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March 2018

Pastor's Perspective – Lent 2018

As I was driving toward RiversEdge the other day, I saw one of those huge flocks of birds moving like a dancing cloud in the sky. This morning I heard birds chirping in the early morning. Both signs of Spring in Illinois. Spring means new and renewed life as migrating birds return to build nests, mate and produce a new generation of birds.

For Christians, Spring or “Lent” is also a time of new and renewed life. We are invited to examine ourselves and our discipleship and to do those things that will draw us closer to Christ so that we may live more like Jesus.

As I grew up in Catholic neighborhoods in St. Louis, I believed that “Lent” was all about sin and self-denial. The focus was upon giving something up for Lent. As I matured as a Christian I began to rethink what I had learned about Lent. As I read the Gospels I do not see Jesus inviting his disciples to deny themselves, I see him inviting them to learn to love their neighbors and to reach out to those whom the world had rejected and ignored. I see him inviting his followers to do as he did. In fact, in Matthew’s account of the life and teachings of Jesus his last words to the disciples are:

Matthew 28:18-20 New International Version (NIV) ¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

He did not invite them or us to focus on how bad we are but to focus on others who need to experience the love of God through learning the Way of Jesus and becoming his disciples. Before we began the season of Lent, I invited all of us to pray for people we know who are not walking with Christ. I invited us to ask The Lord to show us how to share His love with these friends. This, it seems to me, is one way to be faithful this Lent. Lent, Spring, is a time for new and renewed life, not only in nature but in us and in those whose faith has gone dormant or who have never known that God loves them and wants them to experience God’s life-giving love in the fullest.

I pray that this Lent, Spring, will be a time of new and renewed life for all of us and for those around us who need to know that God loves them.

Floyd

March Scriptures and Sermons

March 4, 3rd Lent – Gospel: Matthew 6:5-15, Sermon: “When You Pray”

March 11, 4th Lent – Gospel: Matthew 6:19-24, Sermon: “Where is my Treasure?”

March 18, 5th Lent – Gospel: Matthew 7: 7-12, Sermon: “Ask, Seek and Knock”

March 25, Palm/Passion Sunday – Gospel: Matthew 21:1-17, Sermon: “A Different Kind of King”

March 29, Maundy Thursday – Gospel: Matthew 26:17-35, Sermon: “Feast of Life”

I have found that we more fully open ourselves to hear God’s message when we read and pray about the scripture lessons before we come to worship.



'Finding Spring Again' is a free educational grief seminar offered by UnityPoint Hospice-Peoria, to persons experiencing the loss of a loved one, on Thursday, **March 8** from **5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.** at the Methodist Atrium Conference Room ABC in Peoria. Refreshments will be provided. Please RSVP by **March 6** to 309-672-5746.

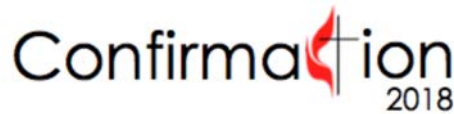


Monthly **Food Pantry** Day is **March 9**. We will have our **King's Closet** upstairs at the Annex. We have clothes, other small items or produce for local people to take and use, if they need it. Bring items all month. It comes in free and goes out free, no charge. Anything left over will be taken to Good Will or South Side Missions.



Dennis Hill is working with ensembles (small groups) for music specials. There is room on the signup sheet for other specials (solos, duets, reading, etc.). Music is a very important part of our worship experience. If you are interested in any of these possibilities, please contact Judy at 822-8770 or 645-6625.

Choir rehearsals will be on Wednesday, **March 14** and **28** at 7:00 p.m. There is plenty of room for new people. If you haven't tried it and don't think you are good enough, come anyway and learn from those who have had experience. This year we will try 5th grade on up. **Submitted by: Judy Schaer, Worship Committee Chair**



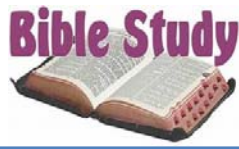
The Confirmation Class will meet at 9:15-10:15 a.m. **every Sunday** until **May 20**, Pentecost Sunday (excluding Easter on *April 1* and Mother's Day on *May 13*). Parents are welcome to observe the class. If you would like to be a part of the class or like more information, you may contact Pastor Floyd at FloydBlackard@outlook.com or call at (217) 556-6414. The class will be studying the basics of the Christian Faith and some of the history and unique emphases of the United Methodist Church.



Palm Sunday, March 25, is a Christian moveable feast that falls on the Sunday before Easter. The feast commemorates Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, an event mentioned in each of the four canonical Gospels. In many Catholic and Episcopal denominations, worship services on Palm Sunday include a procession of the faithful carrying palms, representing the palm branches the crowd scattered in front of Jesus as he rode into Jerusalem.



We will celebrate the resurrection on **Easter Sunday, April 1**, with a special early morning service at 7:30 a.m. followed by a breakfast and then our regular 10:30 a.m. service. We will celebrate Easter by sharing again in the sacrament of Holy Communion remembering how the risen Christ made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of bread.



Sunday Morning classes for all ages at 9:15 a.m. We will be digging deeper into the Bible passage we hear that morning, deeper into what it means to follow Jesus, deeper into how God is at work in our own lives and the world. Please come with questions and a learning spirit. Bring your favorite Bible, or use the ones we have. Let's learn together!



- ◆ Val Huser announced that her daughter Ashley and husband Billy Aman are expecting a baby girl.
- ◆ Matt Kirkham, the Nauman's son-in-law, was one of 3 knighted in the Order of St. George at the Guards NH military ball on Saturday for long and honorable service.
- ◆ Rick & Kathy Brooks welcomed their new grandson Lane Hudson Brooks on February 9.
- ◆ Brenda Story-Philips reports that Sharon Bailey is doing well after surgery. Thanks for the prayers.



Be sure to check our website at riversedgeumc.org where you will find the newsletters, calendars and announcements regularly. If you see pictures that you are in and would like them removed, please let Judy Schaer know. The committee wanted pictures to depict the life of our church. Scan the QR code (Quick Response Code) at the end of the newsletter with your smart phone to easily access our website.

We have put up new Welcome signs inside the church entrances in addition to the directional signs. The signs on the front and back doors and in the restroom stalls will be changed monthly to inform you of current events happening at the church. **Submitted by: Communications Committee**



The Midwest Mission Distribution Center of the United Methodist Church is helping to supply clean-up buckets for the record THREE hurricanes. Any donations would be greatly appreciated. Supplies bought through DollarDays (<https://www.dollardays.com/midwestmission/wishlist.html>) would be the best way to donate, as they are shipped directly to MMDC at the Center's bulk prices. Monetary donations may be sent to:

MMDC, P.O. Box 56, 1022 New City Road, Chatham, IL 62629
www.midwestmissiondc.org | office@midwestmissiondc.org



John Schaer is still collecting **ALUMINUM CANS** to recycle. CANS only, no aluminum disposable pans or other items. You may leave them in the entry area of the river side of the church or call John at 822-8770 if you would like him to pick them up. Once he gets a truck load, he will take them to the recycle center. Not only will this help the earth, but the money will go to the Church account.



OUR MISSION: Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

This is the core of who we are and why we exist. We are disciples of Jesus Christ who are making disciples for Jesus Christ.

In Matthew 28:18-20 Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

We hope and pray that you will consider joining us on this wonderful adventure of Christian faith!

OUR VISION: Our vision is to meet the physical and spiritual needs of our neighbors through our witness, welcome and nurture.

This is the vision of what we want to be. We are alive in Christ, filled and guided by the Holy Spirit. We are a church family that cares for one another and is concerned about the spiritual and physical needs of our neighbors.

We witness to our faith by showing the face of Christ in our everyday lives. We strive to live according to Christ's teachings. We reach out to the community through our Food Pantry and support of local schools. We spread God's love to the world by supporting missions that provide disaster relief in the Americas, help children and families at Chaddock Children's Home, and teach children at a United Methodist school in Liberia.

We welcome all people to join us in the journey of Christian faith and Christian living. A central part of who we are is that we are a worshipping community of believers. Regular worship reminds us who we are and whose we are. We are disciples of Jesus Christ, who are loved by God as children of God. We all need to be touched and blessed by God's love and mercy offered to us in Jesus Christ.

We make disciples of Jesus Christ through our nurture. We offer opportunities for children, youth, and adults to grow in their faith through worship, study, and service.

OUR MOTTO: The Church That Cares

We strive to be a group of people who truly care for others. Our congregation provides meals for families after a funeral service. We pray for one another in times of joy and sorrow. We support our mission work through our annual Rummage sale. We help children and families in our community through our Food Pantry and support of the Weekend Snack Pack program. We touch lives in our community and around the world.

Submitted by: Randy Waldrip

**Thank You
so much!**

Russ Vance says: "Thank you all for your prayers, cards, visits, flowers, etc and, if you don't mind, keep it up! Especially prayers for Diane.

Orda Doty would like to thank everyone for your prayers and cards that have been sent during the past few weeks. Your support has meant so much and is greatly appreciated.



The last week of March is the week we call "Holy Week." It begins with "Palm Sunday" which calls us to remember how Jesus entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey as predicted by the Prophets. Those with him and others who were anxious for the coming of the promised Messiah who would establish a new Kingdom and restore the glory of Jerusalem, greeted him with shouts of joy. Jesus, however did not come to fulfil their hope of an earthly kingdom, but God's plan for a new kingdom that would ultimately bind all people into one family.

On Thursday of that week (March 29, this year), Jesus had his final meal with his disciples before he was to be arrested and executed. We will remember that evening on which Jesus instituted the sacrament we call The Lord's Supper or Holy Communion. We will share the sacrament as we gather around tables as the Disciples did and remember the words of Jesus.

Good Friday is commemorated as the day that Jesus was executed on the cross. Since it has not been your tradition to hold a special service on Good Friday, we will not have one. I do encourage you to read and meditate on the account of the Crucifixion found in Matthew 26 and 27 as you remember Our Lord's suffering and death.

We will celebrate the resurrection on Sunday, April 1, with a special early morning service at 7:30 a.m. followed by a breakfast and then our regular 10:30 a.m. service. We will celebrate Easter by sharing again in the sacrament of Holy Communion remembering how the risen Christ made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of bread.

I pray that remembering the events of Jesus' final week before his death and resurrection will help you draw closer to Christ.

Submitted by: Pastor Floyd



10:30 a.m. **WORSHIP SERVICE HELPERS** are still needed. If you are interested in ushering, reading scripture, greeting or being an acolyte, please sign up on the Schedule Sheet in the back of the sanctuary.

We still need one **SUNDAY SCHOOL** teacher. We are working towards having two teachers per class. Please talk with Gale Allen or April Nauman if you'd like to help. Please help us raise the next generation of Christians.

The **PRAISE AND WORSHIP TEAM** is looking for singers and musicians. If you have any interest learning more, please contact Jarrod Doty at church, by email at jdoty69@gmail.com or by phone at 309.657.8904.

If you, or anyone you know, want to fill in on the **ORGAN** or **PIANO** occasionally, please text or call Carla Doty at 657-8903 or email at dougdoty@aol.com.

Submitted by: Judy Schaer, Worship Committee Chair

MARCH 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4 9:15 a.m. - 10:15 a.m. Confirmation Class 5:30 p.m. O.U.R Buzz & Dianne's	5 7:00 p.m. Trustees	6	7	8 5:30 p.m.— 7:30 p.m. Find- ing Spring Again Methodist Atrium Conf. Room ABC Peoria	9 9:00a.m.— 11:00 a.m. Food Pantry/ King's Closet	10
11 9:15 a.m. - 10:15 a.m. Confirmation Class	12	13 7:00 p.m. Ad Council	14 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice	15	16	17
18 9:15 a.m. - 10:15 a.m. Confirmation Class	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 9:15 a.m. - 10:15 a.m. Confirmation Class Palm Sunday	26	27	28 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice	29 7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service	30	31



Our Motto "The Church That Cares"

Our Mission

"Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."

OUR VISION

"Our vision is to meet the physical and spiritual needs of our neighbors through our witness, welcome and nurture ."

WORSHIP SERVICES:

Sunday 8 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

NURSERY:

Sunday 8-11:45 a.m. (infant-kindergarten)

SUNDAY SCHOOL GROUPS : 9:15-10:15 a.m.

D.O.C.K. (Preschool – 5th grade)

Youth (grades 6 – 12)

Sunday Morning (All Ages)

CHOIR PRACTICE: (7th grade-Adult)

September through May

7 p.m. Wednesday evenings, as announced

O.U.R.: Outwardly Upwardly Righteously

(first Sunday of month)



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