Palm Sunday
NFL Super Bowl commercials are so famous that they can sometimes outperform the actual football game itself. One of my favorite Super Bowl commercials was in 1993 when basketball stars Larry Bird and Michael Jordan had a shooting contest for a McDonald's meal. USA Today has had viewers rate their favorite Super Bowl commercials since 1989 and the highest rated is a 1995 Pepsi commercial in which a young boy becomes so emersed into gulping all his drink that he sucks himself into his Pepsi bottle. Brands value the opportunity to advertise during the Super Bowl so much that a 30-second commercial in the big game that took place just a few weeks ago cost about $5.6 million.

While watching the recent Super Bowl commercials my son and I had fun trying to figure out the brand that was being promoted, which was sometimes difficult to know until the very end. Jesus’ ministry on earth was very much the same way. He drew in many followers throughout the few years of his ministry on earth, in which people kept asking, who is Jesus?

Who is this man who speaks with such authority? Who is this man who can calm the storm? Who is this man who makes the sick well and the blind see? Who is this man who forgives sins? Who is this man carrying a cross to the hill of Golgotha?

This culminates in the eighth chapter of St. Mark’s Gospel beginning at the 27th verse, And Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. And on the way, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" And they told him, "John the Baptist; and others say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets."

And he asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Christ." And he strictly charged them to tell no one about him.

At the end of those Super Bowl commercials, a logo would appear, and our curiosity is answered. In verse 31, Jesus gives his very clear answer, And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again.

So, who do you say Jesus is? This is an important question. In fact, it’s the most important question that is ever asked in the history of the world, “Who is Jesus?” For if you believe he was some ordinary man who lived a good life and simply died an unjust death, then your salvation is empty. But if you believe that Jesus is truly God, part of the Trinity – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, that he died on the cross for your sins, and three days later rose to life, thus defeating death so that through his resurrection we may have life eternal with him, you are blessed, and your salvation is certain.

Salvation is a free gift found in God’s Word and the promises of Christ as shared through this ministry and by which the Holy Spirit works faith in your heart and the heart of all who hear and believe. In Mark 15:39, an unknown centurion, who stood there facing up at Jesus, watched as Jesus breathed his last, he said, “Truly this man was the Son of God!"

As we journey together through this season of Lent to the cross and Christ’s crucifixion, may you find peace and courage in knowing who exactly Jesus our Savior is and through whom we have love, life, and salvation.

Matthew F. Leighty
Executive Director
Light in the Darkness

I got quite a shock when I was ten years old. I was on a camping trip with my Boy Scout troop in South Texas. I had one more day of the trip to get my Reptile and Amphibian Study merit badge. As we sat around a campfire discussing our plans for the next day, I saw something on the ground just outside the light of the fire. I only needed to find one more reptile to get the badge and I had found it! I crept away from the group, snuck up on the reptile, reached out my hand, turned on my flashlight, and... it was a scorpion!

Ephesians 5:13 reminds us that, *When anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible.* This seems like a pretty simple concept. If there's a dark area in your life, shine a light on it. Yet, this isn't as simple as it seems. I know I've been afraid of exposing the dark areas in my own life. I've been afraid of shining a light and finding a scorpion of a problem that I can't solve on my own. If we add layers to this such as troubled relationships, a troubled world, and a troubled past, we can feel crushed.

The Moments of Comfort videos for March will give you tools to focus on The Light in times of darkness. We can't do this on our own. We would indeed be crushed if we had to deal with our sin and the sin in this world. The good news is that as we have a Savior who gives life through light. Ephesians 5:14 says, *Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.* God raises us from our spiritual death. Christ shines light on us in our darkness. May we have the strength to address the darkness in our lives every day knowing that we walk in the light of Christ.

*Tommy Moll - Content Manager at Worship Anew*

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**March Moments of Comfort**

**Theme: Light in the Darkness**

March 3 – From Darkness into Light – John 16:22  
March 10 – Emerging into His Brightness – Psalm 23:4-6  
March 17 – Emerging from Shadows – 2 Corinthians 1:6-7  
March 24 – Entering His Light – 1 Peter 4:12-13  
March 31 – Bathed in His Light – Ephesians 5:14

Moments of Comfort is an online video ministry of Worship Anew, which speaks to the sufferings we face in this life with the comforting message of God's Word.

Rev. James Elsner has served Worship Anew as a speaker and contributor since 2008.
March 7, 2021 – Third Sunday in Lent
Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; John 2:13-22

The cross destroys our excuses and is the end of our sin. And as we die to sin, the cross is the beginning of a faith that saves.

March 14, 2021 – Fourth Sunday in Lent
Psalm 107:1-9, 19; Numbers 21:4-9; John 3:14-21
“Look on Jesus” - Sermon Text: John 3:14 - Rev. Shayne Jonker

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him would have eternal life.” Jesus foretells His own death on the cross and its benefits. He is the serpent on the wood, lifted up for the life of the world. All who look on Him through the eyes of faith have eternal life.

March 21, 2021 – Fifth Sunday in Lent
Psalm 119:9-16; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Mark 10:35-45
“What God Doesn’t Remember” - Sermon Text: Jeremiah 31:34b - Rev. Shoemaker

We love to remember stories about fun times, joyous occasions. God also remembers how we are His beloved children, forgiven because of Jesus’ sacrificial death and glorious resurrection. The prophet Jeremiah reminds us that God chooses to not remember our sins. Join us as we talk about what God doesn’t remember.

March 28, 2021 – Palm Sunday
Psalm 118:19-29; Zechariah 9:9-12; Mark 15:1-47
“Crucify the King” - Sermon Text: Mark 15:6-20 - Rev. William Mueller

Palm Sunday brings such a day of emotion: the triumphal entry, the rejoicing crowd, the humble King – all this will be poured into the anguish of Good Friday. Yet what was Jesus’ driving theme behind all of this? Why does Scripture give us such detail? It’s because He has done this for us!
The current pandemic has forced families to find creative ways to keep connected. Between Zoom hangouts and drive-by birthday parties, we've found ways to show the love we feel for our family members who aren't in our homes. The connection challenge gets more complicated when we have a family member in a care facility. With shifting visitation rules and varying levels of technology in facilities, it can be difficult to keep connected with those we love.

As Christians, we know how important it is to gather as a faith community and to nurture faith in our homes. Here are seven ways that you can strengthen your family faith connection with those who are in an assisted living or long-term care facility.

1. Write it on your calendar.
   We all have the best intentions to give a family member a call. We think about it, but often times, we forget to follow through. Putting your connection time on your home calendar elevates this from a nice idea to a top priority. You may want to get together with your siblings or other family members and make a schedule to check on your loved one. How often you call is up to you, and availability will be different for each family. With that said, the general rule would be the more communication, the better. With care facilities having fewer social gatherings and visitations, residents need more calls and connections.

2. Don't know what to say? Write it down.
   Come up with a list of "What was _______ like when you were a child?" questions. School-age children are great at coming up with these questions, and they're also great at asking them. Grandparents have a wealth of knowledge and experience. The stories that children will hear from older family members are priceless gems. More senior family members can also point our younger children to the bigger picture of God's work in their lives and show us that we will be on the other side of our current struggles, even if we don't know when.

"Only in Jesus Christ are we one, only through him are we bound together."
(Dietrich Bonhoeffer)
This list is certainly not exhaustive. Talk with the staff at your loved one's care facility to find out what other families have done to stay connected. Also, get clarification on the rules for visitation and gifts. Check with the care facility on the availability of a chaplain or pastor who may be able to visit with your loved one.

Though it may seem difficult to do, the need is stronger than ever to keep connected. Study after study is showing that those in assisted living and care facilities are feeling more isolated than ever during this pandemic. Yet, there is hope. In Christ, we have a connection that will never fade, one that will always last.

Thomas Moll is Content Manager at Worship Anew.
Lights Out? Never!

If we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.

2 Timothy 2:11

The Lord will always “Leave the Light on for us!” as that old hotel commercial stated so well! Christ’s Light of faith is always with us, bringing love and forgiveness to us and through us. Wow, what a Lord we have! Henri Nouwen’s quote says it well, “For Jesus, there are no countries to be conquered, no ideologies to be imposed, no people to be dominated. There are only children, women, and men to be loved!”

Whenever we hang too much of God’s Word on “It’s going to get better” then it is like “When?” “How long?” “How?” The Good News is that the Lord is with us here, right now, loving us, holding us, and healing us! He never turns his light out on us!

Rich Binler
Bloomingdale, IL

Lord, thanks for “leaving your light on” and never leaving us because of what we do or do not do. We need you today and forever. Amen.

Reflect: Make a list of what is and is not going well, then rejoice in the Lord’s light and forgiveness.
Read: Genesis 1:4 and Matthew 5:14

Visit HopefullLiving.org or call 1-800-779-0846 to subscribe today!
Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give... for God loves a cheerful giver.
Matthew 6:4

Thrivent Choice Dollars Help

Make an impact on the ministry of Worship Anew through Thrivent Financial. Eligible Thrivent Financial members who have available Choice Dollars® have until March 31, 2021, to direct them.

Don’t miss this opportunity to recommend that Thrivent Financial provide outreach funding to Worship Anew. Go to Thrivent.com/thriventchoice to learn more. Or call 800-847-4836 and say “Thrivent Choice” after the prompt.