

*Sanctify a fast,
call a solemn assembly.
Gather the elders
and all the inhabitants of the land
to the house of the Lord your God,
and cry out to the Lord. - Joel 1:14*

Dear friends in Christ,

Lent begins on February 22 with Ash Wednesday worship and ends 40 days later on Palm Sunday. Now if you're doing the math along with me, you'll notice that the time between Ash Wednesday and Palm Sunday is more than 40 days...46 days to be precise. This is because the Sundays during Lent don't 'count' as they are thought to be mini resurrection days. Even in a season of Lent which is meant to be a bit more subdued and introspective, Sunday is still the day we commemorate Jesus' triumph over the grave! Also, the name 'lent' is derived from Old English and Germanic words meaning 'spring season.'

So that's your math and history lesson for this month. But what is Lent really all about?

Lent is about perspective. When the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D. set the movable date of Easter, they also instituted a time of fasting and prayer leading to Easter that was patterned off of Jesus' time in the wilderness (Mt. 4:1-11). This time was especially important for those who would be baptized on Easter, which, for many centuries was the only day the sacrament was administered throughout the year. In general, the thinking was that such an important and transformative event like Easter needed to be approached carefully and prayerfully. Easter, like Christmas, is about God's promises made and fulfilled. It should not just be something we 'do,' but a way we live.

This is why fasting was so important in the earliest observances of Lent and even throughout the Bible. We might think that fasting is about abstaining from certain foods or practices, but it is a whole lot more than that. Fasting is about making a dedicated effort to approach life in an unfamiliar way. If your fasting includes abstaining from certain foods, the hope is that the practice will bring you closer to those who have to live daily without certain necessities. If your fasting is about cleaning your living space of those things you've collected but never use, the practice will hopefully put you in touch with the values of simplicity and sufficiency. Whatever fast you might choose, it is meant to change the way you look at the world and especially how you understand and pursue your relationship with God.

So I invite you to consider fasting this season as we prepare for Easter. It can take on many different forms and look a lot of different ways. Perhaps you'll commit to the *40 Cans For Lent* food drive that you'll read about later in this newsletter. Collecting these food items will be a daily reminder to be grateful for what you have. Or perhaps you'll go on a technology fast and connect or reconnect with your neighbors in 'old fashioned' ways. Maybe you will fast from certain foods and be reminded of God's gift of daily bread. Or perhaps you'll go on a spending fast, where for the season of Lent you only buy exactly what you need to survive and nothing more.

The light of resurrection will dawn on us by the goodness of God's grace. May we be prepared to receive it!

Andrew

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NURSERY STAFF

ALEESHA GILL
NURSERY STAFF

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:
TUESDAY THRU FRIDAY
9:00 A.M. TO 2:00 P.M.



March 1	Jean Sturtz	March 18	Aiden Thomas
March 5	Logan Deem	March 19	Rebecca Brown
March 6	JoAnn Tousant	March 22	Amy O'Connor
March 6	Carol Murray	March 22	Todd Thiebeau
March 7	Shirley Parker	March 23	Robert Brown
March 8	Cassandra Elmer	March 23	Linda Briggs
March 9	Jean Bach	March 24	Carl Bingle
March 11	Martha Adams	March 26	Sarah Deem
March 13	Eugene Hayes	March 28	William O'Connor
March 14	Alice LeRoy	March 29	Matthew Willaman
March 17	June Denny	March 31	Michele Bariteau
March 17	Ken Thompson	March 31	Gail Fluno
March 18	Jason Rudd		

*A milestone for Louise Jeffries
Born February 8, 1923 - 100 years young!
Blessings to her in the year ahead!*



EXPLORATION CLASS

February 19th & 26th

*Are you new to the community of faith at FPC Watertown?
Do you want a refresher on what it means to be a Presbyterian?
Can't remember when and why the Apostles' Creed was written?*

Exploration Class is for you! On February 19 and 26 at 11:30am, join Pastor Andrew for a deep dive into what it means to be a Presbyterian and a member of our faith community! We'll touch on topics such as Reformed theology, Presbyterian worship, sacraments, and governance, and the duties and expectations of members of the church. These classes are designed for new and 'seasoned' members alike-all are welcome!

February 19: Reformed theology, Presbyterian worship and sacraments

February 26: Presbyterian governance and membership

lunch will be provided* *childcare available* *Martin Luther Approved

RSVP to Pastor Andrew

Love – Hope- The Future

The Malawi Early Literacy Team (MELT) welcomes the arrival of baby Jonathan to Rodwell and Tabitha Sichinga of Mzuzu, Malawi. Jonathan was born on January 9th. Rodwell is a Resource Teacher for MELT, Malawi.

This young family, like any family anywhere in the world has hopes and dreams for their baby. They have the added challenges of living in a small home without running water or electricity, access to food, healthcare - basic needs. His salary is about \$125.00 a month

Rodwell is an excellent teacher who can offer his child more than most in this region. The one thing he talks about so often is the hope being offered to the poorest and most rural children in his area thanks to the programs M.E.L.T. provides. Our mission provides culturally appropriate books for schools, professional development for teachers, and a meeting space at the MELT Central Library.

We thank all of you who have prayed for these children, given a donation or helped to assemble materials bound for Malawi. Please think of baby Jonathan and the hope being provided to children with our mission.

Heather White



M.E.L.T. USA Chair





40 Cans (or boxes) For Lent

The 40 days of Lent are a time of reflection on Scripture, of strengthening our faith, and committing acts of mercy and generosity. Some people observe Lent by ‘giving up’ something. Instead of giving something up for Lent, you are invited to collect these 40 items which will aid our neighbors in need through the Watertown Urban Mission.

You can use a box, a bag, or a crate to collect your items, which we ask you bring to church on Palm Sunday, April 2, where they will be blessed during worship. As you collect one item per day during the season, remember the many blessings you have received from God!

If you are unable to attend worship on Palm, Sunday, volunteers will be available to pick up at your home or office. Volunteers will also be available to assist getting your items into the sanctuary for worship. A sorting and delivery party will be held on Wednesday, April 5, at 4:00pm, with a trip to get ice cream after.

1. Peanut Butter
2. Jelly
3. Tomato Soup
4. Canned Meat
5. Pasta
6. Spaghetti Sauce
7. Cereal
8. Oatmeal
9. Canned Green Beans
10. Canned Peaches
11. Canned Carrots
12. Applesauce
13. Dry Pasta
14. Dried Beans
15. Canned Tuna
16. Rice
17. Flour
18. Sugar
19. Macaroni and Cheese
20. Hearty Soup
21. Chicken Noodle Soup
22. Hamburger Helper
23. Canned Corn
24. Baked Beans
25. Granola Bars/Protein Bars
26. Canned Pears
27. Coffee
28. Toilet Paper/Baby Wipes
29. Mayo
30. Instant Mashed Potatoes
31. Canned Mixed Veggies
32. Crackers
33. Cornbread Mix
34. Canned Fruit Cocktail
35. Feminine Hygiene Product/Diapers
36. Toothbrush
37. Toothpaste
38. Bath Soap
39. Shampoo
40. Antiperspirant/Deodorant



A traditional way to celebrate Palm Sunday is to read the Passion Narrative of Jesus. The Passion Narrative is a patchwork of the various accounts of Jesus’ final days from the four gospels, usually read in parts by designated readers and the congregation. To honor this tradition, our Palm Sunday celebration this year will be called “Palms to Passion.” The service will follow the last several days of Jesus’ life with readings from the Bible, special music by FPC’s choir and musicians (including “The Palms”), and thoughtful readings from poetry and prose. There will be no sermon that day; instead, the music and the words of Scripture will speak for themselves.

The Great Mystery of Easter

MAUNDY THURSDAY, April 6th

7:30pm Tenebrae and Holy Communion

A Tenebrae is a worship service of gradually lighting and then gradually extinguishing candles as a symbol of Jesus’ coming into and being taken from the world. This service will recall the events of the first Last Supper, and will include the sacrament for us to share together. The service ends in almost complete darkness as Good Friday begins.



GOOD FRIDAY, April 7th

Community Good Friday/Stations of The Cross, Time and Locations: TBD

12:30pm The Seven Last Words of Christ

A quiet service of readings, silence, and reflection, held in FPC’s Sanctuary during the time when Jesus was crucified. This service will remember Jesus’ final words.



EASTER SUNDAY, April 9th

Sunrise Service at Thompson Park, Time: TBD

8:30am Morning Spoken Prayer and Holy Communion

This service will be held, weather permitting, on FPC’s labyrinth.

9:00am Come and Go Easter Brunch, Fellowship Hall


10:00am Morning Worship with Molto Brass and Choir






**OPEN Tuesdays and Thursdays
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
And
The 1st Saturday of the month
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

The Spare Closet is in need of bath and hand towels, wash cloths, blankets, small men's pants (especially jeans), small appliances such as: toasters and coffee makers.



AMERICAN RED CROSS
BLOOD DRIVE

MONDAY, MARCH 6, 2023
8:30 A.M. TO 12:30 P.M.
FELLOWSHIP HALL
All blood types needed



**HELP SAVE A LIFE +
GIVE THE GIFT OF BLOOD**

PW Ponderings

Mid-winter greetings to you all! You may know that we cancelled our January meeting due to the forecast of a foot of snow, or more. I know that you are anxious to get together, as we have yet to gather this year. Never fear! We will have our February meeting on Thursday the 23rd, at Stone Presbyterian, with our business portion beginning at 11am and lunch to follow. Bring a sandwich, if you wish, soup and dessert will be provided. We will still share our hobbies, crafts, skills; what ever you're passionate about! Have a Happy Valentines Day. See you soon.

Mo Gorman, treasurer

AMAZING *grace*



ASH WEDNESDAY
David



WEEK ONE
Isaiah of Babylon



WEEK TWO
The Prodigal Son



WEEK THREE
The Blind Man



WEEK FOUR
The Woman at the Well



WEEK FIVE
Paul

LENT

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Join us for
SUNDAY WORSHIP AT
10:00 A.M.

Listen on your radio
WATN 1240AM or
watch the service live from
www.watertownfirstpres.org
or
www.facebook.com/watertownfpc

If you miss a week of worship it is just a click away.
just visit our website at www.watertownfirstpres.org.

AN IRISH BLESSING

*May love and laughter light your days,
and warm your heart and home.
May good and faithful friends be yours,
wherever you may roam.
May peace and plenty bless your world
with joy that long endures.
May all life's passing seasons
bring the best to you and yours!*



Daylight Savings Time begins **March 12, 2023**