



Meetings and Gatherings

Ash Wednesday Service: February 14, Noon

Children's Church: Each Sunday following the Children's Message

Choir Rehearsal: Mondays, 5:15 PM

Church Council: Sunday, February 18, 12:30 PM

Finance Committee: Sunday, February 18, 11:45 AM

Korean Sunday School Class: Sundays at 9:30 AM

Learning in Retirement: February 21, 9:30 AM

Lent Fasting Challenge: February 14—March 30.

MaTT Club: February 4 and 18, 4:00 PM

Praise & Prayer Small Group: Sundays at 9:30 AM

Staff Meeting: Tuesday, February 6 and 20, 9:00 AM

United Methodist Men: Saturday, February 10, 7:30 AM breakfast meeting, Murphysboro UMC fellowship hall

Victory Dream Center Youth: Wednesday, February 7 and 21 at 5:30 PM

Women's Bible Study: Wednesdays at 9:30 AM

Worship every Sunday at 10:30 AM

**Join Us for
In-Person Worship or
Online**

Worship on Sundays 10:30AM

To watch the recorded service through
Facebook video visit our website at

<https://www.facebook.com/CarbondaleGraceUMC>



Grace Notes

News from Grace United Methodist Church

Carbondale, Illinois 618-457-8785

Web site: www.carbondalegrace.org

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Veronica McMichael: Pastor of Christian Education & Discipleship

Michelle Parker-Clark: Pastor of Congregational Care

Marty McMichael: Sr. Pastor

"LENDING LIFE TO LENT"

Let's start our discussion of Lent by understanding your mind and body are vessels for the Living God to dwell in and use. This use is not a robotic manipulation, certainly not a malevolent slave-like response of fear, and not an uninformed conformity for the sake of being accepted. You are a vessel of intricate design developed for a specificity of use best defined as loving developmental relationship with God. Here's the thing church, a vessel has to be full of something. Even a seemingly empty vessel, like an empty bottle, is full of something; it's called air. This is a constant for us to consider. We are either full of Christ, or something else... We are either receptacles for Christ or not...

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.² Every branch in me that bears no fruit he takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, he purges it, that it may bring forth more fruit.³ Now you are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can you, except you abide in me.⁵ I am the vine, you are the branches: He that abides in me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit: for without me you can do nothing.

(Ephesians 4:16-18)

As receptacles of Christ, our focus should not be on what we *will* or *should not* put in God space. But maybe we should be more cognizant of *increasing opportunity and action* to fill our space with God stuff. This is a proficiency model; focusing on the Holy nature we desire and magnifying it until we extinguish that is ungodly. Lent doesn't have to be an exercise in giving up

(Continued on page 2)

Pastor's article continued from page 1

something we enjoy or changing behaviors we dislike. Neither idea brings about a feeling of empowerment or sense of a positive self which is essential for change.

⁸ Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.⁹ Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you. (Philippians 4:8-9)

Our focus ought to be on making our vessels fuller with God stuff, for His identified purposes, and prayerfully according to His will. Don't stop eating chocolate... What if you made or purchased chocolates and ate them with homebound members during a visit? Don't stop eating meat! Get together with other meat lovers and create a fundraiser for the church... Don't stop watching TV, instead go to City Council Meetings, arrange visits with your local law enforcement office, and be active in church ministry to ensure biblical values are represented and respected.

⁹ After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.¹⁰ Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. (Matthew 6:9-10)

I want you to reflect during this Lenten season for sure. But something to reflect upon besides how well you are doing at self-deprivation is more attractive and effective. Reading the Word daily and prayer are essential, so add to it. Engage in obedience that which needs to be done so that your prayer and reading has something to work with. A conversation of faith works better in context of God's Word and Voice. Get spiritually active for real!

Sincerely yours,

Marty McMichael

Sr. Pastor

Grace Mission Statement

"Love God, love people, make disciples of Jesus Christ."

KINGDOM LIVING

EXPLORING LIFE'S TOUGHEST QUESTIONS...



Join us

When? March 5, 2024
Every 2nd & 4th Thursday
5:30-7:30pm

Where? Grace Church
220 N. Tower Rd.
Carbondale Illinois 62901

Details:
⇒ Childcare provided
⇒ Meal provided 5:30-6:30

COME EXPLORE HOW KINGDOM LIVING IS THE
ANSWER TO LIFE'S TOUGHEST QUESTIONS...

United Methodist Men
Saturday, February 10, 2024
7:30 AM Breakfast Meeting,
Murphysboro UMC





SUMMER CAMPS

How nice to dream of summer camping in the midst of winter! The Illinois Great Rivers Conference has provided information on United Methodist camp schedules in Illinois, including our Little Grassy Camp in rural Makanda. Camps are offered in various themes for grades 1-13. There is even an extended weekend camp for little ones and their parents or grandparents.

Camps at Little Grassy include rock climbing, art, ranch life, discovery, "Voyagers", and many more. AIR is a particularly spiritually important camp experience for Grades 7-13 on June 16-21.

Teens who would like to serve as counselors can attend a training camp in early June.

Camp scholarships are available to offset the costs of the camps. Both the local church and the conference can help if you apply. Detailed information is located online at www.littlegrassycamp.org. Registration is required.

Camping information will be located also on the information table in the church lobby. For other help, please see Kay Eckiss for guidance.

February Birthdays

2/1 Mavis Williams
2/6 Kay Deffley
2/8 Marjorie Blessing
2/8 Violet Fager
2/9 Mary Ann Ruph
2/13 Randy Stark
2/16 Elijah Moore
2/19 Jill Booker
2/23 Roger Smith III
2/24 Joyce Craven
2/25 Moon-Chan Bae
2/25 Debbie Meador
2/29 Alivia Berkel

FEBRUARY



February Anniversaries

2/14 Robert & Cynthia Oetjen

Early March Birthdays

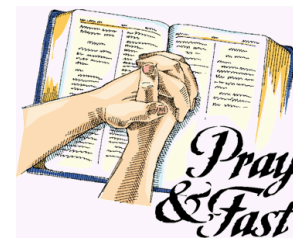
3/4 Jean Paratore 3/4 Timothy Park

Grace UMC
Get ready!

For the Lent fasting challenge!

Starting Wednesday,

February 14th - March 30th.



This Lenten season our entire Church family will come together as a corporate body beginning Ash Wednesday through Holy Saturday, the day before resurrection Sunday, to willfully practice the act of fasting **to shift our attention from what pleases us to a more God centered focus.** We purposeful spend time in prayer, repenting, and focusing on gratitude. Asking God to make us less self-absorbed and more community centered. We are fasting together as a church because it creates a sense of strength and corporate agreement. Whereby it is inevitable that, where corporate fasting exists, corporate breakthroughs in healings, deliverances and transformed lives follows. Fasting is God's ordained means for breakthrough.

"Is this not the fast that I have chosen:

To loose the bonds of wickedness,

To undo the ^[c]heavy burdens,

To let the oppressed go free,

And that you break every yoke?

⁷ Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,

And that you bring to your house the poor who are ^[a]cast out;

When you see the naked, that you cover him,

And not hide yourself from your own flesh?

⁸ Then your light shall break forth like the morning,

Your healing shall spring forth speedily,

And your righteousness shall go before you;

The glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.

⁹ Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;

You shall cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.' ISA 58:6-9

So, start praying now, asking God to show you what you should re-frame from this upcoming Lenten season, that will allow you more quality time with the Holy Spirit. Remember food is not the only thing God may be calling you to abstain from this Lent, it could be social media, a certain type of food like sugar, television, negativity and the list goes on. The idea is, to be intentional and relational with God, demonstrating our sincere desire to draw close to Christ so that Christ and his Kingdom will draw close to us.

Pastor Veronica

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

February 14, 2024

Noon

Grace United Methodist Church Sanctuary



LENTEN SEASON

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on February 14th this year and continues until Easter on Sunday, March 31st. The season of Lent is described as a spiritual journey. Christians seek to reflect on and shed our worldly tendencies and take on a deeper relationship with God. We focus on Jesus and His path and sacrifices.

On Sunday, February 11th, devotional aids will be available at church. Simple calendars and booklets will be available for adults, teens, and kids as guides through Lent. Also, on that Sunday, small Valentine gifts will be given out to those attending worship. "But seek first the kingdom of God...!" (Matthew 6:33)

Kay Eckiss

To Grace United Methodist Church,

Thank you for your love & support.
Thank you for being our family in Christ.
We are truly blessed and encouraged.
Praying that God will continue blessing this church in a very intimate way.

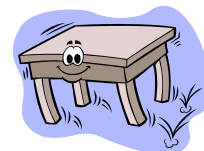
Love,

Moonchan & Soojin



MaTT Club -

a place for kids and adults to gather with friends, old and new, at the table with Jesus.



January MaTT Club was filled with the thoughts and tastes of food. First, we studied the parable of The Great Banquet. At our second meeting we heard the story of The Yeast (or Leaven). After hearing the story of the Great Banquet (Luke 14:15-23) we talked about excuses we have today for not spending time with God. The children wrote some of our excuses on pictures of lunch bags, then used a red marker to make the "NO" sign through our excuses.

During craft time we made snow paint by mixing glue and shaving cream. After painting their picture the children added detail using construction paper.

On Jan. 21 Roberta Williams came and helped the children each make a loaf of bread to take home. We heard the parable of the Yeast and discussed how yeast spreads throughout the flour and makes the dough increase in size. In the same manner, the things Jesus taught, the word of God, started small- a few people in a small unknown country- and spread around the world. The children wrote ways to spread the kingdom of God (God's love) on pictures of bread slices. Ask them to show you their Binder Books.

During craft time we made flour and salt playdough. Again I encouraged the children to add the salt to the flour and see how it is spread throughout the flour.

Thank you Jamie and Jen, and Amy for providing snacks in January.

Thank you Jennifer for taking pictures and helping.

Thank you Rosemary, Jamie and Jenn, Natalie and Merit for being extra help.

Happy February birthday Daone and Dasia.

In February we will hear the parables of The Wise and Foolish Builder and The Rich Fool.

Flossie