

MARCH 2023

GRACE MONTHLY

"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer"

Romans 12:12



The Greatest Reward

by Sungjae Chung

We all have had days that we had looked forward to. Whether it is a sports game or a dance competition, we have all waited in anticipation for a certain day to come. In the past, I could not wait for my soccer tournament. As I was fully motivated to do great, I naturally wanted to prepare for the tournament, so that we would win. I practiced almost every day, tried to eat healthy, and even watched video tutorials. The constant sacrifice and dedication was hard. However, as a result of my preparation, my team won! Our victory indeed was delightful, but personally it was more sweet because of all the preparation I had gone through. If I had chosen to sit back and relax, the win would not have been as meaningful to me. Because I was able to sacrifice, my gain became so much greater.

Collectively as a ministry, during the season of Lent we have committed to sacrificing various things in our lives from social media to snacks. For many, the sacrifice is very difficult, if not impossible. However, God ensures that at the end of the tunnel, there will be light. Romans 12:12 says, "Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer." God is saying in this verse that steadfastness leads to reward. Just like sacrifice made my soccer victory so much greater, Jesus' resurrection and God's promise will be so much more significant, once we fast and lift up things in our lives to him. Many say that Lent is a season of giving up, but I would say that it is a season of gain. **What we sacrifice cannot compare to what awaits us at the end.** Jesus is the greatest reward, and Lent is a period of preparation to help understand the magnitude of the blessings he has given to us. Therefore, as we continue on through this season, I hope that we all realize that Lent is truly a season of preparation of the greater blessings and rewards that God has in store for us.

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FEBRUARY HIGHLIGHTS

"BEYOND LOVE" BROTHERS & SISTERS APPRECIATION NIGHT

This exciting event finally happened again on Feb 17th, 2023, after a long break of three years due to Covid. Rather than focusing on romantic love or affection, it's a night to express our appreciation for one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. This year's theme was: "Beyond Love" based on Romans 12:10 "Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor." During the event, the balloon-popping game served as an enjoyable fellowship activity to pair up and cooperate with others to survive and win. In addition, the card-writing activity provided a space to read and pray for others' struggles or worries. The event truly allowed the students to create new bonds with others and be truly thankful for them with a loving heart as people of God's Kingdom.



LEADERS RETREATS

During the month of February, the GEM and CLAY leaders went on a retreat to spend time together in worship, prayer, and fellowship. It was a valuable time for leaders to build relationship and reflect on their role and calling as youth leaders.



Praise & Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father,

During the season of Lent, we pause to reflect on the many blessings you have bestowed upon us, both as individuals and as a community of believers. We are grateful for the love and mercy you have shown us, and for the opportunity to come together as a church family to worship and praise your holy name.

We pray that you would give us the strength and courage to persevere in our faith, even when the road ahead seems difficult. May we be reminded of the ultimate sacrifice you made on the cross, and may this knowledge inspire us to live lives of love, service, and compassion.

We are also grateful for the church community that surrounds us, offering us support, encouragement, and fellowship as we journey together on the path of faith. We thank you for the wisdom and guidance of our pastors and spiritual leaders, who shepherd us with love and care.

As we look forward to the upcoming spring break, we are mindful of the sacrifices that we are called to make during this season of reflection and repentance. We know that by denying ourselves and taking up our cross, we can draw closer to you and experience the transformative power of your grace.

We ask that you bless us with safety and protection as we travel, and that you would help us to use this time wisely, to rest and recharge our spirits, and to deepen our relationship with you. May our plans for the upcoming Student Discipleship retreats take place smoothly, with all of us taking a spiritually refreshing and impactful experience out of it.

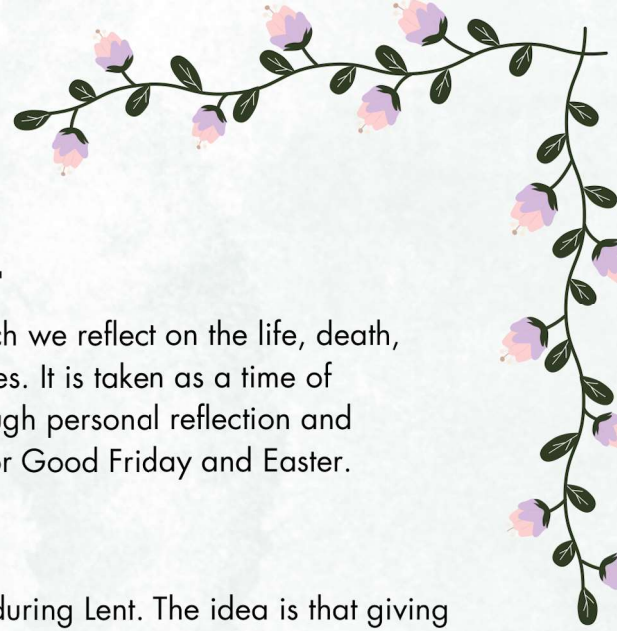
In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR MARCH

- Friday, March 3rd** (GEM) Worship Night
(CLAY) Friday Youth Night
- Friday, March 10th** Friday Youth Night
- Friday, March 31st** Friday Youth Night

There is no FYN on Fridays, March 17th & 24th.

Events are subject to change. Make sure to keep up with our latest updates with your small group leader, on our website, or Instagram!



Season of Lent

Lent is a period of 40 days leading up to Easter, during which we reflect on the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ and its significance in our lives. It is taken as a time of preparation and an opportunity to go deeper with God through personal reflection and reading God's Word as we prepare our hearts and minds for Good Friday and Easter.

Fasting

Fasting, or giving something up, is a very common practice during Lent. The idea is that giving up something that's a regular part of life (like eating a meal or scrolling through Instagram) can be a reminder of Jesus' sacrifice for us. That time is usually replaced with more time connecting with God through Scripture-reading and prayer.

This year, with our small groups we will be committing to fast from certain things in our lives and intentionally spending that time instead in prayer and reading God's Word. What are you willing to sacrifice, in order to remember Jesus' sacrifice for you?

Week 1	Feb 20 - 25	Your favourite food/meal (Sweets, junk food, a whole meal)
Week 2	Feb 27 - Mar 4	Social Media (Instagram, Tik Tok, Facebook)
Week 3	Mar 6 - 11	Social Media (Instagram, Tik Tok, Facebook)
Week 4	Mar 13 - 18	Leisure & Entertainment (Youtube, Netflix, video games)
Week 5	Mar 20 - 25	Leisure & Entertainment (Youtube, Netflix, video games)
Week 6	Mar 27 - Apr 1	Spending Money (Shopping, eating out)
Week 7	Apr 3 - 8	Your Choice

May it be a transforming experience as we intentionally commit to growing in our intimacy with God for the next 40 days.

