



The Oakletter, Feb. 22, 2026

Don't you love it when God smacks you up alongside the head? That happened to me today, when I was reviewing tomorrow's lesson. I knew that there was something that I had to revise in the middle of my outline. I did so, but I wasn't completely satisfied with the result.

That's when it happened: God smacked me right up alongside the head, right there on the patio at Panera.

I'm glad that he did. When I get to that part of the message tomorrow, the illustration will work better, I hope, than what I had originally intended. The revised portion will be pretty clear. Please let me know what you think.

Let me tell you something I hope to remember to include tomorrow, in case I forget: Last Thursday, there was a 5 p.m. webinar for participants in the Feb. 25 Faithful Resistance rally in Washington, D.C. Breakout groups were part of the webinar, and I found myself chatting with five others when our breakout group started. A man from Frederick, Md., spoke first. He said that he is Jewish and that he is participating in the rally in honor of his grandmother who fled Poland for France when she was being pursued by the Nazis. When that pursuit continued in France, she left for the U.S. Others shared personal stories, too, but I didn't feel that I had a personal story to share. Something occurred to me, however, Saturday afternoon as I was cleaning the parsonage, and then, later that same day, God smacked me up alongside the head.

Were I to meet with one of our U.S. representatives next Wednesday, I would be happy to share this personal story. I am in a group slated to meet with the representative from Virginia's 10th congressional district, Suhas Subramanyam, at 3:30 p.m. that day, but that's the time that I'm supposed to be back at the bus that some of us are riding to and from the Conference office in Glen Allen, so I can't make that meeting. That's a shame, because we're told that politicians like hearing personal stories, and mine's a good one. Maybe I'll write it up and send it to our reps later.

*Very respectfully,
Ned*

**This week at
Oaklette**

Sun., Feb. 22
9:30 am Sunday
school/SOTM

11 a.m., First
Sunday in Lent
worship

Mon., Feb. 23
10 a.m. Food
pantry [J.
Basnight/H.
Haluska]

7 p.m. HRM
Band

Tues. Feb. 24

6:30 p.m., The
Last Supper
Bible study

Wed., Feb. 25
6:45 a.m.-7
p.m.,
Faithful
Resistance rally

6:30 p.m.
choir practice

Thurs., Feb. 26
8:30 a.m.-3:30
p.m. HSOBX

10 a.m., Bible
study

Sat., Feb. 28
9 a.m.-noon,
Food
distribution,
Community
Feed, 700 S.
Main St.

Sun., March 1
9:30 a.m.,
Sunday
school/SOTM

11 a.m., Second
Sunday in Lent
worship

Birthdays: Patricia Newbern, Feb. 22; Cynthia West and Eric Nathan, Feb. 28

Sunday's Old Testament lesson, Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7

The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

"You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Our prayer list includes: Sandy Carraway, Coastal VA District & DS Givens, Kaylee Cuccorillo, Jay Eckert, Joyce Gaston, Bill Gilliam, Kaye Herndon, Ethel Hickman, Debbie Hodges, Earl Jenkins, Teal Jenkins, Pat Johnson, Karon Hardy, Brian Lincoln, Dave Lorence, Rose Marie Madu, Chesapeake Police

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