

*When the face of God
is revealed,
what do you see?*

Lent 2010
The Kittamaquondi Community

*For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known.
-1 Corinthians 13:12*

Lenten Greetings, Friends,

In James Cameron's blockbuster movie, *Avatar*, the inhabitants of the planet on which the movie takes place greet each other by saying "I see you." These simple words take on more meaning as the movie progresses. We come to learn that the "seeing" these people speak of is more than just witnessing or observing. When they say, "I see you," they are recognizing the value of the one they are encountering. They are saying, in short, "I see you for what you really are, and know that you are to be honored."

Those are powerful words because they connect to a very powerful desire we each hold. We want to be known and understood and valued. And yet, we so often hide ourselves from each other. We pretend we something other than what we are. We put up barriers that make sure no one gets too close.

The ancient scriptures of our faith have a lot to say about the risks and benefits of being known and loved. Throughout scripture, God is revealing God's self to humankind—in creation, in conversation, in covenant, in community, in communion. God wants to be known by us. But revelation comes with a cost—those who receive that revelation are changed as a result. Some things fall away and other things are made clearer and stronger.

Lent is a time to focus in on our relationship with God—to open our eyes to God in, among and beyond us. We trust that God sees us already, and we seek not only to see God more clearly, but to see ourselves as God sees us. There is a cost to this journey. We may have to leave behind some pretenses that have served us well. But when we hear God greet us saying, "I see you," we know the deepest desires of our heart have been heard and understood.

We invite you to worship with us...

Sunday, February 14th: Transfiguration Sunday

"...whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him, he would take the veil off, until he came out..."

Scriptures: **Exodus 34:29-35**; Psalm 99; 2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2; Luke 9:28-36.

According to Exodus, Moses was so transformed by the experience of coming face-to-face with God that the skin on his face began to shine. But instead of celebrating his transformation, the Israelite people begged him to hide his face from them. According to the Gospel of Luke, Peter, James and John witnessed Jesus' face begin to shine when he took them up a mountain to pray. Their reaction? They are terrified.

Why is it so scary to encounter God—or even to encounter people who have encountered God? Perhaps we don't want a bright light shining on us, revealing us. What do we think we need to hide from God?

Wednesday, February 17th: Ash Wednesday

"Be reconciled to God!"

Scriptures: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; Psalm 51:1-17; 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21.

7:00 pm: Open Meditation

7:30 pm: Guided "Visio Divina"

8:00 pm: Vespers and Ashes

Our Ash Wednesday worship will begin with an open period of quiet meditation. We'll have a fire in the fireplace and some images and tools set up in the room to guide your reflections. You may come for all, or for part of this period. At 7:30 pm, Terri Simpson from the National Cathedral will offer some simple instructions in a contemplative practice she calls "Visio Divina", using visual art to guide us to an encounter with the divine.

At 8:00 pm, we'll gather for a short vespers service that will include scripture, a brief reflection, prayers of confession and an assurance of pardon, and an optional anointing with ashes.

Sunday, February 21st: The First Sunday in Lent

“Do not put the Lord your God to the test.”

Scriptures: Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16; Romans 10:8b-13; **Luke 4:1-13.**

The temptations that Satan offers Jesus during his forty days of trial in the wilderness are disturbingly close to things we want God to give us: ease, power, rescue. The story seems to suggest that some of the most basic desires of our heart get in the way of our connection to God.

What expectations do we bring to our relationship with God? What do we think God should do or be for us? How can we push past all the things we think we need to find our deeper desire for connection with God?

Sunday, February 28th: The Second Sunday in Lent

*“...since they had stayed awake,
they saw his glory....”*

Scriptures: Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18; Psalm 27; Philippians 3:17-4:1; **Luke 9:28-36.**

Two weeks into the Lenten season, the story of Jesus' transfiguration on the mountaintop appears in the lectionary again, giving us a chance to take a second look at this powerful story. Are our fears about being seen and known by God (and by each other) really warranted? What would happen if we “woke up” to the revelation of God in our midst, even for a moment? How would the problems of the world look different, once we opened our eyes to God?

Sunday, March 7th: The Third Sunday in Lent

*“Seek the Lord while he may be found,
call upon him while he is near.”*

Scriptures: **Isaiah 55:1-9**; Psalm 63:1-8; 1 Corinthians 10:1-13;
Luke 13:1-9.

The lectionary for the third week of Lent directs us to a stunning portion from the Prophet Isaiah. Using images from the natural world—rain that falls from heaven, seeds that sprout and produce grain—Isaiah reminds us of the deep connection between creation and Creator. Our sense of connection with God may wax and wane, but all of creation reminds of that cycles, movement and change are part of any relationship.

What season best describes your current relationship to God?

Sunday, March 14th: The Fourth Sunday in Lent

*“...we entreat you on behalf of Christ,
be reconciled to God.”*

Scriptures: Joshua 5:9-12; Psalm 32; **2 Corinthians 5:16-21**;
Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32.

The fourth Sunday in Lent is a day of transition. We can see where the story of Jesus is heading—to the cross, the grave and beyond. When we face into the fractures and divisions of this story—people fighting with people, people fighting with God—we recognize the importance of staying as close as possible to God in difficult times. Like the Prodigal Son, we may find that we have traveled far away from the life we are called to live. But God awaits us and welcomes our return with extravagant grace.

Sunday, March 21st: The Fifth Sunday in Lent

*“I am well on my way, reaching out for Christ,
who has so wondrously reached out for me.”*

Scriptures: Isaiah 43:16-21; Psalm 126; **Philippians 3:4b-14**;
John 12:1-8.

The scriptures for this Sunday are incredibly intimate: Paul exclaims over how Jesus has touched him and John shows us Mary, touching Jesus’ feet with her perfume and her hair. This is how close we can come to God when we put aside our fears, our expectations and our judgments. Could we let ourselves go to that place of real connection with God?

Sunday, March 28th: Palm Sunday/Passion Sunday

*“Let the same mind be in you
that was in Christ Jesus.”*

Scriptures: Isaiah 50:4-9a, Psalm 31:9-16; Philippians 2:5-11; Mark 14:1-15:47.

The story of Jesus’ passion—his betrayal by his own disciple, his torture, his death—is not an easy story to hear. But Jesus’ invitation to his disciples—“watch with me for just one hour”—is his invitation to us. Can we stay awake? Can we open our eyes and see Jesus’ story as our own?

Sunday, April 4th: Easter Sunday

*“Why do you look for the living among the dead?
He is not here, but has risen.”*

Scriptures: Acts 10:34-43, Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; 1 Corinthians 15:19-26; **Luke 24:1-12.**

Lent has shown us again that God does not hide from us. God is revealed in the story of Jesus’ life, death and resurrection, and that story is repeated in our own lives. His story is our story too. God is revealed in our lives and in the lives of the people around us.

Are our eyes open to the miracles that God is revealing to us, even now? Easter is a celebration—not just of what God has done in Christ, but also of what God is doing in and through us!

Special Worship Events in Lent

Maundy Thursday Worship

Thursday, April 1st, 2010

6:00 pm to 7:30 pm Passover Seder

For many years, KC has held a Seder as a way of reflecting on the connections between the Passover story and the Easter story. The gospel writers connect the stories when they set Jesus' Last Supper with his disciples in the midst of the Passover celebrations in Jerusalem. During the Seder, we not only retell the story of the Exodus, but we step into it, making ourselves characters in the on-going story of God's saving work in the world.

7:30 pm to 8:30 pm Tenebrae Service

After our Seder, we'll gather for an ancient tradition called a Service of Shadows or a Tenebrae Service (*tenebrae* means shadows in Latin). This simple service takes place in candlelight. Readings from scripture, interspersed with songs, tell the story of Jesus' last supper, his arrest, trial and crucifixion. After each reading, a candle is blown out until the sanctuary is completely dark. Then, one candle is re-lit, the cross is draped in black, and the congregation leaves in silence.

Our hope is that this moving service will help us continue to walk with Jesus, tracing his steps away from the Seder table to the cross.

Sunday Morning Meditation

*From 9:00 am to 10:00 am
Every Sunday in Lent*

This Lenten season, we invite you to spend some time in contemplation and prayer—guided by art—in our sanctuary for up to one hour prior to worship.

As part of the Worship Renewal Grant we received from the Calvin Institute for Christian Worship, we have been working with Terri Lynn Simpson, a poet and spiritual guide from the National Cathedral. Terri has prepared a booklet on “lectio and visio divina”, a process of contemplation led by either written words or visual art. Terri will also be present at our Ash Wednesday service to offer instruction in this practice.

Terri will select a piece of visual art and an accompanying written text (from scripture or elsewhere) for each Sunday in Lent. The art will be displayed in large form at the front of the sanctuary on an easel and reproduced on the cover of the bulletin. As the season progresses, each week’s art pieces will be displayed on the side wall of the sanctuary.

The experience of quiet contemplation, and the experience of viewing art, can provoke similar fears. How are we supposed to approach this experience? What if we don’t “get it”? Will this experience reveal us as spiritually—or artistically—shallow?

The process of visio divina helps us to move past our fears and to move towards a deeper encounter with God, revealed to us in what we see, what we hear and what we notice within ourselves.

Join us for

Making Room

*Our winter celebration of
the arts and the art of contemplation*

Sunday, February 21st, 2:30 to 6:30 pm

2:30 – 3:50 **Ikebana Class** led by instructor Nisa Clements and colleagues. Each participant will learn the meditative art of Japanese flower arranging and create an arrangement to take home. Reservations for class only required @ 410 730-4855 *Cost of class: \$10 per person

4:00 – 4:30 **Guided Meditation** led by Retreat Leader Terri Simpson, accompanied by musician Karen Rugg on the harp.

4:30 – 5:30 **Live Harp and Native American Flute selections** performed by local musician Karen Rugg while participants are invited to continue their meditations, explore the Art and Poetry Gallery and relax by the fire.

5:30 – 6:15 Our monthly **Healing Service** will be held in the sanctuary led by KC member Chaplain Jack Dunlavey. Live harp music will be included in the service.

*With the exception of the Ikebana class, all events are free of charge.

This program is made possible through a Worship Renewal Grant from the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, Grand Rapids, Michigan, with funds provided by Lilly Endowment Inc.

Evening Worship at KC

Candlelight Evening Prayer

Sunday, March 14th, 5:30 pm

With scores of candles lighting our sanctuary, KC takes on a very special glow. Come and rest in this space on the second Sunday evening of every month. This service includes prayer, scripture, brief periods of spoken reflections and of silence, and ends with a communion service. The music of Rick LaRocca—guitar and voice—weaves the service together in a unique and arresting way.

Healing Service

Sunday, February 21st and Sunday, March 21st, 5:30 pm

This intimate service is a long-standing KC tradition. Led by KC member Jack Dunlavey, this service begins with meditative music and a reflection, and continues with healing prayers for all who request them, either with or without a laying on of hands. The evening ends with a Circle of Gratitude. All are welcome to come experience the power of prayer in an intimate setting.

Eventide: Worship in Words and Silence

Sunday, February 28th and Sunday, March 28th, 5:30 pm

This service is an oasis of quiet where we can pause, drinking deeply from the Living Water that Jesus offers before we journey into the week to come. We use a simple written liturgy to frame our service, and instrumental music eases our way into a ten-minute period of silence. Then, we celebrate communion, receiving God's gifts of bread for the journey and the cup of blessing.

Spiritual Education Lent 2010

The Kittamaqundi Community has a long and strong history of spiritual education. Our classes provide a unique opportunity for us to deepen our faith while also deepening our relationship with the other participants in the class.

We are offering a choice of two classes during Lent this year. Each is highly participatory, and it is helpful if each participant makes a commitment to attend every class.

1. Communion as Practice:

A Lenten Study of The Eucharist in Action

Led by Laura Norvell and Heather Kirk-Davidoff

Within our KC community, we share communion in the context of worship regularly. But we bring to the table different understandings of what we do there. During this six week study, we will reflect on the biblical origins of Communion (the Eucharist), on the ways that communion has taken shape in the history of the church, on how modern Christians understand the practice. Connecting our what we've learned with our own experience of communion, we'll consider how we enact the practice with new understandings in the KC community and the world. Each week we will share communion in a way that enhances our discussion.

Dates: Six Sunday afternoons. February 21, 28, March 7, 14, 21 and 28, culminating by preparing worship for the community on Maundy Thursday, April 1.

Time: 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm.

Location: The first floor center room of Oliver's Carriage House.

**2. Eclipsing Empire:
Paul, Rome and the Kingdom of God**

Led by Heather Kirk-Davidoff, Chris Beyer and leaders from four other Columbia churches.

Join preeminent New Testament scholars Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan on location in Turkey as they trace the Apostle Paul's footsteps throughout the Roman Empire. This DVD-based study explores fresh insights into Paul's message of the Kingdom of God, its challenge to Roman imperial theology, and the apostle's radical relevance for today.

We will join four other Columbia congregations for this ecumenical Lenten study. We will meet for 5 consecutive Friday evenings to view a 20-minute video and continue with small and large group discussion guided by readings by John Dominic Crossan.

Dates: Five Friday evenings. February 26th, March 5th, March 12th, March 19th, March 26th.

Time: Dessert and beverages beginning at 7:15 pm. Session begins promptly at 7:30 pm and concludes by 9:00 pm.

Location: The Oakland Mills Interfaith Center, 5885 Robert Oliver Place, Columbia.

Partner Congregations: The Kittamaqundi Community Church, Abiding Savior Lutheran Church, Lutheran Church of the Living Word, Columbia Baptist Fellowship, Columbia United Christian Church.

Winter Sabbath: A KC Silent Retreat

**Friday, February 26th
to Saturday, February 27th, 2010**

Why be silent for a whole day? A silent retreat is an opportunity to step away from your normal pace and surroundings to stop and listen. It is a chance to listen to your self (your own body, mind, and spirit) and to listen to the Spirit of God. It is one thing to pray or meditate for 15 or 30 minutes in your own living room, but it is a completely different opportunity for personal reflection when you can separate yourself from the normal trappings of life. It is not unusual for folks to go in to a silent retreat with no particular expectations and then find it a significant experience.

You are invited to spend some time in community, in the woods, in quiet. Matt Norvell and Heather Kirk-Davidoff will be leading a retreat at Rolling Ridge Retreat Center outside of Harper's Ferry, West Virginia beginning on the evening of Friday, February 26th and ending on the evening of Saturday, February 27th. Participants are welcome to stay at Rolling Ridge through Sunday if they choose. We will begin with a communal meal on Friday night followed by a brief introduction to the practice of silence. Then, we will go into silence until 4:00 pm on Saturday at which time we will celebrate communion together, share a bit about our experience, and enjoy another communal meal.

For those who are unfamiliar with Rolling Ridge, more information about the retreat house can be found at www.rollingridge.net. The retreat house has six bedrooms and sleeps up to 12 people. There are 3 bathrooms and a lovely common room with a wood stove. The retreat house is nestled in beautiful woods filled with hiking trails.

This retreat is free. Participants are responsible for their own food for breakfast and lunch on Saturday and will share costs for our two common dinners.

Please let us know if you are interested in participating by February 14th.

Spiritual Education for Children at KC

KC's Sunday school meets three Sundays a month. After beginning worship with their families, children go downstairs for Sunday school from about 10:20 until worship is over. Our school currently has two classes: one for elementary school aged children and one for middle and high school aged youth. We use a curriculum called "Seasons of the Spirit" that is Bible-based, creative and highly interactive.

We also offer nursery care for babies through pre-schoolers.

On the third and fourth Sundays of the month, our middle school and high school kids meet in the "KCARE Group" led by Sandy Queen and Frank Turban. This group gives the kids an opportunity to share their spiritual journeys and offer each other support while engaging in the disciplines of our community.

On the first Sunday of the month, we invite our children to worship with us for our entire service. These "Whole Family Sundays" are designed and led by teams of adults and youth. They are intended to give our children an opportunity to participate in our entire worship service including our communion service.

Take a Step on Your Journey by Making a Personal Lenten Commitment...

The tradition of “giving something up” during the Lenten season is an ancient one, and familiar especially to those who were raised in more traditional churches. Some of us grew up with the expectation that we would not eat meat—or chocolate—during Lent in solidarity with Jesus, who spent forty days in the wilderness without food.

As adults, we may find it a relief to realize that we don’t have to feel deprived of things we enjoy in order to be people of faith. Yet, choosing to make some kind of Lenten commitment that seems to us to reflect our desire to be closer to God may, potentially, deepen our spiritual life during this season.

For some of us, Lent may continue to be a time when we give up a habit or a practice, especially one that we feel is negative. Forty days is a challenging, but do-able, period to give up sweets, or caffeine, or swearing, and in so doing make a daily effort to live our lives with more intentional awareness of God. You may also find that letting go of some activity (even fasting some days!) helps you make room in your life for God.

You might find it helpful to commit to a new practice during Lent. Consider scheduling a regular time each day for prayer or meditation, for reading a bit of scripture or some other book that nourishes your spirit, or for writing in a journal. Perhaps drawing or painting or walking will give you a sense of opening to God.

When we desire a deeper connection with God and are willing to make changes that reflect that desire, we may be amazed at what we experience. Take some time to get in touch with your desire for a “closer walk with God”. What is it that you are yearning for? What can you do, and how will you be, so that you might feel closer to God? Take a few moments to jot down the things that you know will help you have a closer walk with God during this Lenten period. Share your list with someone close to you.

What makes a Lenten commitment significant is not the particular practice we take on or give up, but our attitude of consciously seeking a connection with God. When we make room in our lives for this connection we are frequently amazed at what we experience. Jesus taught us that God is not only “out there,” but *within* us, as near as our heartbeat, and yearning for our attention and love.

Benefit Concerts

Amazing Grace Coffee House

Sunday, March 7th. Show times at 6:00 and 7:15 pm.

Hosted by singer/songwriter Rick LaRocca, the Amazing Grace Coffee House brings the inspired work of IndieHeaven.com Christian musicians to Columbia. March's featured artist is singer/songwriter **Lisa Fenstermacher** (check her out at www.lisafenstermacher.com.)

The Amazing Grace Coffee House now includes dinner!

Beginning at 5:30 pm, a free hot dinner will be served. Complete dinner is \$10 (suggested donation) including beverage and dessert.

Admission is free, but your donations to support the artists are gratefully accepted. Coffee, tea and desserts are available for purchase throughout the evening.

The Amazing Grace Coffee House is an official drop-off site for donations for the Route One Day Resource Center for the Homeless. We invite you to bring with you a donation of food or clothing. Needed items include non-perishable food like canned chili, peanut butter and bottled water, or jackets and boots. For a complete list of needed donations, see the Amazing Grace website (www.amazinggracecoffeehouse.com).

More about the Route One Homeless Ministry:

The Route One Homeless Ministry began in December, 2007 with the purpose of reaching out to our neighbors living in tents and trailers along Route One. Seven months after we began, we opened the Day Resource Center on Route 1 to provide hot meals, showers, pantry and clothing items, social services assistance, computer access and the fellowship of caring and dedicated people.

We welcome people of compassion who want to reach out a caring hand to those who are hurting. In whatever way you respond, you can help to bring light and hope into the darkness of the lives of our homeless friends. Please contact Anne Dunn at daycenter@verizon.net or 410-461-4638, if you want more information or you want to help.

KC's Second Saturday Benefit Concert Series

Saturday, March 13th. Doors open at 7:15 pm, music from 8:00 pm to 11:00 pm.

2nd Saturday is a unique musical event held at KC. It combines a nightclub atmosphere with family-friendly surroundings. For one low admission price, you can sit comfortably listening to great music, eating delicious food and drinking a fine assortment of beverages. *All benefits from the evening go to support Agape House, KC's ministry partner in Baltimore.*

March's concert features **Funk Daddy-G** (aka Gary Gilpin, a Baltimore-based keyboard player and composer). Check his music out at www.myspace.com/gilpinmusic.

Admission is \$20, and reservations are required. Wine, beer and soft drinks are available for purchase. For more information, or to purchase tickets, go to www.2ndsaturdaycafe.com.

More About the Agape House:

Agape House is a multi-service ministry in Baltimore, providing educational programs for at-risk children, support groups for adult men and women, free meals and groceries, emergency housing for homeless mothers and their children, and much more. KC has had a long-standing relationship with Agape House, and supports its ministry in many ways. Each summer, KC operates a weeklong summer camp for children from Agape House.

More Ways to Reach Out

March 3rd, 3:30 pm to 8:00 pm:

Dinner at the Route One Day Center

A team of KC folks, led by Harriett Katzen and Ruthellen Hellyer, have committed to providing a dinner for the Route One Day Center on the first Wednesday of every month. We need volunteers to cook and bring food, serve and talk with guests, and of course clean up. If you're interested in helping this month or any month, please contact Bev Beyer at bevbeyer@gmail.com.

March 6th and April 3rd, 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm:

Agape House Saturday School

All are invited to join us as we spend a couple of hours playing games, reading books, making crafts and just enjoying time with kids involved with Agape House. We will meet in the Kittamaqundi church parking lot at 1:15 pm and carpool to the new facility for the Agape House in Baltimore (Delta Lambda Foundation-Outreach, 1501 N. Dukeland St, Baltimore 21216.) We return to the church at about 4:30 pm. If you enjoy working with and helping kids, this is your opportunity! Usually, there are from 20 to 30 children from seven to 14 years old. For more information, please contact Sharon Setzer 410-798-7193 (Home) or 443-745-5000 (Cell) setzersa@verizon.net.

A Pilgrimage of Peace: A Weekend Retreat at Dayspring

March 19, 6:00 pm - March 21, 2:00 pm

Through song and silence, shared meals and walking meditation, we journey together to discover the sources of peace. Music includes original chants and songs, Taize chants and Celtic melodies.

Leader: Stefan Andre Waligur is a contemplative musician/composer, retreat leader, and peace activist connected for many years with the Church of the Saviour in Washington DC. He has been closely connected to Taize and Plum Village in France and has served as Liturgical Musician for the Church of the Saviour, chaplain at American University, and adjunct faculty at Memphis Theological Seminary.

General Information: Weekend retreats run Friday dinner through Sunday lunch. The silence begins Friday night after dinner when the leader opens the retreat and introduces the theme. The leader usually offers brief meditations and morning and evening prayers on Saturday. The silence ends late-morning Sunday with a time of sharing and worship, followed by lunch, the departure meal.

The cost for weekend retreats is \$180. To reserve a space, please send a \$90 deposit. Dinner on Friday at is at 7 pm and is the first official gathering. You are welcome to arrive and settle in any time after 4 pm on Friday; we recommend you arrive no later than 6:30. The retreat will end by 2 pm on Sunday.

Dayspring Retreat Center is located at 11301 Neelsville Church Road in Germantown, MD.

For more information or to register: Call the retreat center at 301-428-9348, or send an email to dayspringretreat@verizon.net.



You are welcome at KC.

We are an **independent Christian community** that began in 1969 when the city of Columbia was just beginning. From its earliest years, KC has been a place where a wide variety of people who are seeking to go deeper on their spiritual journeys have found nurture and challenge. We seek to practice the same hospitality that Jesus offered around his table.

Whether you are just setting out on a spiritual journey or have been traveling this road for a long while, we hope you will find at KC experiences and relationships that will help you take the **next step** in your growth.

Let's journey together!

The Kittamaquindi Community
5410 Leaf Treader Way, Columbia, Maryland
410-730-4855
www.kc-church.com
Rev. Heather Kirk-Davidoff, Enabling Minister

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What do you see?