

# Living Lent | Saturday, March 9

Beaver Brooks

## The Invitation

Today's Reading: Hosea 6:1-6

*"Come, let us return to the Lord. He has torn us to pieces but he will heal us; he has injured us but he will bind up our wounds. After two days he will revive us; on the third day, he will restore us, so that we may live in his presence. Let us acknowledge the Lord; let us press on to acknowledge him. As surely as the sun rises, he will appear; he will come to us like the winter rains, like the spring rains that water the earth." "What can I do with you, Ephraim? What can I do with you, Judah? Your love is like the morning mist, like the early dew that disappears. Therefore I cut you in pieces with my prophets, I killed you with the words of my mouth— then my judgments go forth like the sun. For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings..."*

**Hosea 6:1-6**

### Encouragement for the Lenten Journey:

In my earlier years as a Baptist, we were not typically invited into the Lent experience. Our aversion to other expressions of God's Church limited us from meaningful, historic images. Now, these, new to, Liturgical invitations can bring fresh meaning to themes that have become just "another Christian holiday". Lent, a season of fasting, prayer, and reflection once again, calls us to examine our hearts. It is a reminder of the gracious invitation of God to enter into a transformative loving relationship.

Hosea 6 begins with the word Come, an invitation. I am reminded of the story of a renowned chef who seeing the hungry homeless person outside the rear door of his 5-star restaurant, says "Come eat at my table". Hunger takes the place of the normally required gilded invitation to experience remarkable dining.

Verse 3 says "Let us press on to acknowledge him". Surprised by the invitation, I respond, "Are you talking to me?" You don't know me! You're not like me! I resist the urge to turn away, the obvious, distinctive differences between the two of us is an accusation of my

condition. I am hungry, without, and in need, He is the Source. And he is giving me an invitation. Hesitantly, I press beyond my fear to acknowledge him. I look into his eyes and realize the invitation is genuine. Reality becomes surreal as he feeds me what I need from His Table.

Years later, I am still responding to the Invitation to Come. Lent is the perfect time to be reminded of my hunger ~ his invitation. My need ~ his endless supply.

Verse 5 of Hosea 6 reminds me of the power of words to wound, separate, and accuse. Maybe this Lenten season I will deliberately abstain from words and phrases that wound, separate, and accuse. And replace them with words of invitation and curiosity. Join me?

### Contributor and Contributing Body of Christ:

*Beaver Brooks is the director of Much Ministries Inc. and 2nd Story Goods. He and his wife, Kathy Brooks, have furthered His kingdom in Canada, Haiti, all over Georgia, and beyond. The vision of Much Ministries is to "Transform individuals, families, communities, and the nation of Haiti from a place of poverty to a reality of thriving, using their God-given abilities." While the mission is to "Create sustainable economic opportunities and remove barriers, for individuals willing to move beyond a mindset molded by poverty." To learn more about Beaver, his family, and his ministry, visit [muchministries.org](http://muchministries.org).*