

Good morning,

It is so very good to see you all here today. I have to say that church was something special last week and today. I get choked up listening to us all sing. Last week I was down with the children for the children sermon, there was 30 kids downstairs. I forgot what its like to be in a room with 30 kids. It went well.

I was with the men yesterday morning at their breakfast, having a little bacon and eggs. This place is really buzzing. And It feels so good. The spirit is moving! Invite someone to come experience God's presence here.

So here we all are, it's the second week of lent. I'm wondering how its going for you, if that thing that you've given up, or that thing that you've put on, I wonder if it is centering you, if it's helping your walk with God.

Lent can be such a powerful time in our lives if we really lean into it. It is that time of the year that we are intentional about bringing our whole lives to God. Those piece of our lives that are polished and shiny, and those broken pieces. We offer them all up to God. For God to bless them, for God to transform them. For God to just dwell in the midst of our lives.

This morning I want to title my sermon, pick your head up. Last Sunday frank had some really important things to say about temptation. Because temptation is such an important place to begin during lent.

Temptations, much like our fears, our anxieties, have a way of narrowing our field of view. Each of these things has a way of changing us, because they become all that we focus on. Last week in our reading the devil was trying to tempt Jesus, he offered him really important things, food, power, security.

But these things the devil offered were just a small fraction of what God had to offer. Jesus' lesson to us was to pick our heads up. See the bigger picture. Gods bigger picture.

I wonder where in your life have you put your head down and zeroed in on the wrong thing. When God is over here telling you to pick your head up so that you can see the whole thing, bigger picture, Gods plan for your life.

Ive got a couple of things to say today about how we pick our heads up, but it all begins with being in communication with God... This time during Lent is a time of pause of just listening to where God is at work in your life. God is trying to tell you, I promise you God is trying to speak to you. Pick your head up and listen.

There is much around us that can cause us to put our heads down. The struggles Everyday life, There is a war going on..

But if you can find every day time to pause and listen, pick your head up, God will have something for you. There is a group here at church that has taken some things out to the Ukrainian church out in Jenkinstown.

There's another group that has given some monies to the Ukrainian church in the city. If this is where you're at, and this is what's pulling your head down, and narrowing your field of vision theres something you can do.

Don't misunderstand, it makes sense, there is a war about us. But pick your head up, God is speaking to you. God has something special for each of us in this moment. Just pause, listen and pick your head up.

Lent is a time for perspective... just Pick your head up.

Early this week I had to do a couple of funerals, on Wednesday and Thursday. And walking with these families I started to think about the uncertainty and brevity of life. It is fleeting. Death is a constant reality. Death is something that we will all experience. Not me because im 32 and invincible. Im kidding.

But this is the point of lent. To draw to mind our mortality. From dust we come and to dust we shall return. All of us.

But its in this acknowledgement that we are able to put our trust and our faith into Gods promises for our lives. Its this faith that helps us to pick our heads up. Its this reality of death that **is** the invitation into this perspective that comes from God. It is...

What our fears and anxieties and temptations as it narrows our vision they will have us to think that we can make it longer, we can live for ever. We can make our lives fuller, we can make them more secure.

But this life will end. And we know that, and we know that, and we know that!

So the question is what do we do with the time that we have here and now.

Well ladies and gentlemen, that's lent. That is the singular question of lent. What do I do here and what do I do now. Pick your head and look to God... Paul in our reading from Philippians is encouraging a church, a people, whose head are down and looking at the wrong things, he says their minds are set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven.

Your citizenship is in heaven. Pick your head up...

Lent is a gift, pause don't miss it. Listen, God is speaking. Pick your head up and look to God...

The world is rough, that was true in biblical time, that is true today. But you have been given a faith that will see you through the best times and it will see you through the worst.

And so I want to encourage you this week to pick your head up to see where God is at work in your life and where God is leading you. And when you hear it and when you see it. I want you to Go...follow where God is leading you.

But it all starts with us picking our heads up.

Pick your head up.

Amen