God will finally and totally defeat all his enemies and the faithful will be rewarded with the blessings of a new heaven and a new earth when victory is complete. Let it be so.

FRIDAY, May 4: John 13:31-35

In Jesus' "farewell discourse" to his disciples in John's Gospel, he is preparing them for the experience of living in the world after his departure. Jesus promises that just as he has revealed God's glory (true character) to them, so too will their lives reveal God's glory to the world. And the sign of this will be their love for one another. *"If you love each other, everyone will know you are my disciples."*

SATURDAY, May 5: John 13:31-35

The singular form of the Hebrew word for compassion means "womb" and is often used of God in the Hebrew Scriptures. "To be compassionate as God is compassionate" is to be moved as a mother in response to her children. This is what is meant by Jesus throughout John's gospel when the Greek word *agape* means "to love" is used.

In [The Heart of Christianity](#), Marcus Borg expands on this when he states that, "for Jesus, the primary quality of a life centered in God is compassion. To be compassionate is to be "womblike:" life-giving, nourishing, embracing. So God is; so we are to be" (pg. 122). Amen.

LECTIONARY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

May 7 — 12, 2004

The foundational message of the gospel is that God so loved the world that he sent Jesus Christ to die and then rise for the sins of all. This week we will be reminded, once again, that God's grace is without a doubt meant for all people worldwide. May the power of the Holy Spirit be with us during our devotional time. As we study and pray, may the security of God's love give us the strength and courage to be open to more than what falls within our present system of beliefs. May we, like our biblical friends, be open to the winds of change.

MONDAY, May 7: Psalm 67

Psalm 67 is known both as a psalm of thanksgiving (for the harvest) and also as a prayer for the blessings God has given to humankind. The psalmist highlights the fact that ultimately, God alone is in charge. We are encouraged to recognize His mercy, deliverances and salvation, to give thanks. The words "all, peoples and nations" are used to emphasize the psalm's universal perspective

Lord be with us this week. Open our hearts and minds to the vastness of your world. Help us to hear your call to engage in new challenges, to see and hear you in racial and ethnic manners not familiar to our way of thinking. Teach us to be like you.

TUESDAY, May 8: John 5:1-9

Reading further down in John 5 in verse 1 we find these words, "It was because Jesus did things such as this on the Sabbath that they began to persecute him." It is the unlawful healing work of Jesus that we commonly focus on when we read this story about the cure on the Sabbath Festival. It is interesting to note, however, that it was also against the law to carry ones sleeping mat on the Sabbath. Both Jesus and the sick man had broken the law. We are free to wonder, like Jesus, just what the purpose of the law was. Who did the law benefit?

Jewish theologians at that time were "aware that divine providence remained active [even] on the Sabbath, keeping all things in existence." Jesus, Son of God, the Word in the beginning who became flesh, saw absolutely no reason not to restore health to this sick man. Concern, love and healing were far more important than religious protocol!

WEDNESDAY, May 9: Acts 16:9-15

The Holy Spirit speaks to Paul and Silas via a dream telling them to travel to Macedonia. At the bank of the river, outside Philippi, the men are challenged culturally. The Spirit has not only altered their travel plans but has brought them to a community entirely of women. Lydia (the first European convert) is ready to hear the Good News, she also is not afraid to challenge the men to practice what they preach, “Come and stay in my house if you have decided that I am a true believer in the Lord.”

It is sad but true that we are also biased by our families and culture as well as by our religious understanding. We practice prejudice without knowing it.

Lord Jesus, Help us to look at ourselves before we think poorly of others. May we seek to understand our neighbors. Amen

THURSDAY, May 10: Acts 16:16-40

And now we hear the rest of the Philippians story begun yesterday. In today’s reading Paul and Silas get in the way of a private slave enterprise. Appearing only to be Jews and not Roman citizens, they are flogged and imprisoned. They are judged by their actions, no one attempts to find out who they are, why they did what they did or what their overall mission is. After an extraordinary visionary and evangelical experience the city magistrates finally agree to let the men go free.

Paul and Silas then make their way back to Lydia’s home, possibly to regain their own emotional and physical strength as well as to encourage the new believers. Lydia must have proven herself to be a wonderful hostess! Is it possible that both Paul and Lydia learned something from one another about serving as host/hostesses of the Lord. The hallmarks of a good host are: one who shows an interest in his/her guest, and one who encourages the guest to share their own story all the while making them feel at home. How are your Christian host or hostess skills? Do we open our homes to those who come from backgrounds unlike ours?

FRIDAY, May 11: John 14:23-29

In the Gospel of John, Jesus gives a series of discourses. Jesus wants to make sure his followers understand the gospel message before he goes to be with his father. Verse 23 reminds us that the biblical message of God’s love is for anyone who wishes to accept the gift.

It was a tradition for Jewish people to use the salutation “Peace” meaning “Shalom.” In this instance, however, the Peace given is the gift of salvation, “I do not give it to you as the world gives peace.” This Shalom was bought for us via the life

and death of Christ. It is a gift that brings a comfort that the world cannot give and yet it is a peace that is difficult for us to emulate at times.

Lord Jesus, we thank you once again for not leaving us alone to struggle with the issues that life brings. Be with us today as we learn to love you more faithfully. Amen

SATURDAY, May 12: Revelation 21:10; 21:22-26; 22:1-5

As in Psalm 67, there is a strong all-inclusive nature in this Revelation reading. In the new Holy City described “the nations” will enter and “walk by its light,” they will bring their treasures. All will be welcomed and all will be safe. There will be no need for a temple because God’s presence will be visible in the people themselves. Every Christian will be a priest, every place will be sacred. Ultimately this vision “promises that Easter finally results in gifts that are beyond calculating, imagining, or describing.”

Lord, it is a scary thought to think of ourselves as priests! Be with us as we struggle with your Word. Continue to love us, just as we are, while continuing to challenge us with what it means to be a Christian.