

Living Lent | Friday, February 24

Becky Livingston

Vulnerable, Specific Prayer

Today's Reading: Acts 1:15-26

"For it is written in the book of Psalms,

'Let his homestead become desolate, and let there be no one to live in it'; and 'Let another take his position of overseer.' So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us-- one of these must become a witness with us to his resurrection." So they proposed two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also known as Justus, and Matthias. Then they prayed and said, "Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which one of these two you have chosen to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place." And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was added to the eleven apostles."

Acts 1:20-26 NRSV

Encouragement for the Lenten Journey:

"Lord, you know everyone's heart." Does that scare or comfort you? To know that our Lord knows everyone's heart. And then does it challenge you to think that our prayers are what opens the vulnerability that we have before God (and others) to what His will might be in our lives?

Our Church has been without a Senior Pastor now for over a year. The former Pastor was such a delightful, resourceful, strong, and energetic Pastor when I joined the

congregation around 2 years ago, but he felt a call to go to another congregation in another State. With holy envy, in addition to listening to the Interim Pastor that we have, I listen to almost every sermon that the former Pastor preaches each week via YouTube and receive the many good words of encouragement, challenge, and reconciliation he speaks from that pulpit. And, yet, God has not yet brought us a new Senior Pastor. Could it be that we have not as a congregation and individuals met the challenge with thoughtful and specific prayer?

As Christians, we know that God encourages us and commands us to pray. Why do we find it so difficult? Many books and articles have been written on prayer and how to pray, but the bottom line is "to pray." Whether it is word prayers, whispers of prayer, crying, shouting, or calmly quoting scripture or repeating liturgy, prayer is the answer to our every need and desire.

May our prayers this Lenten Season find us seeking to become vulnerable to open our hearts to what God would have us become, do, and be. May we find ourselves committed to prayerfully seeking His will in our lives. May we find ourselves committed to praying for Morningstar and the many children who will pass through those beautiful, historical gates, for the staff, the Board, and the leadership. And, in so doing, may we find that the choices that are made and the results of those many prayers will indeed be a choice that comes from seeking His will and His way.

The Apostles and the work of the Holy Spirit together resulted in a choice that obviously was prayerfully sought and fulfilled.

Vulnerability and persistence in prayer will result in leading to God's holy will and way in our lives.

Contributor and Contributing Body of Christ:

Becky D. Livingston, SSI, has just completed a 39-year career serving in the private practice of law for 16 years, followed by a 24-year career as the CEO for a nonprofit, faith-based senior living organization in Statesboro, Georgia. She is currently "repurposing" to fulfill the call to ministry with the National Christian Foundation (NCF) as a Generosity Ambassador/Relationship Manager. Since 1982, more than 30,000 generous givers at NCF have mobilized \$16.7 billion for 71,000 churches/ministries/charities like Morningstar Children & Family Services.