Nasrudin - a protagonist of many Middle Eastern, Greek, and Russian folktales - was approaching the door of his house one night when he suddenly realized he had lost his key. He tried to look around for it, but the night was so dark he could hardly see the ground. So he got down on his hands and knees and examined the ground where he was standing. But it was still too dark to see anything. Moving back toward a streetlamp, he again got down on his hands and knees and began a meticulous examination of the area. A friend came by and, noticing him, asked what he was doing. Nasrudin replied, “I lost my key and am looking for it.” So the friend too got down on his hands and knees and began the search.

After a while the friend asked, “Do you remember where you might have lost the key?”
“Certainly,” answered Nasrudin. “I lost it in my house.”
“Then why are you look for it out here?”
“Because,” answered Nasrudin, “the light is so much better here.”*

Like Nasrudin, we are all so much more comfortable searching for the missing “keys” in our lives in the light, in the safe places, in the comfortable places. But so often the real “key”, the real growth and healing, is inside, within us, in some of our darker places and experiences. As we enter this season of Lent, marked with ashes, we are invited to enter into those places and to help our CR’s do the same, remembering that Jesus walked that long dark road to Jerusalem, remembering the Good Shepherd is with us in the darkest valleys, remembering that the Light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it. May this be a season of deep growth and spiritual discovery...and may we know that we never walk this road alone.

With the love of Christ, Barbara

*Story from “The Gift of Being Yourself” by David G. Benner