



WESTERN SPIRE

March 2017

*“The season of repentance is upon us; Turn back, turn back, turn back”
~taken from a Lenten Prayer by Rev. Julie Rennick*

Beloved of Christ,

As I write this, the days are winding down to the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday, and the calendar is filling up with many opportunities to draw closer to God as we begin this journey toward the cross.

This is my favorite season of the church year. It is a time that intentionally inspires us to focus more closely on the sacrificial nature of Christ’s life, ministry, death, and resurrection, and how we can live more sacrificial, Christ-centered lives.

Now, normally in our culture we talk about Lent being a time to “give something up.” The idea of self-sacrifice behind this is noble, but it is something that has never sat well with me. Sure, giving up chocolate, coffee, sweets, and so on is good for us, but in the end, we usually go back to eating and drinking those things again, or falling back into old habits (they do linger a while, don’t they?).

That is why, during Lent, I generally try to “take something on.” Rather than giving something up, I strive to add something to my life that, if it becomes routine and habit, will last long after Easter Sunday. Most years I try to focus on adding more time for daily prayer to my life. Being able to *intentionally* sit, be still, and pray is something I have long struggled with (see, even the Pastor struggles with these things!). So Lent has been a time when I can work at making my prayer life more habitual.

This year I am still going to work on that, as it is something I work on all year long. But I will also be adding in a new practice: that of fasting. I’m not quite ready to try a Lenten-long fast- these things take time! However, I am going to strive to do “mini” fasts each week, from sundown on Tuesday, through to sundown on Wednesday. My hope and prayer is that this will be a way for me to focus my heart, mind, *and* body on Christ.

I want to invite you to join me in this endeavor. On Sunday, March 5th, at 9 am, I will be gathering with those who are interested in the Mary Griffith room to discuss tips and ideas for *how to* fast and *what to focus on* while fasting. We will begin our fasts on Tuesday evenings separate, in our own homes, but break the fast on Wednesdays evenings together, with a shared meal before our mid-week Lenten services.

Perhaps you are interested in participating, but are not sure about a food fast, or for health reasons cannot participate in a food fast. You can still join us! First, you can pray for those who *are* fasting. Prayer is a central aspect of fasting, and prayer support by others is an important part of the experience. Second, you can fast in other ways. Perhaps cutting out caffeine (scary thought!), or some aspect of technology. Whatever it is, it should be difficult, but *not* impossible.

In a way, that’s the essence of the gospel: it’s difficult, but not impossible. It’s supposed to be hard. Following Jesus isn’t easy. If it was, we’d have a likely very different world.

More information on *all* the Lenten happenings can be found in this edition of the SPIRE. Please take time to see all of the things we are offering that can help us all to participate in the Lenten journey together.

as always, grace & peace,

Pastor Kyle

Preaching and Worship

March 2017

March 5, 2017

**First Sunday in Lent
Fasting and Prayer 9 am**

Sermon: The Invitation to the Table

Reader: Irene Fadden

Ushers: Ray & Sharon Marr

Toddler Room: Logan, Maxine & Kelly Babcock

March 12, 2017

**Communion Sunday
Daylight Savings Time Begins**

Sermon: What Happens at the Table, Part 1

Reader: Sharon Marr

Ushers: Sue Leonard

Toddler Room: Maxine & Kelly Babcock

Communion Elders: Bill & Elaine Hassler and Cim McFarlane

March 19, 2017

Third Sunday in Lent

Sermon: What Happens at the Table, Part 2

Reader: Janet Manktelow

Ushers: Sue Leonard

Toddler Room: Sue Pringle

March 26, 2017

Fourth Sunday in Lent

Sermon: Under the Table

Reader: Jody Pruitt

Ushers: Sue Leonard

Toddler Room: Jan Taylor



Fasting and Prayer Sunday, March 5th, 9am

Two of Christianity's spiritual disciplines are fasting and prayer. This year, I want to invite you to join me in short, simple times of fasting. Richard Foster notes that, "In a culture where the landscape is dotted with shrines to the Golden Arches and an assortment of Pizza Temples, fasting seems out of place, out of step with the times. In fact, fasting has been in general disrepute both in and outside the church for many years" (*Celebration of Discipline*).

In modern times, it is popular for people of faith to "give something up" for Lent. This could be something as simple as chocolate or caffeine, to as complicated as all technology (which is really, very hard if you think about it!). Much of the time, however, this "giving up" does not ground its focus in God, but rather in "self-improvement" or "self-sacrifice." The spiritual purpose of giving something up, as with fasting, is to bring focus and centering to God in the life of the individual and the community.

During this season, I will be fasting from sundown on Tuesdays until sundown on Wednesdays, breaking the fast with the shared meal before the Mid-Week services. I would encourage you, if you are seeking ways to draw closer to God in this time, to join me. Because the first of these "24 hour fasts" will not take place until March 7-8, **I will be sharing tips and ideas for fasting during the Sunday School hour on Sunday, March 5th at 9 am in the Mary Griffith room.**

Obviously, there are some who should *not* fast, particularly those with some health concerns. If you are interested in doing a food fast but are not sure if you should, please consult a physician. But even if you cannot do a food fast, there are other ways you can participate.

First, you can pray for those who *are* fasting. Prayer is a central aspect of fasting, and prayer support by others is an important part of the experience.

Second, you can fast in other ways. Perhaps cutting out caffeine, or some aspect of technology. Whatever it is, it should be difficult, but not impossible.

Of course, I am also available for one-on-one conversations about all of this, and am happy to discuss the ways we can find God speaking more clearly in our lives during this Lenten journey, and throughout the whole year.

A Place of Prayer/Wednesdays 9 am to 4 pm

Finally, the Worship Team has decided to make the sanctuary available for prayer in a more intentional way during Lent. On Wednesdays in Lent, in addition to the Mid-Week meals and services, the sanctuary will be open from 9 am through 4 pm. If you are feeling overwhelmed and need some encouragement, sad and need some comfort, or overjoyed and need some time to give thanks, come, lift your prayers to God in this sacred space. Pastor Kyle will try to be available should the need arise (if you anticipate a need, please reach out to him!). Come on in! The door's will be open!



Noteworthy Lenten Happenings

Lent is always a busy time in the church, and this year is no different. We will be offering some new experiences, some old, but all will help us to focus our attention toward the cross in this season of repentance and reflection.

Ash Wednesday Service, March 1st, 7 pm

On Wednesday, March 1st, we will be marking the beginning of the Lenten season with an Ash Wednesday service. Please join us for this service that invites us to enter into a period of self-reflection, prayer, and preparation in anticipation of the celebrations of Easter.

Lenten Mid-Week “Fasting” Services Wednesday evenings at 6 pm March 8, 15, 22, 29, April 5 and 12

*PLEASE note the time change for these services! Every Wednesday in Lent, we will gather at 6 pm for a simple, shared meal and fellowship, which will also function as the breaking of the fast for those who will participate (see the article on Prayer and Fasting!). Following, we will transition into the sanctuary for a simple service that will focus on Scripture, confession, and prayers of intercession. These times are intended to guide us in our examination of ourselves and our world.

You do not have to come to all the services- come as you can! But because these events will involve a meal, we are asking that you please sign up on the sheet on the bulletin board outside the office so we can be sure to have enough food for all! You can also sign up by contacting Pastor Kyle who will make sure your name gets added!

Good Friday Service, April 14, 7 pm

Join us for a Service of Tenebrae on Friday, April 14th, as we enter into the darkest time of the Christian calendar. This will be a somber service of reflection. While we know that death does not have the final word, it is important for us to remember the sacrifice and suffering of Christ.



The deadline for the next SPIRE is Tuesday, March 21st, 2017.

Thank you!

Announcement

Mark Your Calendars!! WPC Women's Association President, Tricia Owen, is pleased to announce the 2017 scheduled dates for their semi-annual rummage/bake sale fundraiser. Their spring rummage/bake sale will be held in Fellowship Hall Thursday-Saturday, April 27-29, 2017. The fall rummage/bake sale will be held in Fellowship Hall Thursday-Saturday, October 26-28, 2017.



Don't forget that Daylight Savings Time begins on March 12th. Be sure to turn your clocks ahead one hour.

Per capita this year is \$50 per member. The money goes directly to Presbytery to cover costs at the Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly. Please consider paying your per capita. On your check, write “per capita” in the memo line and Val will credit your account appropriately. Thanks, Finance Ministry Team



Thanks to everyone who pledged to the work of the church. As of Feb 15th, we have received pledges for \$85,233. We are still about \$25,000 short, so if you haven't turn in your pledge yet, you can use the form below, find one outside the church office, or write your name and amount of pledge on a paper and leave it in Val Gendron's mailbox outside the church office.

Irene Fadden, Stewardship Team

Please return the bottom of this sheet and put it in offering plate or in Val Gendron's mailbox.

Name _____ Do you want envelopes? _____

Amount of Pledge _____ per week / per month / per year

What will you invest in the ministry of Western Presbyterian Church?



St. Patrick's Dinner

Saturday, March 11, 2017

Serving 4 pm-7 pm

@ Western Presbyterian Church

“Celebrating our 200th year”

101 East Main Street

Palmyra, NY 14522

Corned Beef, Cabbage, Potatoes and Carrots

Roll w/Butter

Coffee, Tea

Dessert



\$10.00 for adults \$9.00 Seniors/Children

Gluten Free & Dairy Free Available

Pre-sale tickets may be purchased by calling the church office

315-597-5171

All proceeds for this dinner will go to support our local....

GOOD NEIGHBOR FUND

which helps our community during a time of need.

Mission Team would like you to take a peek at our bulletin board outside of fellowship hall. On display, there are some wonderful notes from recipients, donors, and local church friends of various WPC mission projects.

Below are two examples of how God's light is shining in our world.



December 14, 2016

Dear Director:

we are the **Kids Council** from **Poll Mac Primary**. We are donating money to you. We raised money for a field trip and had some left. Here is \$22.00 to be used well. From Branden and Wyatt and Timothy.

Sincerely
Kids Council

Palmyra's Blessing By Calvin Bucknam

A few years ago, a joint need for individual compassion was placed upon this areas churches and ministers. It was becoming a difficult problem and found to need a solution. The clergy needed necessary monies to assist those down on their luck and often in desperate need.

This was the important formation of what is now known as the Good Neighbor Fund. Each church was asked to contribute to this mission through their individual budgets. Many churches did contribute as able and still do to this day; however, the bulk of financing seems to have fallen on mainly two local congregations. The Presbyterian and Reformed churches have donated generously with both monetary and volunteer leadership. Many times, this fund has nearly disappeared; but through divine intervention, it has survived.

I am most proud to say that under John Cook and his wife's leadership, the Good Neighbor Fund seems to be functioning extremely well. Every individual request is given appropriate attention with both emotional and financial need aided promptly and fairly.

Many volunteers, from different walks of life and religious backgrounds, are members of this historical, now newly re-formed committee. Lisa Premyslovsky and I are the Reformed Church's representatives and devote the necessary time, when assistance is needed, and called on by the current chairman. Lisa and I are both proud to serve in assisting local residents when the need arises. Sincerely, Calvin Bucknam

Toddler Schedule

Below is the Schedule for staffing of the Toddler Room during the 10:00 AM Sunday morning service. Thank you in advance for your extremely important mission of providing infant and toddler care. Please arrive about 10-15 minutes early. If you find you are not available on your assigned date, please find a replacement. Many, Many thanks!



FYI – Emily Mc Farlane is available most Sundays to help the adult in the nursery. Snack and a Vacuum (if needed) are in the closet. Let Jody know when we need more snacks Thanks again for your help.

03/05/17	Rena Haigh	315-597-5971
03/12/17	Maxine & Kelly Babcock	315-210-0368
03/19/17	Sue Pringle	315-597-9533
03/26/17	Jan Taylor	315-597-4293
04/02/17	Irene Fadden	585-802-7594
04/09/17	Ruth Dantz	315-597-2143
04/16/17	Jody Pruitt	315-331-3211
04/23/17	Nancy Talma	315-597-5003
04/30/17	Logan & Kelly Babcock	315-210-0368
05/07/17	Carol & Andy Sloan	315-597-5182
05/14/17	Katie Mitchell	315-597-5653
05/21/17	Sue Leonard	315-597-6616



*If anyone or anyone you know is interested in joining the team in providing infant and toddler care during the 10:00am service please contact **Jody Pruitt**, we would love to have you! Also, if you are no longer able to help please let Jody know as well. Thanks CE Team Jody Pruitt 315-331-3211 jody.pruitt@gmail.com



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

March 3	Norma Alsdorf
March 4	Ruth Dantz
March 4	Barbara Pieters
March 5	Lou Callerame
March 11	Eric Chapman
March 16	Shelby Hutton
March 16	Sarah Hutton
March 17	Collin Trapiss
March 18	Cynthia Deys
March 19	Doris Chriswell
March 22	Susan Pringle
March 22	William Bush
March 23	Cory Trapiss
March 26	Kurt Scribner
March 26	Mary Beth LaBerge
March 27	Tricia Owen
March 29	Jacqueline DeBrine
March 31	Walter Lester

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

March 2	James & Jacqueline DeBrine
March 17	Ronald & Barbara Pieters
March 21	Bill & Elaine Hassler

If you are an active member and we have missed your birthday or anniversary, please contact the office at 597-9171 so we can add it to our list next time. If your anniversary or birthday is missing, it means it was not in the Data Base, which is where we get the list.



MARCH 2017

SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
			1 Ash Wednesday 1 pm Mission/Social Concerns 7 pm Service	2 6 pm Bell Choir 7 pm Choir	3	4
5 9 am Fasting & Prayer Parlor	6 4:30 pm CTNS Board 7 pm Fellowship	7 2 pm Deacons	8 9 am to 4 pm Sanctuary Open 6 pm "Fasting" Service 6:30 pm Property 7 pm Christian Ed.	9 6 pm Bell Choir 7 pm Choir	10 5-8 pm CNTS Open House & Art Show FH	11 4-7 pm GNF St. Patrick's Day Dinner FH
12 Communion Sunday Daylight Savings Time Begins	13	14 6-9 pm King's Daughter's FH & Kit. 7 pm Worship	15 9 am to 4 pm Sanctuary Open 6 pm "Fasting" Service 7 pm Finance	16 6 pm Bell Choir 7 pm Choir	17	18
19	20	21 SPIRE DEADLINE	22 9 am to 4 pm Sanctuary Open 6 pm "Fasting" Service	23 6 pm Bell Choir 7 pm Choir	24	25
26	27	28 7 pm Session	29 9 am to 4 pm Sanctuary Open 6 pm "Fasting" Service	30 6 pm Bell Choir 7 pm Choir	31 2-7 pm Blood Drive FH	



APRIL 2017

SUN.	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	SAT.
						1
2	3 4:30 pm CTNS Board 7 pm Fellowship	4 2 pm Deacons	5 9 am to 4 pm Sanctuary Open 1 pm Mission/Social Concerns 6 pm "Fasting" Service	6 6 pm Bell Choir 7 pm Choir	7	8 8-10:30 am Easter Bunny Breakfast FH
9 Palm Sunday	10	11 7 pm Worship	12 9 am to 4 pm Sanctuary Open 6 pm "Fasting" Service 6:30 pm Property 7 pm Christian Ed.	13 Maundy Thursday	14 Good Friday 7 pm Service	15
16 Communion Sunday Easter Sunday No Sunday School	17	18 SPIRE DEADLINE	19 7 pm Finance	20 6 pm Bell Choir 7 pm Choir	21	22 Earth Day
23	24 6-7 pm Set Up Rummage Sale FH	25 6-9 pm King's Daughter's Parlor 6:30-9:30 pm Set Up Rummage Sale 7 pm Session	26 Noon to 5 pm and 6:30-9 pm Set Up Rummage Sale	27 9 am to 5 pm Rummage Sale 6 pm Bell Choir 7 pm Choir	28 9 am to 5 pm Rummage Sale	29 9 am to 11 am Rummage Sale 11 am to 1 pm Tear Down 6:30 pm Game Night FH
30 Casual Sunday Spring Choral Festival						