



FIRST PRESS

February 2018

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Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. ~ Matthew 4

I always took the “forty days and forty nights” as a metaphor. That it could be scientific was the last thing from my mind.

Noah was on the ark and it rained “forty days and forty nights.”

When we lived in Bremerton, Washington it rained a lot. One winter it rained for forty days straight. I forgot what a sunny day felt like. The inference of forty days has always been a duration of time that wipes away your memory.

The other day I watched a documentary called, “The Science of Fasting.” This was fascinating. The documentary moved from Russia, to Germany, and ended up in Los Angeles. The Russian sequence was about rather unethical tests and experiments of the Soviets with fasting as a remedy for mental illness. The German portion was about a spa/treatment facility that is popular today. People in Germany take a “fasting” treatment for two-to-three weeks under the supervision of health professionals.

What they describe is three days of mental challenge. Your mind keeps telling your body to eat. Then there is a day of “acidosis” where your body is undergoing a kind of recalibration in terms of nutrients. The last step people described as calm, wellness, peace that lasts for weeks as you continue without food.

The last part of the documentary was about a researcher in Los Angeles who did an experiment with mice who had cancer. One group of mice fasted for five days before chemotherapy; another group of mice were fed their normal diet before

the treatment. The results were shocking. The group that fasted had wildly better results from the treatment.

Near the end of the documentary there was a discussion regarding next steps. At some point one of the doctors being interviewed discussed the limit of fasting. There is a limit to how many days you can live on water. The limit is forty days.

Here I had always thought that forty days of fasting was a metaphor. It turns out it is the physical limit of fasting. Jesus fasting forty days in the desert is not a supernatural claim; it is biology, physiology. Go figure.

Lent is approaching. Rest assured I am not going to try for the forty-day fast. I am, though, considering how to incorporate a fast or time of fasting into the season. A fast is an ancient practice that disciplines the body and cleanses our soul.

In the next two weeks if you get a chance, watch the documentary. The program is not about Lent, but it does have a rather unique parallel in the idea that going without can give us more, giving up something can bring a better life. This the challenge of Lent: to take up a discipline for a time that causes you to see and understand the limits of life and the power of God’s mercy.

Consider taking up a discipline for Lent. It could be fasting, praying, giving something up or away. Consider making this Lent an intentional time of devotion. And be sure to start Lent with our Ash Wednesday service. Perhaps you will find there is something in your life, once set aside, need not return; something taken up becomes a way forward.

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From Pastor Casey's Desk...

"For truly I tell you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you."

~Matthew 17:20, NRSV



There is a lot of excitement for the coming year ahead. How will we grow as a church? How will we make disciples of all nations? And how will we use the spiritual gifts that we have been given to command the mountains that lie in front of us to move?

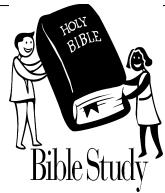
Over the course of this next year it is my prayer that we are able to purposefully set aside time to consider the things that we have to offer to God. In what ways may the time and talents we possess benefit our worship, our fellowship, and our relationship to those who live around us here in Watertown? May we continue to strive to be a community of faith that shares its gifts with others and a place where others are able to come and share their gifts as well.

This past January, I had the opportunity to attend the Calvin Worship Symposium. It was a time of being able to learn and worship with people from different Christian traditions and cultural backgrounds. It truly was a representation of the hope that one day we will all gather together to offer our praise to God. However, the conference was also a time for meditation and contemplation. It was a time to think about the things we hold onto and whether or not they are really beneficial to the various ministries that God calls us to. Which is difficult, but also freeing, because it means that there are a number of different paths that are opened up to us.

Therefore, I have a challenge for you, the reader, and myself... Make a list of talents, gifts, your time, and so forth, and consider how they might sustain us, nurture us, and carry us on as a church that is striving to do God's will here on earth. It doesn't matter how small or insignificant you think it may be, because as we find time and time again, God can do anything with what we offer. Let us make 2018 a year where we push ourselves to move the mountains that lie ahead of us and a year where we find renewed energy in our journey of life and faith.

Sincerely,

The Rev. Casey Carbone



The **WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS** will begin on February 7th, weather permitting. We are starting a new study called Women of the Bible. First of all we will explore the Book of Ruth and the Book of Esther. The Study of Esther will take us to the Jewish celebration of Purim and possibly the taste of Hamantaschen.

We will then explore the lives of other familiar women in the Old and New Testaments, as well as some you probably never have heard of. It is guaranteed to be a lively and interesting class. It is open to men as well as women, and we would love to see some new members.

**Our Next DOLLAR DINNER will be
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11TH
From 5:00-6:00 p.m.**

Sign up to help or come and be counted!



American Red Cross

ATTENDANCE

SUNDAY WORSHIP

<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>		
<u>Week</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Week</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
January 1	87	January 7	91
January 8	115	January 14	95
January 15	128	January 21	110
January 22	123	January 28	<u>110</u>
January 29	<u>123</u>		
Total	576		406
Average	115		102

Watertown Community BLOOD DRIVE

First Presbyterian Church

Community Room
403 Washington Street - Watertown

**Saturday, February 17, 2018
8:30 AM to 12:30 PM**

Please call 1-800 RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit redcrossblood.org and enter Sponsor Keyword:
to schedule your appointment.
Appointments encouraged and appreciated.
Walk-ins welcome



**BLESSINGS
ON YOUR
BIRTHDAY**

February 1	Nalanie Simpson	February 16	Joshua Garry
February 2	Robert J. Brown	February 16	Sarah Van Eenenam
February 2	Lauren Sinclair	February 16	Jude Cook
February 4	Susan Guy	February 16	Clayton Lee
February 5	Joseph Slabchuck	February 17	Cathryn Hayes Huette
February 8	Louise Jeffries	February 18	William Conde III
February 8	Jessica Jones	February 18	Ralph Green, Jr.
February 9	Harold Johnson	February 18	Dacia Van Eenenam
February 9	Kurt Riordan	February 19	Maira Tangye
February 10	Paul Brown	February 21	Boo Wells
February 12	Kathryn Ann Kolton	February 26	Mark Martin
February 15	Deanna Piiparinne	February 27	Linda McCullough
February 15	Chloe Beehm	February 27	Maksim Klug
February 16	Robert Blank	February 28	Percy Pike



Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent. Lent is a time when many Christians prepare for Easter by observing a period of fasting, repentance, moderation, and spiritual discipline.

The service focuses on both themes, helping us to realize that both have been triumphed through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

During some Ash Wednesday services, the minister will lightly rub the sign of the cross with ashes onto the foreheads of worshipers. The use of ashes as a sign of mortality and repentance has a long history in Jewish and Christian worship. Historically, ashes signified purification and sorrow for sins.

It is traditional to save the palm branches from the previous Palm Sunday service to burn to produce ashes for this service. The ash cross on the forehead is an outward sign of our sorrow and repentance for sins.

~ adapted from *The United Methodist Book of Worship*

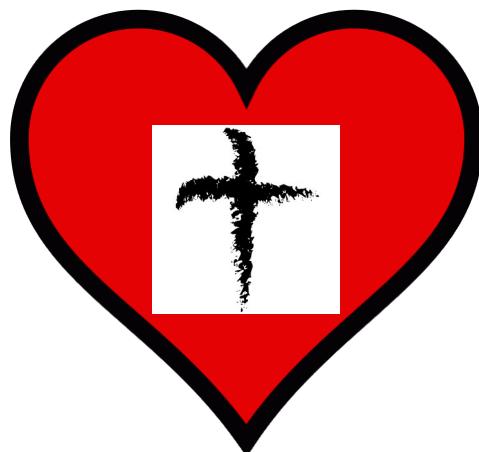
Ash Wednesday is one of my favorite services. For me it is a very intimate and personal time of reflection. It is a time to remember I am loved - no matter my faults - forever and ever! I have always loved that moment when the pastor places the ashes on my forehead and looks into my eyes and says, "Sue, you are forgiven." It is the moment when I remember why I am here, why we all are here. And so, the journey begins once again - the journey to the cross, the journey to Easter.

With Love in my heart,
Sue Beaman

On
**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2018,
COME TO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH CHAPEL AT 7:30 P.M.**

*Come and remember you are a sinner.
Come and remember your sins are forgiven.
Come and remember you are loved.*

ALWAYS AND FOREVER!



Presbyterian Women now meet the 1st Thursday of the month for lunch at 12:30 in the Fellowship Hall at First Pres. Church, and the 3rd Thursday of the month at Ramada Inn for breakfast at 8:30 a.m.

As we journey down the road of life, we often get sidetracked. Sometimes we take a turn off the main road that may turn out to be a dead end. Sometimes we take a turn that leads us down a different path for a while. Somehow God always manages to bring us back to the main road. He is our guide. I have taken many detours, side roads and have even been lost for periods of time. God has always guided me back in the right direction. In this world of uncertainty, there are two constants in my life - God and my church. I know they will always be there in my heart no matter where life's journey takes me. I have wonderful memories of my church that I carry with me always - memories from my childhood, my teenage years and as an adult. So when the following letter came to me here at First Pres, it brought joy to my heart, knowing that others have similar connections to their church through the memories and pictures in their hearts.

To whom it may concern,

I recently discovered that I can view the First Presbyterian Church service on Sunday mornings and because I can see it, I almost feel I'm actually attending it. I am so glad of this as I was born in Watertown and this church was a very vital part of my life. My whole family always attended, the ladies all wearing hats and gloves, and the ushers collecting the offering dressed in formal tails. At 12:00 the children adjourned to Sunday School until 1:00, my mother often playing the piano for our hymn singing. My mother also sang in the choir. Our beloved Dr. Darwin Pickard was a long time minister then.

If you have seen the picture of small children by the little door into the kindergarten Sunday School room, I am one of the girls in the picture. I, of course, was baptized there, grew old enough to join the church and take my first communion, participate in the Sunday evening Young People's Alliance, sing in the choir, and one year home from college, was given the coveted role of playing Mary in the Christmas pageant, singing a lullaby to the baby Jesus accompanied by a harp. Before moving from the area, my dream of walking down the aisle as a bride was realized one bright, snowy February day, and my own first three children were baptized there. So, you see that your church was a fundamental part of my life. Now that I am ninety-one years old, and live in a small village that supports no protestant church except in the summer months, I am truly thankful for the ability to join you in worship on Sunday mornings, and remember the very meaningful people and experiences there.

I wonder if there is still anyone there who remembers Letty Kirch?

Sincerely,

*Letty Kirch Haynes
Box 355
Inlet, New York 13360*



Remember, just because someone is not physically present doesn't mean they are not present through their hearts. Thank you Letty for sharing your heart with us. If anyone remembers Letty, drop her a note. God provides many ways for us to stay connected!

Sue Beaman



If your address, email address or cell phone or home phone number changes, let us know!

Love Word Search

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Find the hidden words.

K	Y	D	S	N	G	E	G	I	P	B	E	E	E	H
U	P	A	E	M	L	G	A	A	V	E	A	B	O	N
W	R	T	V	Q	F	P	R	R	J	A	T	P	W	E
U	E	I	E	Z	J	R	B	R	Z	R	E	O	P	Z
U	N	R	I	G	H	T	E	O	U	S	N	E	S	S
N	E	B	L	B	Q	P	P	G	F	M	H	C	J	K
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Y	N	K	U	I	O	R	I	J	E	A	L	O	U	S
R	E	I	T	R	D	J	O	N	F	L	C	G	V	K
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Z	P	Y	Z	D	A	S	R	R	R	L	S	R	A	W
Q	T	K	X	B	W	R	E	V	E	N	Y	Y	C	N

Is **PATIENT**

Does Not Take Into Account A
Wrong **SUFFERED**

Is **KIND**

Does Not Rejoice In
UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

Is Not **JEALOUS**

REJOICES With The Truth

Does Not **BRAG**

BEARS All Things

Does Not **ARROGANT**

BELIEVES All Things

Does Not Act **UNBECOMINGLY**

HOPES All Things

Does Not Seek Its **OWN**

ENDURES All Things

Is Not **PROVOKED**

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SUNDAY WORSHIP AT
10:00 A.M.
(Service is broadcast over
ratio station WATN 1240AM)

If you miss a week of worship it is just a click away.
The service and sermon can be found in podcast form;
the text of the sermon is also in text form. Just visit our
website at www.watertownfirstpres.org.

"Hugs"

*'Hugging is reciprocal
I'm sure you will agree*

*'Cause when I'm hugging you, you're also hugging me!
Heart to heart and holding on, is as close as folks can get,
And I'm sure those who knock it just haven't tried it yet!"*

~ Eleanor Fralick

