



EPWORTH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

...to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world!

Connections

March 2019

Greetings!

You've heard me say frequently that I love Easter! I love it when Easter is early (as early as March 22) and I love it when Easter is later (as late as April 25). This year, we celebrate Easter on April 21. Here's a bit of trivia: The reason the date for Easter changes every year is because of the way the date is calculated. Simply, it is the first Sunday *after* the full moon (April 19) *after* the 1st day of spring (March 20).

Easter is the celebration of Christ's resurrection! It is when we celebrate the new life God has given us. Through Christ's resurrection, God has made it possible for us to have new life – a new beginning! And, in order for us to celebrate this new beginning more fully, a period of preparation is necessary.

This period of preparation is called Lent. Lent begins 40 days prior to Easter, not including Sundays (always considered to be "little Easters"). So, count back 40 days from the date of Easter (April 21) and that date is Ash Wednesday (March 6), the beginning of Lent.

Ash Wednesday is a day of repentance, according to Claim the Name Confirmation curriculum, in which "we confront our own sin of not keeping God at the center of our lives and our resulting sins, which have hurt others, creation, and ourselves." We come together to worship on Ash Wednesday as a community of faith where we confess our sin before God. The ashes, in the sign of the cross, on our foreheads reminds us that we have repented.

The Lenten season, then, is a period of time in which we have repented (Ash Wednesday) and in the days that follow, we intentionally place God in the center of our lives again.

This year, during Lent, we will have a couple opportunities to place God in the center of our lives: First, I am inviting you to participate in a Lenten study, "Wondrous Encounters: Scripture for Lent" by Richard Rohr on Monday evenings from 7:00 to 8:00 pm (beginning Monday, March 11th) and on Thursday afternoons from 1:00 to 2:00 pm (beginning Thursday, March 7th).

I love how Richard Rohr speaks of prayer in his Ash Wednesday Scripture encounter.

"So today you must pray for the desire to desire! Even if you do not feel it yet, ask for new and even unknown desires. For you will eventually get what you really desire!..It is the Holy Spirit doing the desiring at your deepest level...."

You are the desiring of God. God desires through you and longs for Life and Love through you and in you....

You cannot begin to desire something if you have not already slightly tasted it...make it conscious, deliberate, and whole-hearted...on this Ash Wednesday of new beginnings...Remember finally, that the ashes on your forehead are created from the burnt palms of last Palm Sunday. New beginnings invariably come from old false things that are allowed to die."

Second, as we have just been reminded by Richard Rohr, prayer matters! Mary Becker is opening the sanctuary for a time of prayer on Wednesdays from 5:30 to 6:30 pm beginning March 13th. You are invited to come and pray for 5 minutes or to come and pray for the entire hour. See what new beginnings God has for you and for our congregation!!!!

Blessings,

Deb

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LENT

Ash Wednesday –March 6th @ 7:00pm

Palm Sunday –April 14th @ 9:00am

Maundy Thursday – April 18th @ 6:30pm

Good Friday –April 19th @ 7:00pm

Easter Sunday – April 21st @ 9:00am

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A special prayer time will be available in the Sanctuary every Wednesday throughout Lent from 5:30-6:30pm.

MANNA ORDERS!

Manna orders will be taken on March 3rd & 17th. Order forms can be found in the attendance folder as well as on the west wall in the Community Room. Purchase a gift card to give as a gift or purchase them to use for your everyday shopping at the grocery store and/or gas station! It's an easy way to earn extra money for our church! Depending on the cards you purchase Epworth receives 2–20% of the price you pay. Give it a try this month! For questions, see Carole Burris or contact the church office @ 847-931-5400.

{ Prayer Corner }

If you are in the same boat as I am you are probably wondering what is it God is leading Epworth to. I personally like to try and fix "things" on my own. After a while I realize that I need help & turn to prayer for guidance from God. I think that is where we as a church are now. We need to be turning to prayer for God to guide us in what His big plan is. We can pray daily on our own and I hope you are doing that. If you are someone who needs a little help or you would rather pray in church feel free to join with others at church. I am going to make the sanctuary open for time of prayer. Let's use this Lent as a time to get ready for Easter and what *is* next for Epworth.

Lent starts March 6th. Come to the evening service and start your praying then. The following Wednesdays through Lent I will have the sanctuary open from 5:30 until 6:30. Come for 5 minutes or the whole hour. Commit to pray for Epworth & the future. Let God enter your heart. He is just waiting for us to ask.

Any questions give me a call.
Mary Becker 847-695-1008

Current & Upcoming Events

- ✓ **FOOD PANTRY SUNDAY** is next Sunday, March 3rd. Please bring canned fruit and/or Jell-O donations or any non-perishable food items of your choice! Donations can be placed in the Food Pantry basket outside the Sanctuary.
- ✓ **WOMEN'S RETREAT** - The 12th Annual Women's Retreat will be Saturday, March 9th from 9:00am-2:00pm. Tickets are \$25 and are now on sale in the Community Room. This will be our final retreat so don't miss this wonderful opportunity to join us. Questions? Contact Robin Luzin.
- ✓ **FRIENDSHIP LUNCHEON** - Over 55? Join us for our next Friendship Club Luncheon at 12:30pm on Wednesday, March 13th @ Village Squire (480 Randall Rd; S. Elgin). A sign-up sheet is on the Epworth bulletin board in the Community Room. You don't have to be a member of the church to come. Questions, call the church office at 847-931-5400.
- ✓ **KMOTION** – Our next KMOTION event will be on Saturday, March 16th, from 11:00am – 1:00pm and will be all things SCIENCE! We'll do airplanes, rockets, slime and play-doh! Com'on out and join the fun. Questions? Contact Andy Lindstrom at andylindstrom@yahoo.com.
- ✓ **CHRISTMAS SHOEBOXES FOR SPIRIT LAKE** – In March we will be collecting items for girls (nail polish, socks, bracelets, necklaces, craft items, hair accessories, etc...) as well as shoeboxes, wrapping paper, and tape. Don't feel like shopping? Purchase a Target gift card from MANNA and let us do the shopping for you!
- ✓ **SPROUTS** – Join us every Friday morning @ 9:15am! Babies and toddlers spend about 35 minutes of social time where they can play and learn followed by 15 - 20 minutes of singing, movement activities as well as story time. It's a great time for both child and parent and the perfect time to spend an hour with your little ones. You don't have to be an Epworth member to come, so invite friends, neighbors, and relatives...the more the merrier! **We will not meet on March 1st.**
- ✓ **MEN'S FRIDAY BREAKFAST** - Come and enjoy a delicious breakfast, fellowship and discussion on topics of the day. We meet in M5 the 1st and 3rd Fridays of each month @ 8:00am. All are welcome to attend; this is a casual group and regular attendance is not required.
- ✓ **GEORGE BLANKENSHIP SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS** The deadline to submit an application for this year's George Blankenship Scholarship is Sunday, March 31st. Applications can be downloaded from our website or picked up in the church office. There is also a new online application; the link can be found on our website under "Announcements".

Missed worship on Sunday?

Visit our website, eumcelgin.org, to get access to everything you missed. Click on the GROW link and you will be able to listen to last Sunday's message under "Sunday Podcast" or download a copy an electronic copy of the CONNECTIONS Newsletter by going to the "Connect" tab and click on the "CONNECTIONS Monthly Newsletter" link.

Care  Team

This has been a beautiful but difficult winter to navigate. Please remember to help out not only our members who are older and/or homebound, but your neighbors who might also be facing these challenges. Any help whether bringing in newspapers and trash cans or helping with snow removal is a huge help. We just need to show we care and are thinking about them.

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epworth green team 

Thanks for all everyone is doing to "go green". The latest IPCC report on climate change suggests that climate change is worse than originally thought. The increasing number of wildfires, superstorms and the warmer temperatures for 9 of the last 10 years all point to this fact. Cutting out or reducing your use of fossil fuels is an important part of "going green" along with being a good steward of the earth! Keep up the good work!



## MARCH GIVING / SERVING OPPORTUNITIES

**PADS** - PADS of Elgin provides overnight shelter and coordinates support services for the homeless in Elgin and surrounding areas. The shelter is open 7 days a week to all individuals who have a non-felony record and can pass a breathalyzer test. For two hours one evening our servants help serve food to the residents of PADS.

**When: Sunday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> @ 6:30-9:00pm**

**Where: 1730 Berkley Street in Elgin**

Please contact Andy Lindstrom at [andrewlindstrom@yahoo.com](mailto:andrewlindstrom@yahoo.com) for more information.

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FOOD FOR GREATER ELGIN - Provides food assistance to 1200 low income families (approx. 5500 individuals, 1/2 of which are children) in the Elgin, South Elgin and East Dundee areas each month.

When: Monday, March 18th @ 5:30-8:00pm.

Please click on "Food for Greater Elgin" under the "Serve" tab on our website for more information on how to serve.

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**SOUP KETTLE** - Provides hot meals and warm smiles to 60-100 people in need every day. Epworth Church staffs the Soup Kettle at Zion Lutheran Church the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month.

**When: Tuesday, March 19<sup>th</sup> @ 4:30 - 6:45pm.**

Those wishing to serve, please see Janina Hoffman for more information.

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CRISIS CENTER MEALS - Epworth Mission Team provides meals for the Crisis Center on the 4th Sunday of every month. We are in need of volunteers to make a main dish to pass, a vegetable or dessert.

When: Sunday, March 24th @ 5:00pm.

Please contact Mary Rees Freeman at mrf647@hotmail.com.

To our Epworth family:

Thank you everyone for all of your love and support shown in so many ways with the passing of our Mom, Sheila Burris. We so appreciate people's expressions of kindness with cards, comments, food and service for the luncheon, help with her memorial service, Pastor Deb's support, and Robyn's above and beyond time, along with contributions in her memory. We often wonder how people get through these times in their lives without God's love and support shown through your love!

Paul & Carole Burris

MARCH RAINBOW COVENANT –

Abounding Ministries seeks to make disciples of Jesus Christ through dynamic worship, motivational speaking, retreats and print resources. The NIC Conference Evangelist circuit-rides among our local churches facilitating inclusive, upbeat worship experiences that strengthen the spiritual life, mission and evangelism of congregations, while offering training and print resources. This full-time appointment within the NIC is non-salaried. Jane Rubietta partners with Rich as an Author and Conference Leader focusing on Women's issues, spiritual formation, and strengthening relationships between congregations and clergy families. AM is a 501.3.C Non-Profit Corporation under the umbrella the United Methodist Church.

To make a donation to this month's Rainbow Covenant organization, simply place a donation marked for "Rainbow Covenant" in this morning's offering plate.

WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY

MONDAY MORNING @ 6:30AM

Join us on Monday mornings at 6:30am at the Centre of Elgin for our Walking Bible Study. Come be part of your church community, Walk to better yourself physically and mentally and Talk to grow spiritually! Meet others at the walking track on the upper level of the Centre, you'll be glad you made the effort! Questions, ask Mary Becker, Ginny Jensen or Carole Burris.

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#### **WEDNESDAY MORNING @ 6:00AM**

You are most welcome to come and sit at the South Elgin Panera Bread on the east side of Randall Rd. in front of Jewel to converse about the scripture for the upcoming Sunday. It's always great to get into the scriptures and really find a new understanding with others!

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LENTEN BIBLE STUDY

Join us on Monday evenings @ 7:00pm or Thursday afternoons @ 1:00pm during Lent for our study on "Wondrous Encounters: Scripture for Lent". Contact the Church Office or sign up for class online.