

# CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER

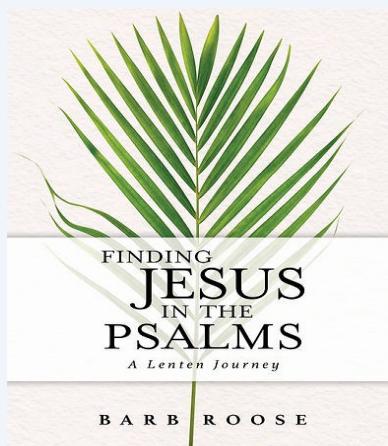
Eblast

March 7, 2024



Don't forget to set your clocks ahead 1 hour before you go to bed this Saturday, March 9th. You wouldn't want to be late for church.

## Lenten Book Study



Our Lenten Book Study continues Monday, March 11th at 6:30 p.m. at St. John Lutheran Church 207 S. Hopkins St.

We will gather all in the Nursery and then break into three smaller groups for discussions. With the number of participants, we feel smaller groups would allow for more people to participate in the conversations. We then will meet back as a large group. Outline of the Bible Study:

March 11, Chapter 4

March 18, Chapter 5

March 25, Chapter 6 & Conclusion

## Holy Week Schedule

**Palm Sunday March 24th 11 a.m.**

**Maundy Thursday March 28th 7 p.m. @ St. John**

**Good Friday March 29th 7 p.m. @ Redeemer**

**Holy Saturday March 30th 7 p.m. @ St. John**

**Easter Sunday 11 a.m.**

## Readings for March 10, 2024

First Reading: Numbers 21:4-9

Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22

Second Reading: Ephesians 2:1-10

Gospel: John 3:14-21

### Scripture Reflection

#### Reflection on the Gospel by Paul C Shupe from Daily Feast: Meditations from Feasting on the Word

Even in our own day, when established powers have sought to limit God's love by the exclusion of others from full participation in the community, divine compassion for the oppressed and divine passion for justice have called forth prophets to declare that God's love includes all, regardless of age or race, nationality or creed, gender or sexual orientation. The cumulative weight of the biblical record and the multifaceted experience of salvation within the contemporary church seem clear: God so loves the world. What limits on God's love do you notice this week?



## Easter Flowers for Church Altar

To place an order either fill out this order blank or call the church office (570) 888-2270  
**Deadline to order is March 18, 2024**

- ♦ Single Lilies (6 in. single plant) \$15.00 #\_\_\_\_\_
- ♦ Double Lily (8 in. double plant) \$35.00 #\_\_\_\_\_
- ♦ Mums-6 ” Pot \$22.00 #\_\_\_\_\_
- ♦ Azalea (6” Pot) \$22.00 #\_\_\_\_\_
- ♦ Hyacinths (6” Pot) \$12.00 #\_\_\_\_\_
- ♦ Hyacinths (8” pot) \$18.00 #\_\_\_\_\_
- ♦ Hyacinths (10” pot) \$30.00 #\_\_\_\_\_
- ♦ Tulips ( 6” Pot) \$12.00 #\_\_\_\_\_
- ♦ Tulips ( 8” Pot) \$18.00 #\_\_\_\_\_
- ♦ Tulips ( 10” Pot) \$30.00 #\_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of

\_\_\_\_\_

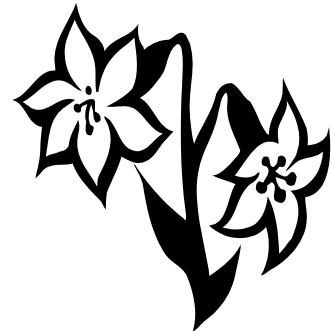
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Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Paid

Check \_\_\_\_\_ Cash \_\_\_\_\_



# BOY SCOUT TROOP 4019

## RUMMAGE SALE!!!



When: March 16, 2024

8am-2pm

Where: Church of Redeemer

201 S Wilbur Ave

Sayre, PA 18840



Dear Friends,

The Valley Food Pantry (VFP), a vital Bridge ministry, will be providing a special gift to 60 already selected families this Easter! It will consist of all the fixings for a delicious Easter dinner plus a five-day supply of food. The giveaway event is scheduled for **Friday, March 22**.

We would like to make this extra special by adding some items not available from the VFP. Would your church be willing to help? Here's the list of food that we'd like to gather:

*Canned Yams*

*Boxed Cornbread or Biscuit Mixes*

*Boxed Scalloped Potatoes*

*Butter or Margarine*

*Chocolate Pudding Mix*

*Cans of Pie Filling (any flavor)*

*Boxed Desserts such as Brownie Mixes*

To coordinate the donations, please let us know what you plan to collect by emailing [secretary@thevalleybridge.org](mailto:secretary@thevalleybridge.org) or contacting Joan at 607-857-0710 (call or text). The donations can be delivered to the VFP whenever it is open (M, T, Th, F from 10 to noon and T, W from 2 to 4), but no later than Monday, March 18. The VFP is located at 418 Waverly Street in Waverly. We hope that you can get your congregations involved in this project!

In addition, we could use a few more hands to prepare the food boxes. If you are interested in helping on March 22, please respond to this email for more details.

Finally, look for another email coming shortly with details for the first in a series of "Learn 'n Serve" events planned for **Saturday, April 13** for all our member church congregations as well as anyone who would like to find out more about The Bridge!



# Sunday School News



The Sunday School has once again chosen their Lent program for this year to be Heifer International. There is a display in the church with mite boxes and envelopes for the congregation. You will also find with the display a large jar for donations. They can be cash or check. If you donate by check please make it out to Church of the Redeemer with a note in the memo line "Heifer"

The Sunday School is still collecting recyclable cans and bottles in support of the Easter mite boxes. Please keep bringing in your recyclables. The monies collected from the donations will go to Heifer International.. Thank you for your continued support!!



## **Our Undercroft is a MESS.**

We have four decades or more of once cherished items being stored in the Undercroft. We have so much stuff that it has become a fire hazard and storage boxes are deteriorating. As a result, our rector has tasked Linda Murrelle with organizing a crew to look at all the things stored there and determine what should be kept and what should be thrown out. St. Mary's Guild, Altar Guild, and Sunday School will be given labels to affix to items that should be kept. We anticipate that the job will be completed by Easter. If your inner Marie Kondo is intrigued and you're willing to help please contact Linda or the Parish Office.

The Wildcat closet continues to collect donations of Sweat pants, Sweat shirts, socks and toiletries. The box is located in the atrium . Linda Murrelle will pick up your donations and make sure they are delivered to the proper locations.



For the Month of **March** we will be collecting peanut butter for our local food pantries.

### **Mark your Calendar**

**A celebration for our stained-glass windows. April 14, 2024. Tribute Quartet, a Gospel group out of Tennessee will be performing.**



## **Serving in Worship at Redeemer**

**March 10**

**Reader:** Diane Siebecker

**Usher:** Rick Rhodes

**Greeter:** Mary Rhodes

**March 17**

**Reader:** Alice Bennett

**Usher:** Glenn Murrelle

**Greeter:** Amy Murrelle



Jared Watson 3/12

Tom Dux 3/13

Tricia Johnson 3/14

Stacy Mack 3/16

We are now accepting clean rummage for our 2024 rummage sales. You may bring your rummage during office hours . Monday & Wednesday from 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. and Tuesday & Thursday from 12:30 - 4:30 p.m. If you will be bringing rummage please call ahead to let the office know. Thank you!





## **Update on Baby Bob**

Baby Bob celebrated his three month old birthday this week and is at 37 weeks gestation. His weight is 5.5 pounds! He is proving to be quite a fighter for his survival. Most recently he endured a UTI and a staph infection, however, he is now well enough to undergo surgery on Friday to repair a hole in his heart. Please continue to hold Baby Bob in your prayers. Our cards offering encouragement and assurance of our prayers mean a great deal to parents Zach and Dawn. Some blank cards are available on the table in the entry of the church. Won't you take the time to offer some words of comfort? We'll send the cards to them, via grandma Lisa Cole. Thank YOU!



## **Boy Scout Rummage Sale**

Our Boy Scout Troop 4019 will be holding their annual rummage sale on Saturday, March 16 in the Parish Hall from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Set-up will take place starting Wednesday, March 13 in the afternoon. We hope you will consider stopping by and having a look around. Maybe you will find a treasure or two.

**BIG  
SALE**



February 2024

Dear Church of the Redeemer,

Thank you for your recent donation  
to our Feed My Sheep food pantry  
given in memory of Shirley Spears.

A memorial card was sent to Amy  
Murrelle notifying her of your gift.

Thank you for your continuing  
support of this valley mission.

In His Service,

A UMC  
Feed My Sheep Food Pantry

# Lent Resources from Episcopal Relief and Development

THURSDAY, March 7

*They walked in their own counsels, and looked backward rather than forward.*

Jeremiah 7:24b

The Bible provides a fascinating perspective on the moral significance of memory. Time and again, God reminds the people of Israel of their deliverance from Egyptian enslavement, underscoring the ethical significance of this experience. The memory of liberation is meant to inspire Israel to act justly, drawing from their experience and lessons of their past suffering and redemption.

However, in today's passage from Jeremiah, God rebukes the people for fixating on their past and neglecting the potential of the future. They have become ensnared in the spiritual pitfall of nostalgia, as if they've forgotten to "remember the future," as my spiritual director aptly puts it.

Remembering the future recognizes that each new day brings fresh opportunities and that life's most significant moments are not confined to the past. It is a call to embrace the notion that new possibilities are ever-present, urging us to craft innovative paths for the days ahead. In essence, this perspective assigns moral weight to the future, affirming that God's vision of freedom and abundance awaits realization in the days ahead. In this way, the future carries as much moral responsibility as our past, urging us to actively shape it in alignment with a greater purpose.

## Today's readings

Psalm 95:6–11 | Jeremiah 7:23–28 Luke 11:14–23

*How can we both cherish the lessons of our past experiences while remembering to build a more just and hopeful future?*



WE ARE THE  
OF HIS *people*  
*pasture,*  
AND THE  
OF HIS *sheep*  
*hand.*

PSALM 95:7

## FRIDAY, MARCH 8

*We will say no more, “Our God,” to the work of our hands. Hosea 14:3b*

Today’s readings center on the theme of idolatry. Hosea condemns Israel for placing their faith in the Assyrians and worshiping the work of their own hands. Psalm 81 warns against having a “strange god among you,” and in Mark 12:28–34, Jesus emphasizes the priority of loving God with heart, soul and mind. In each case, Scripture underscores God’s desire that we place our faith solely in the One who led us out of Egypt.

Discussing idolatry in the twenty-first century may seem unusual, but I invite us to consider it as a prompt to reflect on where our ultimate faith lies. When faced with challenges, who and what do we truly believe in? Where do we put our trust?

While modern idolatry may not involve carving and worshiping statues, many of us (myself included) spend a significant part of our day with our heads bowed down to smartphones. Technology is often hailed as the solution to societal issues. Similarly, in almost every sector of society, people overvalue money’s ability to solve all sorts of intractable problems. These texts remind us to question where we place our faith and to return to something deeper and more intrinsic.

Hosea beautifully describes God as a Cypress tree and God’s mercy as dew, emphasizing the gap between the work of our hands and the steadfastness of the earth itself. What would it mean to reevaluate where we place our ultimate trust?

### Today’s readings

Psalm 81:8–14 | Hosea 14:1–9 | Mark 12:28–34

*In a world where technology and wealth often take center stage, how can we ensure that our faith and trust remain firmly rooted in something deeper and more enduring, as emphasized in Scripture?*

**LOVE**  
**YOUR** *neighbor*  
**AS YOURSELF.**  
*Mark 12:31*



## SATURDAY, MARCH 9

*I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other.*

*Luke 18:14a*

Every year on Ash Wednesday, Episcopal clergy engage in a somewhat peculiar debate. Some churches opt for “Ashes to Go,” offering quick prayers and ashes for people rushing off to work, while others view this on-the-go liturgy as unsettling and consumeristic, considering it an unnecessary concession to the busyness of people’s lives.

In my view, today’s passage from Luke provides guidance on the matter. In these verses, Jesus observes two individuals practicing penance. One follows all the religious protocols, offering lengthy prayers in a display of religious correctness and righteousness. The other is a tax collector who stands at a distance, uttering only a few words of penance. Jesus deliberately contrasts these two people, emphasizing that what truly matters is the humility and authenticity with which we approach God, rather than rigid adherence to external religious forms.

This serves as a reminder that God prioritizes sincerity and humility as we seek penance. As someone who embraces both traditional church practices and outreach on the sidewalks, I believe these qualities can be found in both settings. We need not position ourselves as judges of others’ prayers and penance; that task belongs to God alone.

### **Today’s readings**

Psalm 51:15–20 | Hosea 6:1–6 | Luke 18:9–14

*How can we observe traditional religious practices and also meet people where they are, recognizing that the authenticity and humility of our approach to God matter more than external expressions of faith?*





## FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT, MARCH 10

*Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart, that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

The Book of Common Prayer, p. 823

### Today's readings

Psalm 107:1–3,17–22 | Numbers 21:4–9 | Ephesians 2:1–10 | John 3:14–21



## MONDAY MARCH 11

*They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.*

*Isaiah 65:21*

In today's reading from Isaiah, the prophet envisions God's renewal of the earth, offering transcendent images of abundance that resonate with humanity's deepest aspirations. These verses depict the end of infant mortality, the gift of long and peaceful lives, the ability to build and enjoy one's home, and a world where children are not born into calamity and are free from exploitative inequalities.

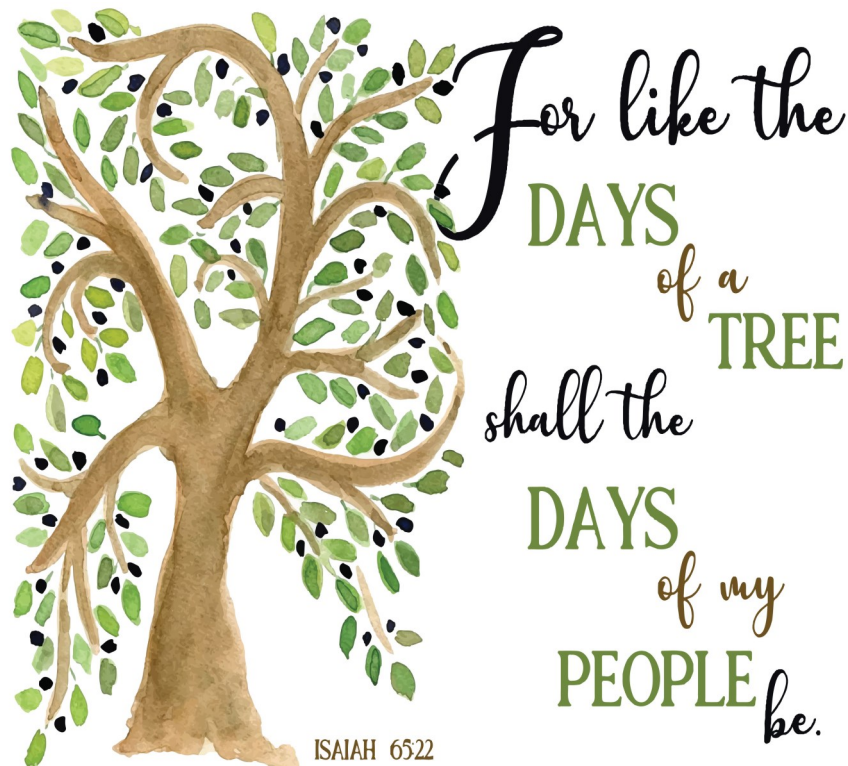
However, the reality we face today is far from this dream. According to the World Bank, many still live on less than \$5.50 per day, children are born into war, climate change displaces millions and poverty and inequality affect infant mortality and life expectancy. The dream of Isaiah, where each person can build a home and live peacefully, seems distant. Despite these challenges, Isaiah's vision serves as a guiding North Star. While we may not be there yet, it shows us where we are heading. Through collective efforts, including the work of organizations like Episcopal Relief & Development, we can join with God in the

ongoing renewal of the earth, working toward a future that reflects the prophetic dream of Isaiah.

### Today's readings

Psalm 30:1–6,11–13 | Isaiah 65:17–25 John 4:43–54

*In a world where the dream of Isaiah seems far away, what actions can we take individually and collectively to move closer to that vision of abundance, equality and peace?*



## TUESDAY, MARCH 12

*My Father is still working, and I also am working.*

*John 5:17*

I recently noticed a linguistic quirk, or what might be considered a false cognate, between English and Spanish. In English, the word “fastidious” generally praises a person’s meticulous attention to detail. However, in Spanish, calling someone “fastidioso” describes them as overly fixated on minutiae to the point of being annoying.

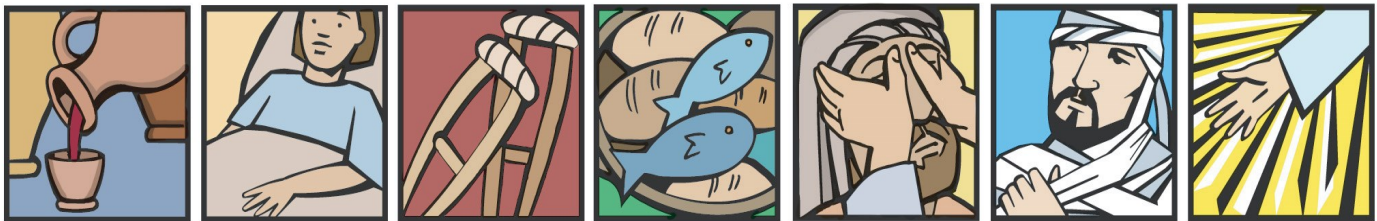
In today’s Gospel, Jesus displays little patience for the religious fastidiosos of his day. He heals a man who has suffered for 38 years, and when religious authorities object because the healing takes place on the Sabbath, Jesus redirects their focus to the greater miracle of the healing itself. In response to their rule-based objections, Jesus states, “My Father is still working, and I also am working.”

As someone who values rules, order, policies and procedures, I often grapple with whether I am being “fastidious” or “fastidioso.” I believe that religion, perhaps especially Anglicanism, tends to attract and cultivate a certain fastidious personality, for better and worse. Jesus’ example reminds us to focus on the bigger picture. God continually invites us to recognize the transcendent miracles happening in our midst.

### Today’s readings

Psalm 46:1–8 | Ezekiel 47:1–9,12 | John 5:1–18

*In your life, how do you balance between upholding rules and policies while also recognizing the importance of seeing the larger, transcendent miracles that unfold around you?*



# Signs & Wonders

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13**

*Very truly, I tell you, the hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the Voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.*

*John 5:25*

One of the most fascinating aspects of Jesus’ message is the way he talks about both abundance and scarcity. For Jesus, there is materially enough for all. The feeding of the 5,000, his promiscuous generosity toward outcasts and his healing ministry bear witness to God’s abundance amidst poverty and inequality.

And yet, the Gospels point to one resource that is scarce: time. “Very truly, I tell you, the hour is coming, and is now here...” Jesus says in today’s passage. Jesus speaks of the shortness of time both in terms of his own life but also in a cosmic sense. He knows his time with the disciples is very brief—and that our own time on earth is, too.

Jesus’ physical presence on earth was brief; his public ministry was just three years. The Gospels convey a sense of urgency to Jesus’ ministry; he is constantly rushing from one place to another, always aware of the storm clouds gathering on the horizon.



In our own lives, I believe we are called to somehow embody this Jesus-like witness to both abundance and scarcity. There really is enough for all, but time is short, the situation is urgent and we must act quickly.

### Today's readings

Psalms 145:8–19 | Isaiah 49:8–15 | John 5:19–29

*How can we strike a balance between embracing abundance and embodying the sense of urgency Jesus displayed in his ministry?*





*Invitation to Our Member  
Churches & Friends*

# Learn 'n Serve Event

**Saturday, April 13  
1 - 3 pm**

Epiphany Church Hall  
304 South Elmer Ave, Sayre, PA

Enter via elevator door to the right of front main doors & go to lower level.

Join in a team Jeopardy-like game that focuses on  
everything "*Bridge*."

Then take part in a service project for *Kids at Risk*.

Fellowship and Refreshments

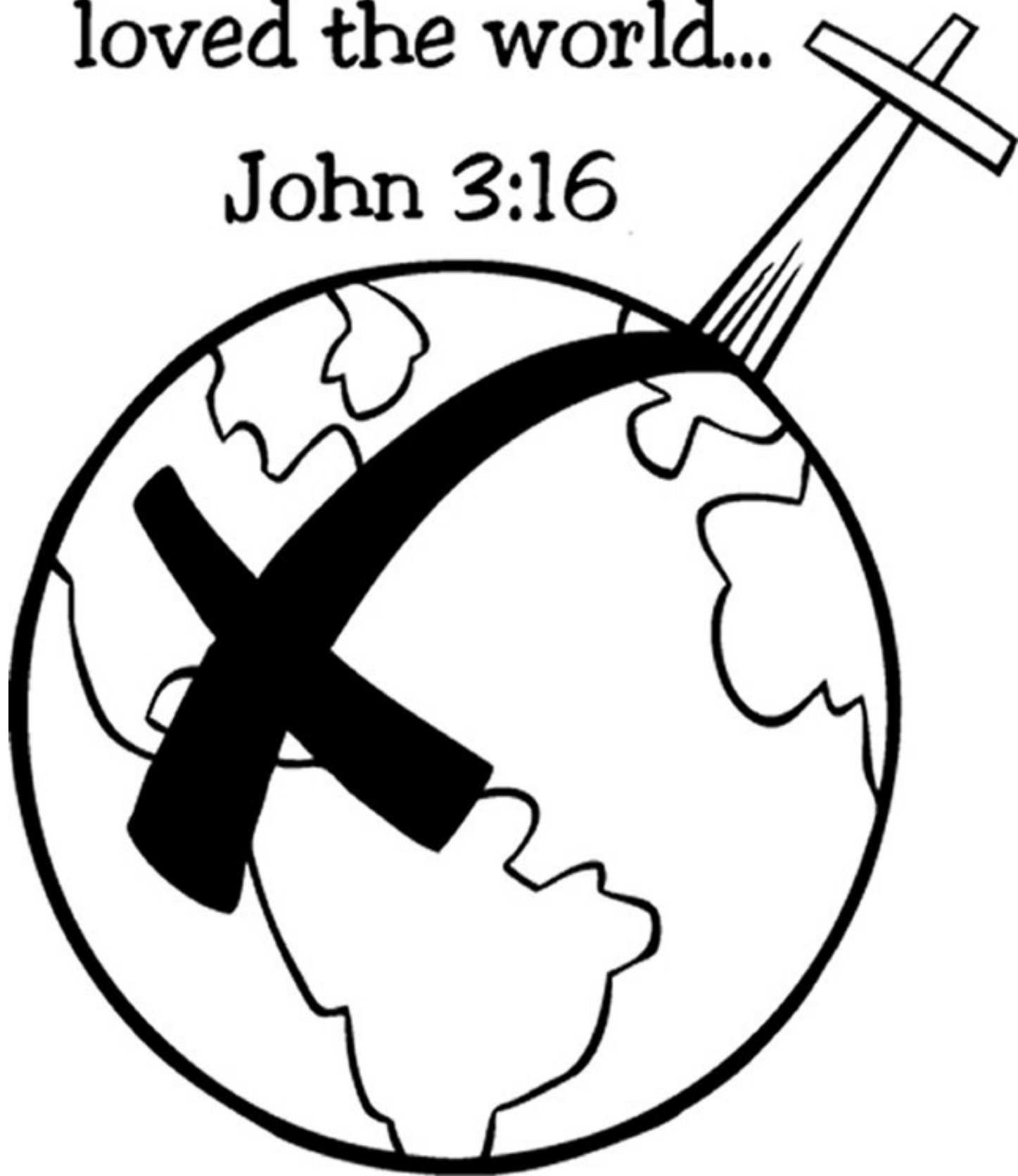
Anyone interested in *The Bridge* is welcome!

RSVP to Kim by Apr. 5: [learnnservice@thevalleybridge.org](mailto:learnnservice@thevalleybridge.org) or 570-867-2628 (text or call)



For God so  
loved the world...

John 3:16



# Measuring God's Love

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16 (NIV)

Choose the word that best matches the definition.

Answers can be found in John 3:16-17 (NIV)

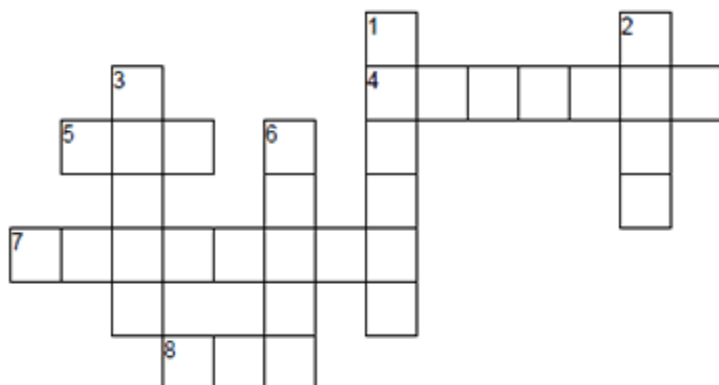


- \_\_\_ 1. To set the punishment of someone who has committed a crime  
A. believes B. perish C. condemn D. loved
- \_\_\_ 2. To rescue from danger or harm  
A. save B. condemn C. perish D. eternal
- \_\_\_ 3. To die or be destroyed  
A. condemn B. save C. believes D. perish
- \_\_\_ 4. Lasting forever; without end  
A. save B. eternal C. whoever D. perish
- \_\_\_ 5. Male offspring  
A. daughter B. sister C. cousin D. Son
- \_\_\_ 6. Accepts something as being true, genuine, or real  
A. perish B. save C. believes D. world
- \_\_\_ 7. The creator of heaven and earth  
A. Moses B. whoever C. God D. life
- \_\_\_ 8. Cared very deeply for someone  
A. believed B. loved C. condemned D. world
- \_\_\_ 9. The earth with its inhabitants and everything upon it  
A. save B. perish C. world D. whoever
- \_\_\_ 10. Anyone; any person  
A. world B. whoever C. perish D. eternal

# God So Loved the World

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16 (NIV)

Complete the activity below.



## ACROSS

4. Lasting forever; without end
5. Male offspring
7. Accept something as being true, genuine, or real
8. The creator of heaven and earth

## DOWN

1. To die or be destroyed
2. To rescue from danger or harm
3. The earth with its inhabitants and everything on it
6. Cared very deeply for someone

ETERNAL	WORLD	PERISH	SAVE
LOVED	GOD	BELIEVES	SON