

Living Lent | March 16

Removing Lint

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.

Psalm 51: 10-12 (NRSV)

Encouragement for the Lenten Journey:

I love to share with folks my childhood misunderstandings. It's fun and at times quite comical the way we see, hear, and understand things as a child. The way we would mess up song lyrics and the Pledge of Allegiance can be hilarious. Our childhood understanding of "church stuff" can be rather funny as well. When my pastor of long ago would talk about Lent, I thought he was talking about lint. My young mind would quickly start to wonder about why I needed to fast and pray over the nasty stuff that we clean off the screen in the compartment of our dryer. How did cleaning that bring me closer to God? Really, if you think about it, my childish mind wasn't too far off. The lint clogs the dryer vent and doesn't allow the dryer to properly operate the way it is intended to function. Sin is like lint. Our heart is like the dryer vent filter. Sin causes us not to operate properly as well. Periodically, we need to clean "our filters."

Lent is a time when we seek to prepare our hearts for the Easter Season. Just as Advent is the time to prepare for the coming of Christ, Lent is when we prepare for the Resurrection of Christ. It is a season of self-reflection and soul searching. It is an intentional time when we reflect on our spiritual lives. We pray, fast, and seek God's guidance as we strive to remove the "lint" from our lives. Lent is a time of repentance. It is a time of reminding ourselves of Christ sacrifice for us. It's a time to center ourselves back to Christ. During Lent we endeavor to live out what the Psalmist was pleading for... "Create in me a clean heart." Through our Lenten

Spiritual journey, we seek for God to put a new and right spirit within us.

Even through my misunderstandings as a child, I still understood that Lent was about casting out the bad stuff. I later discovered it was about me removing the ungodly in my life and replacing it with the things of God. I pray that you too may take this Lent and get the lint out too!

Contributor and Contributing Body of Christ

Rev. Chip Strickland is the Senior Pastor at the Brooklet United Methodist Church in Brooklet, Georgia, having served as their Senior Pastor since June of 2018. Rev. Chip has served in a number of congregations including a three (3) year stint at the St. Simons United Methodist Church, where he first learned about Morningstar and the Children. His love for children has been exhibited throughout southeast Georgia as he has been involved in supporting and counseling students at Southeast Bulloch High School when they have lost beloved classmates, as they prepare for graduation and the challenges of leaving high school, and the general care provided to students and their parents alike through the Brooklet United Methodist Church and in the community of Brooklet as a whole.

*It takes a lot of everything to **create home and healing** for the foster children, our neighbors, served at Morningstar Children's Home.*

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