

# Eastminster Eagle

Volume 41, Issue 2

February 2024

Dear Eastminster Members and Friends,

February ushers in a significant season of the church: Lent. Lent is related to the word lengthen, in reference to the lengthening of the days in this part of the year. Each day in the season of Lent offers more light than the last. Lent is a season of preparation for Easter, the celebration of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is marked by reflection on one's sins, repentance (the desire to change), fasting (weaning ourselves from our dependence on the world), and progress in one's spiritual journey following Jesus.

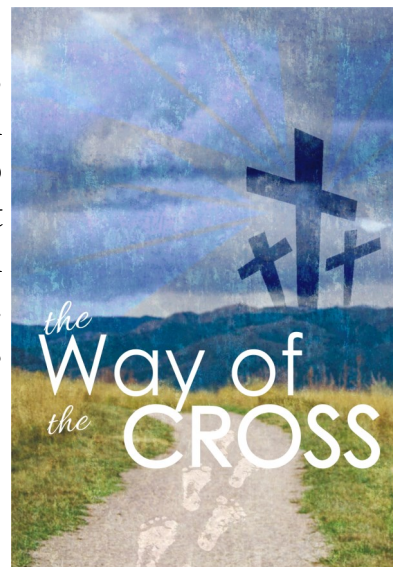
In January we focused on eight activities that will aid us individually and as a congregation to become overflowing cups of God's life: hearing, believing, learning, developing, giving, serving, engaging, and inviting. During Lent we will particularly work on learning the teachings of Jesus and developing a prayerful relationship with God. In his life, teachings, death, and resurrection Jesus shows us how to have a relationship with God the Father (his and ours, too!) and what that relationship looks like.

And what does that relationship look like? A cross. Not only does Jesus die on a cross, but he also gives us one of our own to bear. The cross is indispensable to our way to God. On his death on the cross, Jesus opens the way to God through the forgiveness of our sins. Through forgiveness the way to God is open for all who choose to walk it...but walk it we must. Jesus not only makes the way, but he also shows us the way, and leads us on the way. Our Lenten sermon series will be called "The Way of the Cross."

I want to encourage you to not only attend all the services leading up to Easter, but to invite a friend to join you on this journey. There are six Sundays of Lent leading up to Easter. It begins on February 18th. Consider praying right now for God to show you whom you should invite to join you. Consider also offering to pick them up on Sundays. The Way of the Cross is no cakewalk, but the good news is that we do not have to walk it alone.

With much love,

Pastor Paul



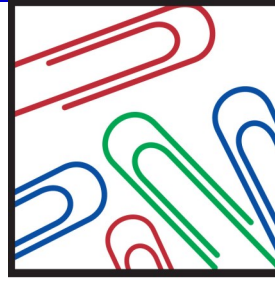


## *PANCAKES, FUN, AND MORE*

Our annual Shove Tuesday Pancake Supper is on February 13th this year. The choir will be serving pancakes to raise funds for the Guest Musicians Fund. This fund helps enhance our worship service by allowing us to invite guest musicians from time to time. The cost is \$5.00 per person or \$20.00 per family. Your generous donation above that amount is greatly appreciated and will be a huge help towards inviting guest musicians to enhance our worship. Game Master Katie Karlen has planned contests for everyone to participate in, and there will be prizes. It's an excellent opportunity for fellowship with members in a relaxed setting while enjoying your pancakes.

Please mark your calendars for Shove Tuesday, February 13th, from 5:30-7pm in the Fellowship Hall.

If you cannot make it to the event, you can still donate online at [Eastminster-dallas.org](http://Eastminster-dallas.org). Please use the donate drop-down menu and select Guest Musician's Fund.



# Office Hours

## 2024 OFFICE HOURS

Monday & Wednesday: 9 am—4 p.m.

Tuesday & Thursday: 9 a.m.—2 p.m.

The office is closed on Friday.

### **February 4 and 11 Sermons and Scripture**

2-4: Isaiah 40:21-31, Mark 1:29-39  
"The Power to Serve"

2-11: 2 kings 2:1-12, Mark 9:2-9  
"Picking Up the Mantle"

### **Sermon series for Lent though Easter: "The Way of the Cross"**

2-18: Mark 1:9-15, 1 Peter 3:18-22  
"Jesus Paves the Way"

2-25: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16, Mark 8:31-38, "You Will Only Need One Piece of Luggage"

3-3: John 2:13-22, 1 Corinthians 1:18-25,  
"It's a Foolish Way"

3-10: Ephesians 2:1-10, John 3:14-21,  
"There's Grace Along the Way"

3-17: Jeremiah 31:31-34, John 12:20-33,  
"The Way Goes Up...Eventually"

3-24: Mark 11:1-11, Mark 15:16-27, "It's Not the World's Way"

3-31: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11, Mark 16:1-8,  
"It Looks Like a Dead End"

From The Wilkinson Center –

On December 16, The Wilkinson Center once again held their annual Christmas Toy Distribution at Eastminster. Laura Ingram, for the Center, sends a big “Thank You” to Eastminster for allowing them to use the space to distribute 2,000 toys, gift cards, and bicycles to 450 kids.



### *Spring Training for Christians*

The word Lent comes from Middle English and German words for springtime. In light of the start of baseball season, some people call the pre-Easter season “spring training for Christians.” This fresh perspective moves away from the flawed understanding that Lent must be somber, or that giving something up for Lent is punishment for sin or a way to earn God’s favor.

As people of faith, we should never take a season off. But every so often — at least once a year! — we do well to examine where we need to get back in shape spiritually. Perhaps we will indeed opt to give something up: that swearing habit, sleeping in on

Sundays, or the cost of a weekly treat so we can donate the money instead. Or maybe we’ll take on something new for Lent: a Bible study, prayer routine or service project.

Hebrews describes spiritual discipline as challenging in the moment but yielding righteousness later. The writer urges us, “Lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees ... so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed” (12:11-13, ESV). May the spring training of Lent strengthen and heal us all.



At some point during Lent we usually sing the hymn "Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days" in our *Glory To God*

hymnal page 166.

Easter is a moveable celebration that does not take place on the same dates every year, as do Christmas and Epiphany. Easter is determined by the lunar calendar, and therefore, the timing of other observances like Lent and Pentecost are dependent on Easter. This year, Easter Sunday falls on March 31st, so Ash Wednesday will be on February 14, which is forty days before Easter minus Sundays.

The hymn "Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days" by Claudia Frances Ibotson Hernaman is typically sung during Ash Wednesday services, or throughout the Lenten season. Eastminster usually sings it on the first Sunday of Lent. This year, we will celebrate the Imposition of the Ashes near the end of the 1st Sunday of Lent service, February 18.

The number forty holds special biblical significance. For instance, it rained for forty days and nights when the earth was flooded, and Noah waited an additional forty days before opening the window of the Ark. Israel wandered in the desert for forty years and Christ was seen on earth for forty days following his resurrection. In the case of Lent, Christ's forty days in the wilderness serve as the primary model for the forty days of the season of Lent.

Claudia Hernaman (1838-1898) was born in Surrey, England, and passed away in Brussels, Belgium. She was the daughter of an

Anglican minister and later married a minister who also served as a school inspector. One of the many women hymn writers of the 19th century, she was particularly devoted to religious education for children. She wrote 150 hymns in various collections, including some that she translated from Latin.

"Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days" was first published in *A Child's Book of Praise; A Manual for Devotion in Simple Verse* in 1873. Despite its publication, the hymn was not included in hymnals until the mid-twentieth century when it was added to the *Irish Church Hymnal* in 1960 and *Hymns for Church and School* in 1964. By the 1970s, "Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days" had become a standard hymn in most hymnals in the United States. The hymn is based on the account of Jesus' temptation found in Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:12-13, and Luke 4:1-13.

Like many other hymns, Christ's life serves as a model for us to face temptation. The first two lines of each stanza focus on how Christ responded when he encountered temptation, while the last two lines encourage Christians to imitate Christ's example. This pattern is commonly found in children's hymns dating back to the days of Isaac Watts. However, it also resonates with adult believers.

Lord, who throughout these forty days  
for us didst fast and pray, teach us with  
thee to mourn our sins And close by  
thee to stay. Amen!

# Puzzle!

After solving the equations, write the words on the correct numbered lines below. Complete Ephesians 1:3 (NIV) to discover how God shows his great love for us.

$14 - 7 =$  \_\_\_ Father  
 $10 + 9 =$  \_\_\_ heavenly  
 $9 + 9 =$  \_\_\_ the  
 $12 + 12 =$  \_\_\_ blessing  
 $2 - 1 =$  \_\_\_ Praise  
 $7 + 7 =$  \_\_\_ has  
 $11 + 11 =$  \_\_\_ every  
 $13 + 13 =$  \_\_\_ Christ  
 $8 + 8 =$  \_\_\_ us  
 $10 + 10 =$  \_\_\_ realms  
 $8 + 9 =$  \_\_\_ in  
 $5 + 5 =$  \_\_\_ Lord  
 $10 + 11 =$  \_\_\_ with

$10 + 15 =$  \_\_\_ in  
 $10 - 5 =$  \_\_\_ God  
 $6 - 3 =$  \_\_\_ to  
 $12 - 6 =$  \_\_\_ and  
 $6 + 6 =$  \_\_\_ Christ  
 $18 - 9 =$  \_\_\_ our  
 $22 - 11 =$  \_\_\_ Jesus  
 $1 + 1 =$  \_\_\_ be  
 $7 + 6 =$  \_\_\_ who  
 $2 + 2 =$  \_\_\_ the  
 $10 + 5 =$  \_\_\_ blessed  
 $4 + 4 =$  \_\_\_ of  
 $10 + 13 =$  \_\_\_ spiritual

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22		
23	24	25	26		

Ephesians 1:3, NIV

“Don’t let me ever think, dear God, that I was anything but the instrument for your story — just like the typewriter was mine.”—Flannery O’Connor

“Pray, and let God worry.”  
—Martin Luther

“Where there is love there is life.”—Mahatma Gandhi

“Blessed are the cracked, for they shall let in the light.”  
—Groucho Marx

## *The realm of the impossible*

The wonderful thing about praying is that you leave a world of not being able to do something and enter God’s realm, where everything is possible. He specializes in the impossible. Nothing is too great for his almighty power. Nothing is too small for his love. —Corrie ten Boom

Answer: Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. Ephesians 1:3, NIV



### *God-shaped hole*

Have you ever neared the completion of a jigsaw puzzle, only to discover

that a piece or two is missing? That's an apt visual for what it's like to live without God. Blaise Pascal, a 17th-century philosopher, observed: "There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of each man which cannot be satisfied by any created thing but only by God the Creator, made known through Jesus Christ."

Centuries earlier, St. Augustine proclaimed "Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in thee." And in the Old Testament, the writer of Ecclesiastes expounded on the meaninglessness of earthly striving and material pursuits. Only God's Spirit can fill our emptiness and satisfy our eternal longings.

"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full," says Jesus in John 10:10 (NIV). He alone provides the solution for emptiness. What comfort to be filled with — and to find our fulfillment in — our Savior!

### *Invaluable!*

"The kingdom of heaven," said Jesus, "is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it" (Matthew 13:45-46, NRSV).

In 2021, the Good News Network reported that a crab fisherman in Thailand stumbled upon a valuable Melo pearl while cutting up a snail for lunch. In wonder, he brought it to his brother to verify the discovery. "My family had been fishing for generations," said Prasarnphon Phunwan, "but I believe our fate is about to change because of my lunch." Several months prior, another fisherman had been offered \$351,000 for a similar pearl.

Likewise, God's priceless love immeasurably alters our eternal fate. If we fully comprehended the value of that love, we'd give up everything to obtain it. But the greater wonder is that we don't have to buy it. God gives it to us as a gift! Whether we seemed to encounter Jesus by chance or someone joyfully shared the Gospel with us, our Savior is the merchant who "sold all that he had" — even his life. So priceless is salvation! So valuable are we!

—Heidi Hyland Mann



### *Open invitation*

Come, sinners, to the gospel feast,  
Let every soul be Jesus' guest;  
Ye need not be one left behind,  
For God hath bidden all humankind.

Sent by my Lord, on you I call;  
The invitation is to all:

Come, all the world; come, sinner, thou!  
All things in Christ are ready now.

Come, all ye souls by sin oppressed,  
Ye restless wanderers after rest,  
Ye poor, and maimed, and halt, and blind, In  
Christ a hearty welcome find.

—Charles Wesley (18th century)

### *Learning to forgive*

Forgiveness is great in theory, and it's a wonderful blessing to receive. But granting forgiveness can be another story. As C.S. Lewis said, "Everybody says forgiveness is a lovely idea until they have something to forgive." Likewise, forgiveness doesn't simply happen over time, as forgetting often does. Instead, it's "an act of volition," said Simon Wiesenthal, "and only the sufferer is qualified to make the decision."

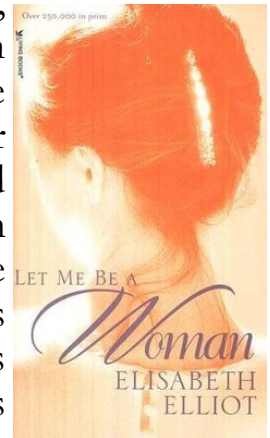
Because forgiveness has many spiritual, emotional and even physical benefits, the secular world is taking notice. Colleges now offer classes about forgiveness skills and strategies. "You practically never hear sermons on forgiveness that are practical and give clear instructions on how to approach it," Professor Robert Enright tells the Washington Post.

Graduate student Shyanne Sporrer says a forgiveness class helped her realize the danger of holding grudges. "Forgiving does not mean you are giving up power," she says.

"On the contrary, when you forgive, you are the person who is in control. By forgiving, you can empower yourself to move forward from the anger and resentment to be a better version of yourself."

### *Ground rules for love*

In *Let Me Be a Woman*, missionary Elisabeth Elliot writes about the "ground rules" for "how this thing called love really works — in a marriage, in the world." Her list reflects many of the principles found in 1 Corinthians 13, the Bible's love chapter.



This love of which I speak is slow to lose patience. It looks for a way of being constructive.

Love is not possessive.

Love is not anxious to impress, nor does it cherish inflated ideas of its own ideas.

Love has good manners and does not pursue selfish advantage.

Love is not touchy.

Love does not keep account of evil or gloat over the wickedness of other people. On the contrary, it is glad ... when truth prevails.

Love knows no limits to its endurance, no end to its trust, no fading of its hope; it can outlast anything. It is, in fact, the one thing that stands when all else has fallen.



Use one word (perhaps in different forms) for all the blanks to complete this Scripture passage: “Dear friends, let us \_\_\_\_ one another, for \_\_\_\_ comes from God. Everyone who \_\_\_\_ has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not \_\_\_\_ does not know God, because God is \_\_\_\_.”

- A. believe    B. help  
C. love        D. forgive

(Answer: C (See 1 John 4:7-8, NIV).)



What did one sheep say to the other?  
I love ewe!

And how did the other sheep respond?  
You're not so baaa-d yourself.

Why do skunks love Valentine's Day?  
They are very scent-imental creatures.

What did the enamored deer say?  
I'm very fawn-ed of you!

What question did the penguin ask on February 14?

Waddle I do without you?

What do you call two birds in love?  
Tweetharts!

What did one bee say to the other?  
I love bee-ing with you, honey!

## Scripture Readings for February

1 Gen. 23:1-20	11 Mal. 4:1-6	21 Gen. 37:25-36
2 Gen. 24:1-27	12 Prov. 27:1-6, 10-12	22 1 Cor. 2:14-3:15
3 Gen. 24:28-38, 49-51	13 Prov. 30:1-4, 24-33	23 1 Cor. 3:16-23
4 Gen. 24:50-67	14 Amos 5:6-15	24 1 Cor. 4:1-7
5 Gen. 25:19-34	15 Hab. 3:1-18	25 Rom. 6:3-14
6 Gen. 26:1-6, 12-33	16 Ezek. 18:1-4, 25-32	26 1 Cor. 4:8-21
7 Gen. 27:1-29	17 Ezek. 39:21-29	27 1 Cor. 5:1-8
8 Gen. 27:30-45	18 Dan. 9:3-10	28 1 Cor. 5:9-6:11
9 Gen. 27:46-28:4, 10-22	19 Gen. 37:1-11	29 1 Cor. 6:12-20
10 Gen. 29:1-20	20 Gen. 37:12-24	



## Spring training for Christians

The word Lent comes from Middle English and German words for springtime. In light of the start of baseball season, some people call the pre-Easter season “spring training for Christians.” This fresh perspective moves away from the flawed understanding that Lent must be somber, or that giving something up for Lent is punishment for sin or a way to earn God’s favor.

As people of faith, we should never take a season off. But every so often — at least once a year! — we do well to examine where we need to get back in shape spiritually. Perhaps we will indeed opt to give something up: that swearing habit, sleeping in on Sundays, or the cost of a weekly treat so we can donate the money instead. Or maybe we’ll take on something new for Lent: a Bible study, prayer routine or service project.

Hebrews describes spiritual discipline as challenging in the moment but yielding righteousness later. The writer urges us, “Lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees ... so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed” (12:11-13, ESV). May the spring training of Lent strengthen and heal us all.



## A prayer for Lent

Dear Christ, hasten to me. Release me from my sins. Free my arms from the chains of evil, that I may embrace you. Lift the scales of ignorance from my eyes that I may see you. Why do you delay? What are you waiting for? You are my God and my Lord, you are my refuge and strength, you are my glory and my hope. In you I put my trust. Dear Christ, hasten to me.

—Aelred of Rievaulx (12th century)



### *Treasurer time*

The church was in the black by about \$27,000 for 2023 due to the generosity of our members and the careful use of our resources. This calls for a loud “Hallelujah” because we had budgeted a loss of over \$97,000. For a church our size to have a turnaround of this extent is a financial miracle provided by the “One who gives every good and perfect gift” (James 1:17) The detailed financial statements are posted on the Stewardship bulletin board in the hallway just outside the conference room, or they can be emailed to you upon request.

½ of the Eastminster Christmas Joy offering of \$1,152.00 was distributed to the denomination, and the other ½ was allocated to the Saturday Neighborhood Breakfast fund, as approved by the Session.

Our reserves at the Texas Presbyterian Foundation (TPF) continue to grow due to the recovery of the stock market during 2023, our account has recovered much of the losses of 2022. A simple computation of the EPC TPF investment account beginning 2024 (\$190,356.68) divided by the 2024 budgeted loss (\$16,561.42) shows our reserves could last us over 11 years, all other things being equal.

Regarding 2023 pledges, of the \$224,590 that was pledged (20 families made pledges), \$204,752 (91%) was fulfilled and \$19,838 (9%) was not. 45% of the pledging families exceeded their pledges by \$24,742 and 25% of pledging families gave amounts less than their pledges. In 2023, 87% of total giving was from pledges, the other 13% was from plate offerings, generous members, and friends of the church. The rental income from St. Peter’s Anglican church and Face It Counseling provided

important resources to help afford and maintain our property. Looking forward to 2024, there are 20 families with pledges totaling \$231,120, which is 92% of the 2024 budgeted offering of \$252,000. This is the highest percent of the budgeted offering being pledged since we have been calculating this percentage. Having pledges helps the church plan for cash needs each month, I greatly appreciate this planning tool.

2023 financial statistics:

Average monthly giving \$21,883.10

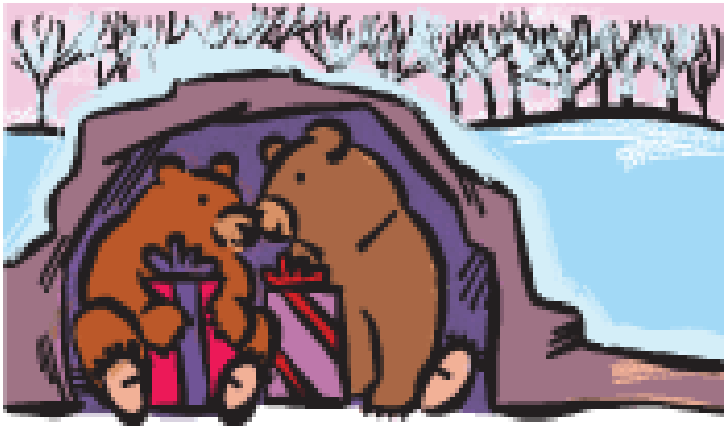
Average monthly total revenue \$23,522.28

Average monthly expenses \$21,257.52

The Lord has given us these resources to use for His glory, if you want to be a part of the many uses for them, get involved in one of the 6 committees and prayerfully consider where He is calling you to serve and how you can share your talents and these gifts with our neighbors. In order for me to be able to report all of this to you the church needs your help, we need money counters for each Sunday, and we need financial officers. Some of our members have offered their gifts in this way for years and let’s face it, we’re not getting any younger! If you feel called to serve in this part of our mission at Eastminster, please come talk to me or let the office know. We will teach you how to count the offerings or perform in a financial position.

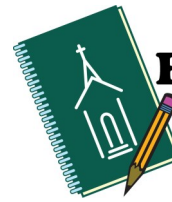
As always, if you have any questions or concerns about Eastminster’s financial situation, please reach out to the Stewardship Committee or me personally by email, [treasurer@eastminsterdallas.org](mailto:treasurer@eastminsterdallas.org) or by phone, 214-402-3152, or

Glory to God,  
Cindy Garrett



## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Jacob Whitley	2/1
Betty Crabtree	2/3
Rhonda Kraft	2/4
Harry Uche	2/5
Matthew Bennett	2/7
Taylor Kraft	2/9
Mark Anderson	2/13
Michael Veloz	2/13
Oscar Veloz	2/14
Susie Fielding	2/23
Tony Bennett	2/24
Kellie Karlen	2/25
Javed Almas	2/25
Wayne Maples	2/27



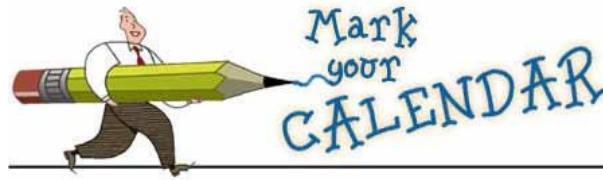
## Eastminster Session

- Chandra Anderson
- Melody Davis
- Philis Knox
- Dick Knox
- Tom Pappas
- Sean Turner
- Fred Watkins
- Patience Uche
- Darlene West



Pastor	Rev. Dr. Paul Burns
Director of Music	Fred P. Watkins
Organist	Melody S. Davis
Administrative Assistant	Chandra Anderson
Hostess/Housekeeper	Minerva Hernandez
Child Care Provider	Betty Crabtree





**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

- Tuesday, February 13—Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper and fundraiser
- Sunday, March 24—Palm Sunday Service
- Thursday, March 28—Maundy Thursday
- Friday, March 29—Good Friday Service, 6:30 p.m.
- Sunday, March 31—Easter Service

**Pleasant Grove Food Pantry for month of December, 2023**



<i>Date</i>	<i>Families</i>	<i>Adults</i>	<i>Seniors</i>	<i>Children</i>	<i>Total Persons</i>	<i>Pounds</i>
4-Dec	187	305	128	214	647	8152
5-Dec	284	572	155	431	1158	13922
11-Dec	201	351	133	212	696	9020
12-Dec	272	575	150	422	1147	13161
18-Dec	194	342	131	207	680	9460
19-Dec	321	614	180	499	1293	16333
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1459</b>	<b>2759</b>	<b>877</b>	<b>1985</b>	<b>5621</b>	<b>70048</b>



**Special dates**

- ◆ African American History Month
- ◆ Transfiguration of Our Lord, February 11
- ◆ Ash Wednesday, February 14
- ◆ Valentine’s Day, February 14
- ◆ Presidents Day, February 19
- ◆ Leap Day, February 29