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March 2017

A Note from your Pastor:

The forty day season of Lent begins on March 1st. Although Lent starts later this year, it still caught me by surprise. I think this is one of the main points of Lent. It catches us by surprise because it is a season of self-denial. We don't look forward to telling ourselves, "No," so we don't mark it on the calendar as quickly as we do birthdays or anniversaries.

Now, the obvious question is, "Why do we need a season for telling ourselves 'No'?" Why, indeed?

Throughout the Hebrew Bible, what many call the Old Testament, the warnings against idolatry are numerous. What does this have to do with us today? Very few, if any of us, carve statues out of wood and bow to them.

We need to look beyond the worship of totems to the worship of things that are not God, and sadly, we in this society worship many things that are NOT God. The most pervasive thing we worship that isn't God is... ourselves. Our culture continues to drive us towards valuing our wants, our freedoms, our desires, over anything else. I'm guilty of this. I use an I-Phone and an I-Pad. Neither of these devices are designed for sharing. It's MY fingerprint that unlocks it. MY apps are installed. It's MY device.

To counter this sneaky aspect of our culture, we take 40 days to be counter cultural. We take 40 days to say "No" to ourselves and "Yes" to God and others. We don't give up things to make us look like heroes. We give up those things which influence us to stay focused on ourselves instead of God. While I might want to give up asparagus for Lent, it will do no one any good, since I don't eat it anyway.

So, I challenge all of us: Which actions or things keep the focus on ourselves rather than others? Is it the desire to win every argument? Is it money? Is it status? Is it cookies? Pray, and ask God for guidance. Be courageous, and give up something that will have a meaningful impact on your walk with Christ.

One of the toughest things to do, though, is to rely on others to help you make this change. This, in and of itself, might be the thing most of us need to practice this Lent. Stop trying to take care of everything on our own. Instead, be ready to ask for, and RECEIVE, help.

May we all experience a blessed Lent.

Blessings!
Pastor Andy



- ◆ Brenda Story stated that Tracy Story's Uncle David received a new heart and is doing well with no rejection presently. He will be on a ventilator in a state of sleep for the next few days and will be in the hospital for the next few weeks. Thanks to everyone for their prayers and please continue as there can be complications.
- ◆ Trent & Nikki Delinski are expecting a baby in September (Doug & Dianna Delinski will be grandparents again).
- ◆ Bob Miller has been called back to work at Caterpillar after a long layoff. He started on Monday, February 13.
- ◆ Jeanne Brennan has finally found a doctor who knows what has happened to her voice and how to fix it. With meds and voice therapy, she should be able to sing by Easter!



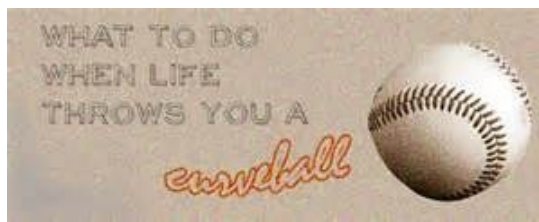
OUR PRECIOUS LIFE (monthly group for widows) is going on hiatus while Pastor Kristi is gone, unless there is a lay person who would want to partner with Pastor Andy to get the group going again.

Adult group **DIGGING DEEPER** will be on **Sunday mornings** at 9:15a.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!

KEEPING THE FLAME ALIVE will meet on the third Monday of the month (**March 20**) at 8:30 a.m. at a **Bob Evans**. Participants will need to bring their daily devotionals and their bibles. If you have questions please contact Pastor Andy via e-mail (try2hopp@msn.com) or cell (309-883-1422).



John Schaer is still collecting **ALUMINUM CANS** to recycle. Aluminum CANS only, no aluminum disposable pans or other items. If you have any, you may leave them in the entry area of the river side of the church. You may 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.



CURVE BALLS: Learn to hit curve balls, life rarely pitches straight. God can teach you how to swing. This group is open for anyone who would like to join. We meet on **March 13** and **27** at 7:00 p.m. If you are interested in joining us or want more information, please contact Pastor Andy Hopp via e-mail (try2hopp@msn.com) or cell (309-883-1422).



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 Pastor Andy, 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.

There is still room for more **CHOIR** participants. We meet on Wednesday evenings (to be announced) at 7pm. Anyone from 7th grade up to 100 years is invited to join us. If you think that you don't sing well enough and would like to try it anyway, please come. Other members will guide you along.

Also, we welcome special numbers: solos, duets (or any number of individuals), instrumentals and other forms of worship. Music plays a very important role in our worship experience. This is an opportunity to serve. You will feel blessed. Remember that there is **JOY IN SERVING JESUS**.

Submitted by: Judy Schaer, Worship Committee Chair



Be sure to check out 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 Pastor Andy or Judy Schaer know. The committee wanted pictures to depict the life of our church. **Submitted by: Communications Committee**



Check out our new QR code (Quick Response Code) at the end of the newsletter. You can use your smart phone to scan the code and check out our website. **Submitted by: Communications Committee**

CHURCH EQUIPMENT POLICY

Due to potential damage to our church equipment, our kitchen equipment needs to stay in our kitchen. The white tables can't leave the church property, and the white chairs can't leave the church building. We have metal chairs available. If you want to borrow them, please contact the church office.



UPDATING RECORDS

If you would like your name added to the birthday list, have had an email address change or would like your email address added to any of the church email groups (1-receive announcements & newsletter, 2-receive prayer requests). See Judy, email at Jude187@msn.com or call at 822-8770. Also, check with other family members.



Every time we have **Food Pantry Day**, 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.



WHAT IS SAINT PATRICK'S DAY?



In the Christian faith, Saint Patrick's Day honors the 5th century missionary to Ireland. It is celebrated by different branches of the Church, including in Roman Catholicism and in Protestant Christianity. Saint Patrick's Day is observed on March 17, and because of its Irish roots, the holiday often incorporates elements of Irish culture such as the color green as well as traditional Irish foods.

Saint Patrick (387-461 AD) was an English (or perhaps Scottish) missionary to Ireland. Scholars agree that he is a historical figure and that he converted many of the pagans on the island to Christianity, but many dismiss the legend that has developed about him.

The feast day of Saint Patrick has been observed in Ireland on March 17 for hundreds of years. The date falls during the fasting season of Lent, but on Saint Patrick's Day the prohibitions against eating meat were lifted, and the Irish would celebrate their patron saint with dancing, drinking, and feasting on the traditional meal of Irish bacon and cabbage. <http://www.religionfacts.com/st-patricks-day>

March 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 7 p.m. Ash Wed. Service	2	3	4
5 O.U.R. 5:30 p.m. @ the Schaefer's	6 7 p.m. Trustees	7	8 7 p.m. Choir Rehearsal	9 4:30 p.m. Communications Committee	10 9-11 a.m. Food Pantry & Kings Closet	11
12 Daylight Saving Time begins	13 7 p.m. Curve Balls Support Group	14 7 p.m. Ad Council	15	16	17	18
19	20 8:30 a.m. Keeping the Flame Alive (at Bob Evans)	21 7 p.m. Nomina- tions\Lay Leadership	22	23	24	25
26	27 7 p.m. Curve Balls Support Group	28	29	30	31	

OUR MOTTO: "The Church That Cares"

OUR MISSION (our purpose): "Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ through our welcome, worship, and witness."

OUR VISION (what we hope to be): "We are a community of caring people striving to meet the spiritual and physical needs of our neighbors."

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)
Digging Deeper (Adults)

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)

CURVE BALLS SUPPORT GROUP:
7 p.m. 2nd & 4th Mondays

KEEPING THE FLAME ALIVE:
8:30 a.m. 3rd Monday

MAY LOVE *and* LAUGHTER
LIGHT YOUR DAYS,

— *and warm your heart and home.* —

MAY GOOD AND FAITHFUL FRIENDS BE YOURS,

WHEREVER YOU MAY ROAM.



MAY PEACE AND PLENTY BLESS YOUR WORLD
WITH JOY THAT LONG ENDURES.



MAY ALL LIFE'S PASSING SEASONS
— *bring the best to you and yours!* —



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