

Good News and good news

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Changing Words...

by Judi Sweeney

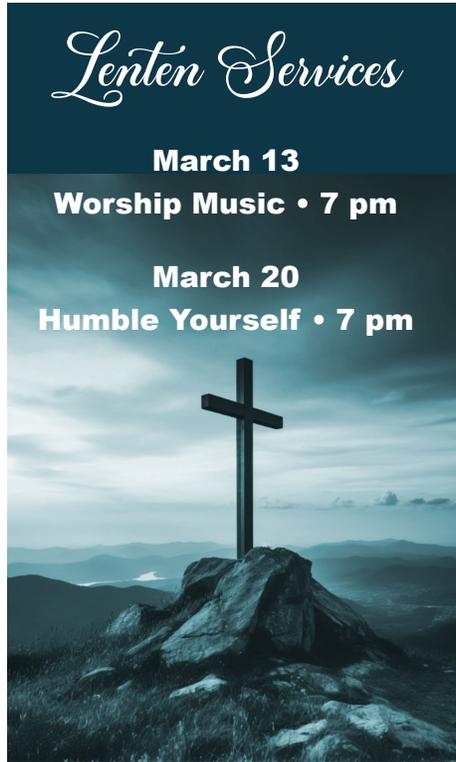
When I went off to college, the world really changed for me. Between my high school graduation and my first day of college, my parents had moved our family from northern Illinois to Connecticut. While I lived in our new home for 2 months, I never had a bedroom or even felt like it was my home. Yet, when I flew back to Chicago and then took the train to Indiana and Valparaiso University, that didn't feel like home either. My mantra (largely said quietly to myself) was, "Well...everything changes. Get used to it." For years that really was true for me, and one of my teachers several years later, really reinforced that idea.

I had finally decided to major in English, minor in history and become a secondary school teacher. One of my classes was really about the origin of words in English and the importance of meanings, especially as they change. The professor stood up on the first day and used that phrase I had almost forgotten about. He told us that words change their meanings quite often because "everything changes." "Nothing in life is permanent," he explained. This was not exactly what a 20-year-old girl without a bedroom of her own anywhere wanted to hear. But I was even more surprised to find out how words have changed over time.

Words that Changed Their Meaning

The professor gave us several examples of words that have drastically changed their meaning over time. He gave us many examples, and I stored a few in my memory because I was so startled by what had happened over the centuries to commonly used words. One of the words was "silly." Originally found in texts from the 1300's, the word "silly" meant "innocent or pitiable." Today "silly" is used to describe something or someone who is foolish or frivolous. The word "naughty" was equally surprising. Again, in the 1300's, naughty people were described as poor and/or needy. The word "naught" meant "nothing or empty." One hundred years later, the meaning

Continued on page 4...



good news...

These are the birthdays of people age 65 and older and couples with anniversaries from March 13th through March 31st.

Birthdays:

Sue Caron	March 13
Mary Dow	March 20
Mary Waytina	March 21
Carol Chaplin	March 24
Jack Sweeney	March 26

Anniversaries:

Brad & Marcia Cummings	March 20
Dick & Barb Gelinias	March 24
Peter & Marilyn Nagle	March 31

Altar Flowers:

March 17 - Flowers are given to celebrate the first day of Spring.

March 24 - Flowers are given to celebrate Brooke Cass' birthday.

Holy Spirit Class...

Monday, March 18 • 7 pm

by Jane Ingersoll-Mahoney

Bring your family members and friends! This class is for both men and women, couples, and singles. Teens are especially encouraged to attend. It is for anyone who desires to know more about the Third Person of the Trinity. Meet me in Fellowship Hall for a night of filling by the Holy Spirit as we learn more about Him and how He benefits us in ways we may not have imagined.

There will be light refreshments, gifts to take home, and blessings for your soul. So, take a short break from your daily demands. Come and enjoy Christian fellowship. Come and be blessed! You will not want to miss this special opportunity. See you all there! NOTE: Pay no heed to 'that voice' that will give you all kinds of excuses why you should not go. Pray about it, then make your decision.

Sign-up after church this Sunday if you haven't already signed up. For more information, please contact Jane.



Please remember to sign up for the Women's Retreat at church on April 6th

<https://www.osvhub.com/first-church-nb/forms/2024-women-s-retreat>

New Small Groups Starting in April

Living Single...

If you are single and want to join other Christian singles for Bible Study and activities, then please consider joining **Living Single**, a new Bible Study and Activity Small Group that will begin on **Thursday, April 4th**. Each month, the group will meet in the Conference Room for a Bible Study on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays. The Bible Study is based on the book and video by Tony Evans called *Kingdom Single*. *Kingdom Single* will encourage you to see yourself as complete in Christ and free to serve Him. It will empower you to live as Kingdom men and women in a corrupt culture. On the 2nd, 4th, and 5th Thursday nights, they will be meeting to do activities in the area together.

The group is celebrating Christian singleness and growing strong relationships with other Christian singles. For more information, please contact Bridget Reynolds.

Overcomers...

A new women's Bible Study will be starting on **Monday, April 8th**. The group will be facilitated by Jeannine Fish, and they will be meeting at her home from 6:30 - 7:30 pm.

The first study will be from the new Lifeway Bible Study called *Life Under the Sun* by Hannah Anderson. Together, you will learn to name your anxieties, concerns, and disappointments. Then you'll discover how Ecclesiastes is more than self-help or good advice—how it frees us to ask the questions that Jesus Himself will eventually answer for each of us.

For more information, please contact Jeannine Fish.

Blue lettering indicates those groups that have updated information.

Adult Sunday School Class

This adult Bible Study meets weekly during the school year from 9:30 - 10:15 am in the Conference Room. Starting on January 21st, the class will be taught for awhile by Patti Barney using the book *Psalms 91*.

Monday Morning Women's Bible Study

Meeting weekly at Phyllis Cobiski's home at 23 Gilbert Street from 10 - 11:30 am. The group will be starting a new study called "*Breaking Free*" on January 8th. Contact Pauline Dwelly for information.

Women's Monday Afternoon Bible Study

This Bible Study will be meeting in the Conference Room on Monday afternoon from 12:30 - 2:00 pm. Contact Susan Gainley.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

This group meets the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month from 6 to 7:30 pm. The group meets in the Parlor. Contact Karen Bessette for more information.

It's All About Jesus

This Bible Study group meets to learn more about Jesus through the Scriptures. The group meets on Tuesday evenings at 6 pm. Contact Jade Ford for more information.

Men's Bible Study This group is currently in the book of Exodus, working through the Bible with a Bible Study entitled *The Essential 100*. We're discovering the 100 most inspirational passages in God's Word that truly identify the Bible as a unified story that leads to Jesus. We meet on Tuesday from 6:30 to 8:00 pm in the Conference Room. Contact Brian Roth for details.



Understanding Spiritual Gifts - Zoom

This Zoom Bible study biweekly on Wednesday nights from 6:45 pm. They are Studying *Spiritual Gifts*, a study by Kay Arthur (available on Amazon). The next class is on March 13th. Contact Marcia Cummings to get a Zoom invite for the class as well as for more information.

Christian Yoga • Balanced in Him

Meeting every Wednesday night in the parlor. Contact Holly Kularski for information.

Prayer Group

This group meets weekly on Fridays at 9:30 - 11:00 am in the Conference Room. Contact Nancy Olson for details.

Celia Daniel's Bible Study

This Bible Study meets in the Multi-Purpose Room on Thursdays from 1:00 to 2:00 pm. Contact Celia Daniels for more information.

Sweeney Bible Study

We continue with our life application Bible studies. Our next meeting will be on March 14th. There will be no meeting on the 28th. Contact Judi Sweeney for details.

Men's Saturday Breakfast and Study

The monthly men's breakfast and Bible Study is on the second Saturday of each month. Contact Dale Wadsworth for information.

The next breakfast is April 13th at 8:15 am.

Drawing Closer

The Bible Journaling Group will meet in the Multi-Purpose Room from 9:30 - 11:00 am on Saturdays. Contact Deb Arnold.

Parents of Little Ones Bible Study

This new group will meet at the Hulsebus' home on the first Saturdays of the month. This group is starting a new study called "Grace Based Parenting" by Dr. Tim Kimmel. Please reach out to Brian or Jessie for more information.

Jr. KICK

This group for students in grades 6 through 8 meets from at 2:00 to 3:30 pm in Fellowship Hall.

Ignite

This group for high school students meets from 4 - 5:30 pm in Fellowship Hall.

Sharing Christ Through Cards

Watch the newsletter for the next session.

Joy 'n Hope

The Cancer Care Ministry supports people with cancer as well as their caregivers. They also pray for people whose life is impacted by cancer each month. See Melanie Silva for more information.

Fishers of Men...

by Bethanie Wheeler

This week we read the story of Jesus calling His first disciples. They were just twelve ordinary men who didn't have any extra special qualities or talents. They just believed in Jesus and left all their stuff behind when He said, "Let's go!" Some of them were fishermen, but once they decided to go with Jesus they would be fishers of people! We need to be like them and tell all our friends and people we meet about Jesus! We made fish bracelets to wear and remind us to tell others.



Samson and Delilah...

by Karen McGrail

Our story today, found in the book of Judges, was about Samson and Delilah. It is good to be strong physically but more important to be strong spiritually. We started off with some exercises running through a rope ladder, lifting weights, and squeezing hand grips. We reviewed the 7 parts to the armor of God (Helmet of Salvation, Breastplate of righteousness, Belt of truth, Shield of faith, Sword of the Spirit, Gospel feet, and Prayer). God gave Samson incredible strength, but Samson relied on that strength instead of on God. Delilah was a Philistine who tricked Samson into revealing that the secret of his strength was his long hair. Then she took advantage of him and cut his hair. Only when Samson's strength was gone was he able to repent, and then God put his plan into action. He asked God to give him strength one more time, and God granted it. He was able to destroy many Philistine leaders in one blow and free the Israelites.

The good news of Samson's story is the same message many of us sing to our children: we are weak, but God is strong. If we put our hope in ourselves or others we become like Samson: weak and enslaved. Samson is a reminder that our true strength and hope is found in God.



A Little Girl and a Sick Woman...

by Mary Beth Kularski

This week our students read "A little girl and a poor frail lady" the story of Jairus' daughter from Luke 8. For them, learning an old woman was sick for 12 years blew their minds because the oldest amongst them is 7. Also, the idea of a little girl so sick her dad couldn't help truly made them all pause. We learned how Jesus was able to heal the poor old lady and bring Jairus' daughter back to life because He can do things we cannot. Only Jesus has power over life and death.

We played a game where we led our friends across the room - blindfolded - with obstacles - oh, and without touching them. Some were hesitant to listen to their guide because we're human and make mistakes, so bumps happened. This game illustrated how faith in Jesus works for us as his followers. He was sent to be our perfect guide, and we can have blind faith, just like we learned about in the story. To see the kids make this connection is always such a blessing to my week!



The Girl Who Wouldn't Go Away...

by Sue Caron

On Sunday, March 10th, we studied the story of Ruth, which took place during the time of the Judges. The story began with Elimelech and Naomi moving from Bethlehem to Moab during a time of famine. Although it was frowned upon, their two sons married Moabite women, Ruth and Orpah. We are not told why, but Elimelech died; then his sons also died. All three women became widows.

Naomi told her daughters-in-law to go back to their people to find husbands. Ruth said to Naomi, "Where you go, I will go, and where you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people, and your God my God." (Ruth 1:16) They returned to Bethlehem, and Ruth began to glean for wheat in the field of Boaz, a relative of Naomi. After a series of events Boaz became Ruth's Kinsman - Redeemer. (A male relative who had the privilege or responsibility to care for a relative who was in need.) Ruth and Boaz were married and had a baby boy named Obed. Obed grew up and had a son named Jesse who became the father of King David. It was into the line of David that the Lord Jesus himself was eventually born, our Redeemer and King!



Words...continued from page 1...

had shifted. The word “naughty” had come to mean being morally bad or wicked. Today, the word has a gentler meaning. “Naughty” means badly behaved or mischievous. But the word that really impressed me was the word “awful.” Looking at the word, I could easily see that it meant “being full of awe.” The word “awe” meant “reverential wonder, tinged with fear, inspired by the sublime” to me. Originally, “awful” meant that a person was full of this reverential wonder. Today, the word means something very different – frightful or exceedingly bad. “How,” I wondered, “did the words completely change their meanings?” At that point in time, I didn’t carry on with that thought. I should have.

What the Bible says about Words

God actually has a lot to say about words and what they mean. Last week I came across a short article about the changed meaning of the word “enormous.” Originally, it meant “greatly wicked.” That was a total surprise. Today it means “of great size.” This time, I carried the thought further and remembered the initial lesson I learned. I looked at many other words that had changed meanings. Then it hit me. The words hadn’t changed meanings. People changed their meanings. People took words and twisted their meanings around until each word meant its complete opposite! I remembered the original word “awe” and how “awful” originally meant “full of awe.” Psalm 33:8 says, “*Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.*” Why did we turn the word “awful” into something so negative and ugly? God wants us to be full of awe toward Him and all He does.

After healing a blind and deaf man, Jesus was accused by the Pharisees of healing by the power of Beelzebub or Satan. Jesus rebuked even their logic but then talked about the power of the words we use in Matthew 12:34-37, “*You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.*” How sobering it is for each of us to know that we will be held accountable to God for “every careless word” we speak. The words we speak show the condition of our hearts. I wondered about the first person who changed the meaning of the word “enormous.” Everyone around him thought it meant “very wicked.” Perhaps that person thought “maybe being wicked isn’t so bad.” Perhaps he was a large person, someone that no one would question or fight. He might have claimed the word for himself. “Sure, I’m enormous!” he’d yell at the people trying to get out of his way as he flexed his muscles and stared them down. The new, opposite meaning was born...born out of sin.

The Bible has so much more to say about the words we use. In Ephesians 4:29, Paul tells us, “*Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.*” Our words should build people up. We should consider the effect of our words not only on the receiver of our words but also on the people around who hear us. Our words should give grace to all who hear us speak. (Grace or undeserved favor is something that is freely given.) The idea of gracious words is again seen in Proverbs 16:23-24, “*The heart of the wise makes his speech judicious and adds persuasiveness to his lips. Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body.*” The words we use can actually help sweeten a person’s soul and make him or her healthier. As Christians we should choose our words carefully and use them wisely. There should be no sarcasm or twisted meaning in them. They should benefit both the soul and the body of the hearers.

Finally, we should take the words of Paul in Colossians 4:6 to heart, “*Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.*” Again, we are reminded that our words must come across with graciousness (undeserved favor). But Paul adds another idea. Our words must be seasoned with salt. Different commentators primarily talk about two properties of salt that should help us understand what Paul is saying. Salt gives food more flavor, and so our words should flavor and make what we say more palatable and tasty to the person to whom we are speaking. However, salt was also the chief way people preserved food then. Paul is suggesting that gracious words should also be seasoned with a preserving salt, always keeping in mind the need to preserve and grow the relationships we have with each other. We need to be careful with our words. We need to remember that words don’t change their own meanings. We do that. As Proverbs 13:3 teaches us, “*Whoever guards his mouth preserves his life.*”

Charitable Contributions Are Now Deductible in Massachusetts

from Nancy Bemis, Cabinet Chair

There has been a tax change in Massachusetts for 2023. Charitable contributions are now deductible. This is from the Massachusetts tax form instructions:

Charitable Contribution Deduction. Massachusetts allows a charitable deduction in an amount equal to the federal charitable deduction, except that the state deduction does not include any amounts for contributions of household goods or used clothing. Taxpayers do not have to itemize their deductions for federal tax purposes to claim the Massachusetts deduction. The Massachusetts deduction may only be used to reduce Part B adjusted gross income – e.g. wages – and cannot be used to reduce capital gain, dividend, or interest income other than interest from Massachusetts banks.

Café at The Mill
45 River Street, Millbury, MA
Open Every Friday @ 7:00pm

March 2024 Events

- Hands To The Pillars Rock!**
March 1
- Faith's Road**
March 8 - Rock!
- McGrail**
March 15 – Worship Rock!
Adult & Teen Challenge
Come celebrate St. Patty's Day!
- Sarah Roberts & Kaitlynn Muscara**
March 22

March 29- The Mill Church Event

Facebook: [cafeatthemill.millbury](https://www.facebook.com/cafeatthemill.millbury)
YouTube: Café at The Mill
508-579-6722

Luke 11:1-13

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