

PASTOR'S LETTER

March 2017



Greetings as we enter this season of Lent,

Lent is a season of reflection. During this time, we put away our Alleluias and enter a time of reflection and prayer. Our walk to the cross with Jesus becomes a major focus in our daily lives. It is by definition a time of repentance and fasting. As you may have heard me mention in Sunday's sermon, fasting from food doesn't always bring about change. It often brings about physical and emotional problems. In our time, we need to take a different approach to fasting. We need to fast from busyness and excuses. We need to fast from sitting idle and watching time pass us by.

This season can also be a time of renewal through devotion, prayer and action. Through giving back to God a few moments each day, we can find ourselves living a more faithful life.

During the first few days of Lent, we have opportunity to gather together in worship and reflect on those things getting in the way of our faithful relationship with God. Last Sunday the congregation was invited to place their struggles into a rock during prayer. Those rocks were then given up to God, symbolically leaving a place in your life to be filled anew. These struggles will remain with God through this season of Lent, as we work to live out our faith.

We have a variety of activities and events planned during this season. I hope that you can find time to join us for many of them.

Walking with you one step at a time toward the cross,

Pastor Cheryl A. Caronna



40 ACTS OF KINDNESS: Living out our Faith

During this season of Lent many Churches partake in a variety of rituals. Many of us know people who “give things up” during Lent. In many UCC Churches this concept of giving something up for a season is in a way a fasting technique. Although it may help draw some people deeper into their faith, it can also make people crabby, withdrawn and unhealthy. As a Church, we will not be giving up for Lent but rather giving forward.

I am challenging the Congregation to complete 40 plus acts of kindness. By living out our faith through action we can strengthen our relationship with God and each other. In the Hall, there will be a bulletin board to help us organize our acts of kindness. If each person in our Congregation completes just one act, we will meet our goal of 40 plus in the first few weeks of Lent. No need to stop at one per person, follow your heart and do as many acts as you can. No action is too small.

During Lent, there will be group opportunities to live out our faith as well as options for individual at home acts. Below is a list of ideas to help us “live out our faith”. Be creative. I can't wait to hear the ways we live our faith as Christians.

Acts at Home

- Write cards to our soldiers over seas
- Knit a prayer shawl
- Donate clothing to Good will
- Take a person shopping that may not have a car
- Read a devotion
- Call a family member you have not spoken to in a long time

Acts as a Group

- Collect 40 cans of coffee (donate to Community meal in Willimantic)
- Bake bread for Canterbury Cares clients
- Serve at the Community Meal in Woodstock
- Connect our Church to a program such as Covenant to Care
- Greet one another outside of church
- Let me know if you have any ideas on ways we can live our faith as a group

Learn about a Justice issue in our country

Be creative....come up with your own way to show kindness

Events and activities in March

Soup Suppers: every Wednesday during Lent. On a separate page, you will find the rotation of the two Churches holding the Suppers.

12th Youth Group Giv2: Youth will be leaving the Church to work with other youth at the Community Kitchen in Woodstock CT. 12:00 -3:00

20th Family Faith Time: during coffee hour, the Church family is invited to bake bread together. We will learn about communion in our Churches. The breads will be donated to the Canterbury cares clients.

BELL CHOIR: practice will be following worship on March 5th, 19th & April 2nd: The Bell Choir will perform on Palm Sunday.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR & SKIT: children will have practice following worship on March 12th, 26th & April 9th. They will perform on Easter Sunday.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

2nd Deacons Meeting

5th Music Committee Meeting

9th Trustees Meeting

16th Council Meeting

12th Christian Education Meeting

Missions Meeting?

Looking ahead... EASTER SEASON begins on April 16th.

Sunday Morning Worship Service 10 am

Children's Church School is held during the 10am worship time.

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