

# SPRUCE PINE UMC NEWSLETTER

Volume 10, Issue 3

March 2020

## From the Pastor's Desk...



## The Lenten Season



It's hard to believe that we're about to step into the season of Lent. Amazingly, it was only 2 months ago we were celebrating the joys of Christmas – God's breaking into our world through the person of Jesus. Now, we are about to take a 40-day journey to the cross.

Speaking of journey to the cross, that's the name of the sermon-series during Lent: Journey to the Cross. During our journey (through the series), we will explore different "stopping places" along the way. These are the experiential moments/times we have in life; and as previously discussed, our "stopping places" are not supposed to become "staying places." Whether our life-moments are good or not-so-good, we aren't supposed to get stuck in the mud in our journeys. We will explore a time of learning, challenge, dependence, doubt, comfort, and new beginnings.

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*"The mission of Spruce Pine United Methodist Church is to be a beacon on a hill spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ through: Worship, Fellowship, Education, Nurturing and Service"*

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## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK *Continued from pg. 1*

So, what is Lent, anyway? And, what are we supposed to do? Lent is a 40-day period prior to Easter where we prepare ourselves to celebrate the glorious day of resurrection on Easter. It is a time of spiritual renewal, where we take an inventory of our lives to see where we might be stuck in the mud. Oftentimes, people give up something as a sacrificial reminder that we are completely dependent upon God. Maybe you're thinking about giving up chocolate, or social media, or...dare I say...coffee and potato chips (yikes!). Or, maybe you're going to pick up a spiritual discipline, such as an intentional time of prayer, meditation, devotion, service to others, or a Bible study. Again, these are things we do to spiritually center ourselves, and/or re-turn ourselves to God. Lent starts with Ash Wednesday – where we remember our mortality and mark ourselves as forgiven children of God. The ashen mark of the cross placed on our foreheads reminds us and the world that although we are broken, we are forgiven; we are mortal, and we are eternal; and, we are marked to remember that our lives are a gift from God. Lent's 40 days is a "tithe" (10 percent) of our time, effort, focus, and discipline during our 365-day year.

As mentioned, giving up something or adding something – both as a way of focusing upon God and others – can be done in many ways. Listed below are some suggestions of things to let go of and pick up. And, for those of you reading the newsletter online, the included hyperlinks will direct you to resources to help you on your spiritual way. The list comes from ResourceUMC.

**Try an electronic fast.** Give up TV, Facebook, texting, tweeting, e-mail and all things electronic for one day every week. (Or everyday of Lent!) Use the time to read & pray. [Learn about fasting.](#)

**Start a prayer rhythm.** Each day of Lent, [go to The Upper Room's prayer wall](#) and pray for another person.

**Go deeper.** [Take an online course](#) as a part of your Lenten discipline.

**Forgive someone who doesn't deserve it (maybe even yourself).** Study a book on forgiveness, such as [Forgiveness, the Passionate Journey](#).

**Give up soft drinks, fast food, tea or coffee.** Let [Juliana's Ice Cream Fast](#) inspire you to give up some food or drink as a way to grow closer to God. Give the money you save to help folks in a different part of the world who are in crisis.

**Create a daily quiet time.** Spend 10 minutes a day in silence and prayer. [Read a daily devotional for the season of Lent.](#) See how it can help you add spiritual practice to your daily life beyond Lent.

**Cultivate a life of gratitude.** Write someone a thank you letter each week and be aware of how many people have helped you along the way. [Learn more about spiritual practice of gratitude.](#)

**Visit [Sight Psalms](#)** and spend time in visual meditation and prayer.

**Volunteer** one hour or more each week with a local shelter, tutoring program, nursing home, prison ministry.

**1. Pray for others** you see as you walk to and from classes, or drive to and from work. [Pray for the world.](#)

Whatever you choose to do to go/grow deeper on your spiritual walk this Lenten season, I pray that you will do it with humbleness, anticipation, and genuine fervor for God, yourself, and for the sake of God's Creation.

In humble wilderness-journeying with you... Pastor Rick

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## TRUSTEE INFORMATION

Trustee Meeting: Tuesday, Mar 17 at 7:00 pm in the church.

Saturday, March 21 is a church workday. There is a lot to do on the grounds in preparation for Easter. We need lots of people to help weed the flower beds, trim plants, pressure wash, window clean, etc. We will start at 9:00 a.m. and go until we are completed. In case of inclement weather, Saturday, March 28 is the work day. Thank you for taking pride in your church buildings and grounds, and thank you for helping to take care of all that God has blessed us with.

## Weekly Scriptures

CEB - Common English Bible

### March 1, 2020

- ◆ Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7
- ◆ Psalm 32
- ◆ Romans 5:12-19
- ◆ Matthew 4:1-11

### March 8, 2020

- ◆ Genesis 12:1-4a
- ◆ Psalm 121
- ◆ Romans 4:1-5; 13-17
- ◆ John 3:1-17 or Matthew 17:1-9
- ◆ Mark 1:9-13 (CEB)

### March 15, 2020

- ◆ Exodus 17:1-7
- ◆ Psalm 95
- ◆ Romans 5:1-11
- ◆ John 4:5-42
- ◆ Luke 4:1-23 & Hebrews 4:14-16

### March 22, 2020

- ◆ 1 Samuel 16:1-13
- ◆ Psalm 23
- ◆ Ephesians 5:8-14
- ◆ John 9:1-41
- ◆ Mark 9:14-29 (NSRV)

### March 29, 2020

- ◆ Ezekiel 37:1-14
- ◆ Psalm 130
- ◆ Romans 8:6-11
- ◆ John 11:1-45
- ◆ Mark 1:9-13 & 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

## UNITED METHODIST MEMES



**District Connect Conference:** Sunday March 22 - 2:00 - 5:00 pm at Covenant Community Church in Asheville. Our time together will begin with worship followed by an informational and Q&A session with District Superintendent, Rev. Beth Crissman. Joining her will be General & Jurisdictional Conference 2020 delegates, Rev. Shelly Webb (clergy delegate) and Caroline Wood (lay delegate). Space is provided on the [registration form](#) for you to list any questions you would like to see addressed during this time. We will compile the list of questions prior to the conference and plan the time allocated for this Q&A accordingly.

Next, we will hear from three Blue Ridge District UMC pastors who have planned and facilitated three different methods of holy conversation among the congregations which they serve. Laity from these congregations will also be present to share their thoughts on the experience. This time of learning will lead us into micro-experiences of two different methods, World Cafe and The Colossian Way.

Our hope is that you are equipped with information and experiences necessary to decide on and implement the conversational method you

**COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE UPDATE** - In January / February we assisted 62 families and individuals with rental, electric, water, medical and other assistance for over \$11,248.53. Thanks to the Spruce Pine United Methodist Church for your generosity!

## March Calendar

- 3rd - SPUMC Book Club - 10:00 am - Parlor
- 3rd - Super Tuesday - Remember to Vote!
- 8th - Daylight Saving time begins, turn clocks ahead one hour!
- 8th - Mission Meal - 12:30 pm - Lasagna, bread, salad dessert
- 9th - UMW Meeting - 7pm
- 12th - Finance Committee Meeting - 5 pm - FaithLink Classroom
- 12th - Housing Coalition meeting - 5 pm Fellowship Hall
- 17th - Saint Patrick's Day, Trustee Meeting - 7 pm
- 21st - Church Workday - 9 am until done.
- 22nd - UMCOR Sunday, District Connect Conference - 2-5 pm - Covenant Community Church - Asheville

## March Birthdays

- |                        |                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 3rd - Susan Basini     | 15th - Jodi Rhymer      |
| 3rd - Cassidy Broome   | 16th - Landon Miller    |
| 3rd - Gideon Broome    | 19th - Zeke Deyton      |
| 3rd - Kenton Broome    | 19th - Jake Deyton      |
| 4th - Nicole Struble   | 20th - Jon Goldman      |
| 7th - Bert Sheeley     | 23rd - Bill Prendergast |
| 12th - Tom Jobin       | 24th - Sharon Drum      |
| 13th - Barbara Henline | 25th - Jeb Bell         |
| 14th - Jim McManus     | 27th - Meredith Hoilman |
| 14th - Sara Powell     | 30th - Tom Ledford      |

## March Anniversaries

- |                           |                                  |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 8th - Lloyd & Nelle Glenn | 19th - Philip & Michela Buchanan |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|

## Thanks to:

- The leaders, volunteers and students of Lamplighters!
- All who remember the less fortunate and contribute to the Community Assistance Fund each week.
- Everyone who gives to the Shepherd's Staff, who allowed us to contribute 103 items in February, all who help at the M-Y Parish Food Bank.
- Members who take meals to the sick and shut ins, those who give rides to church and to the doctor for people who can't do it themselves.
- To the Finance Committee for the Wonderful Wednesday meal.
- All who serve: lectors, greeters, children's time & nursery.
- Everyone working in quiet, behind the scenes ways each week.

## **Contact Us**

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Visit us on the web at  
[www.sprucepineumc.org](http://www.sprucepineumc.org)

## **Shepherd's Staff**

Food Donated over the years to  
Shepherd's Staff:

2014 - 1202  
2015 - 1078  
2016 - 1030  
2017 - 1062  
2018 - 1213  
2019 - 1526

January 2020 - 72

February 2020 - 103

Total - 175

SERMONS AND BULLETINS ON  
THE INTERNET!

NOW! - Listen to sermons and  
read the bulletin at:

[www.sprucepineumc.org](http://www.sprucepineumc.org)