



**First Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
GOLDSBORO DISCIPLE
MARCH 2020**

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Dear Church Family,

Last week, the Community and Evangelism Task Group had the privilege of serving a meal to the families of those who are deployed and some of the newest families and airmen to Seymour Johnson. As I listened to them and watched them, I remember how much it meant to me to have a listening ear and heart when Carey was deployed during Desert Shield in the early 90's. We were fortunate that Carey was deployed only once to the Mid-East. Many in the intervening years have had multiple deployments. As I looked at them, I thought about what it means to be free, to protect our freedoms, and to allow others to be free. What it means to be free and allow others to be free are some of the themes running through my head as I wrote the Lenten Meditation this year, Bound to Love – When the Son Sets Us Free. It was a transforming experience for me to read back and reflect on various scriptural stories on being bound and being free. The guiding scripture for our devotions is John 8:36, "If the Son sets us free, we are free indeed!"

I started to think about four freedoms we take for granted: our survivability because we are just the right distance in the galaxy from our sun, an atmosphere and the raw materials to sustain life here, the fact that our country chose a democracy for its form of government, and the freedoms given to all which are articulated in our Bill of Rights, especially the freedom to worship, speak out, assemble and petition. In addition to these are 46 meditations on freedom dated from Ash Wednesday to the day after Easter following the chronology of the Bible.

**Set Free by God's Abundant Creation
Set Free by Torah
Set Free Through the Prophetic Word
Set Free Through Wisdom
Set Free by Gospel and Grace
Set Free the Last Week of Jesus' Life
Set Free on the Cross
Set Free through the Resurrection**

What holds you captive? Whom have we held captive? My prayer is God will set us free this Lenten season to be who we were created to be, creatures in God's image, who are "bound to love" God, neighbor and self.

Grace and Peace,

Penny

