

Unity Presbyterian Church

Yoke Newsletter ~ March 2017

Church Calendar:

<http://unitypresbyterian.net/page/calendar>

Prayer Concerns:

<http://unitypresbyterian.net/prayer.php>

From Pastor Andrew :

Forty Days Without

“And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. (Matthew 6:16-18)

What are you giving up for Lent? Will it be chocolate, soft drinks, going out to eat, Facebook, or television? These are common answers to the Lenten question. I wonder if fasting from these types of things actually helps our spiritual life. Does abstaining from something for forty days really deepen our relationship with Christ?

The season of Lent offers us a chance to engage in the spiritual practice of contemplation. To reflect on the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness, enduring the temptation of Satan and preparing to begin his ministry. Traditionally, Lent is a time of repentance, fasting and preparation for the coming of Easter. It is a time of self-examination and reflection to focus on our relationship with God. Choosing to give up something, to take something on, or to volunteer and give of ourselves to others during Lent fulfills our desire to walk humbly with God.

The secret of our success is found in our intentions. Are we doing it to show off, or are we doing it to purposely transform our faith. Are we giving something up just to go through the motions and say we fasted for Lent, or are we looking for ways to change our lifestyle and open up ways for God to change our hearts. When we choose to fast is it because we think we can pass the forty day test, or is it because we want to change the way we eat, engage with social media, or improve our physical health?

Maybe this year we will want to volunteer our time to help others as a form of alms giving. When we volunteer is it to say we did something good for a short time and give ourselves a pat on the back, or is it because we are feeling called by God to participate in a new ministry?

Starting a new spiritual practice is another way we can intentionally grow our faith. When we take on new spiritual practices is it to say, "I did that once," or is it to find a new way to engage and improve our spiritual health, our relationship with God?

As we approach this Lenten season I hope we are deeply intentional about the choices we make to engage with the holiness of the season. With pure intentions and humble follow through we honor Christ as we journey with him in the wilderness. It's not just about abstaining from temptation, but opening ourselves to be transformed and made ready for Easter.

May the Peace of Christ be with you, Rev. Andrew Black

The **2017 Lenten daily action calendar** is now available to download here: <http://www.presbyterianmission.org/resource/tread-lightly-lent/>.

ARE YOU READY FOR A NEW DIRECTORY?

I am currently working on a new directory if you have any changes, please notify me at unitythin@gmail.com or call the church office 812-299-2206. *Has your cell number changed? Has your address changed? Has your email changed? Have you removed your land phone?* If any or all have changed then I need to know about this before publishing a new directory. Thank you. Bess

A note from the organist:

It has been sometime since an explanation has been given about the hymn numbers in parentheses following the voluntaries (Prelude, Offertory and Postlude). When the voluntary is based on, or has the melody of, or "quotes" in some way a hymn from our hymnal, I include the numbers of the hymn so you can look it up in the hymnal if something seems familiar to you and you can't quite place it.

Also, it is sometimes interesting to know the tune name, or vice versa, if the tune name is used, to know the actual title of the hymn words. The composer of the music and author of the words are sometimes surprising, too. And if you want to read the words of the hymn, it is a way to meditate on the music. You may know more hymns than you realize.

ASK AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE!

Andrew put the word out on e-mail to various churches that we were in need of more "Sing the Faith" hymnals (small blue). Unity just received 22 from First Presbyterian Church N, Newark, DE! Plus the Worship Committee purchased seven. No more scrambling for the small blue hymnals when needed.

**UNITY'S ANNUAL FAT TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER
FEBRUARY 28 ~ 5:30 TO 7 PM**



MENU: Pancakes, butter, syrup, sausage, bacon, iced tea, coffee and juice. Before Lent begins, pancake flippers, Sadie, Albert and Jan, invite you to enjoy their delicious pancakes.

A free will donation will be accepted to cover expenses (any donations over expenses will go to the Potts Pantry).

Morning Glories

We continue our Bible Study, "Who is Jesus?" Read the 7th lesson, "According to the Non-canonical Gospels." We will meet Tuesday, March 14th at 10:30 at the church. Join us for food, fun, and fellowship. Bring a sack lunch.

Save the front of your greeting cards as a mission/recycling project. There is a box in the back of the church where you can leave your cards.



***ACCEPTABLE CAPS FOR BENCH PROGRAM
SEE THE LINK BELOW***

<http://www.greentreeplastics.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Acceptable-Caps-List-1.pdf>

Green Corner

I had heard about "Tread Lightly for Lent" the Daily Reflection -action calendar on the web site for the Presbyterian environmental group in the past and could never find it in time to share with our congregation. This year we got the link in time for us to use as an optional Lenten study. This is a great opportunity for our congregation to think about Lent in a new way with ideas for Bible study and action. It includes ideas for each day of Lent that range from reading Matthew 6:16-18, to setting aside a quiet time for prayer, to reading about churches using solar energy. The themes for each week are women, creation, water, consumption, and social justice.

The link is <http://www.presbyterianmission.org/resource/tread-lightly-lent/> and it will be an inspirational journey for all of us!

On March 12 the idea involves planning an Earth Day Sunday celebration. We are currently planning Unity's for April 23. Please let us know if you would like to help with the service.