

Abide in **LOVE** Live with **PURPOSE**

STEWARDSHIP 2025 | WEEKLY REFLECTION FROM OUR MEMBERS



LOVING GOD - LEAVING MANY QUESTIONS UNANSWERED & LEARNING TO LOVE THE MESS

BY GINGER GREENBERG

Life is messy. In studying Job this week, it's hard not to reflect on all the juicy, thought-provoking questions that arise from this passage. It's also not very easy to look at all your messiness and really examine it. Shall we receive the good at the hand of God, and not receive the bad? What is the relationship between sin and suffering? If God is good and all-powerful, why does he permit suffering? As I approach 50, with two teenagers, a husband, challenging work, several volunteer commitments, friendships, close family, acquaintances – you get it – it's easy to see how this is fantastic, but it can also be messy. I work every day to receive the good and love from God. I also work to receive the bad and continue to love. Yes – God is love and I love God. However, like many faithful, I struggle with embodying all-encompassing faith like Job describes and to which we are all invited. My struggles are not with the thought of Satan or my own righteousness – however that portrays itself in my life. Rather, my struggles are offered as expressions of genuine and life-giving relationship with God. God's choosing is not always the good news that we might like. I love the mess. It's what I've always known is God's love for me and I love that. As I said above, the mess is not always good news, but I know that in the mess there is hope, exploration and a deeper understanding of my faith.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6 SELECT READINGS

Job 1:1, 2:1-10

There was once a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job. That man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil. One day the heavenly beings came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them to present himself before the Lord. The Lord said to Satan, "Where have you come from?" Satan answered the Lord, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking up and down on it." The Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man who fears God and turns away from evil. He still persists in his integrity, although you incited me against him, to destroy him for no reason." Then Satan answered the Lord, "Skin for skin! All that people have they will give to save their lives. But stretch out your hand now and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse you to your face." The Lord said to Satan, "Very well, he is in your power; only spare his life." So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord, and inflicted loathsome sores on Job from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. Job took a potsherd with which to scrape himself, and sat among the ashes. Then his wife said to him, "Do you still persist in your integrity? Curse God, and die." But he said to her, "You speak as any foolish woman would speak. Shall we receive the good at the hand of God, and not receive the bad?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

ABOUT GINGER

I love being a member of the Ascension family. I have two kids – Copeland (16) and Annabelle (13) and have been married to Clayton for 18 years. We have been a part of Ascension as a family for close to 17 years. It was a special day when Mtr. Kai Ryan married us at Thanksgiving Square Chapel in September 2006. We chose to model our ceremony after the Jewish wedding ceremony and Kai obliged us. We combined our mess with a gathering of families who believed and celebrated different religions to be where we are today – loving our mess. I am grateful to my parents, who also attend Ascension, for loving us in a beautiful way that helped us learn how to accept the good with the bad and know that we are always loved by God.

