

Eastminster Eagle

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March 2023

KNOWING WHAT LENT IS ABOUT CAN HELP YOU FIND YOUR GOD PURPOSE

Lent begins six weeks before Easter (which in this Liturgical Year is April 9). Traditionally, Lent is a time set aside for fasting, prayer, and reflection in preparation for the celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is based on Jesus' forty days of fasting, reflection, and meditation, and is one of the most enduring seasons in the Christian liturgical calendar. It is possible that some of Lent's elements date to earlier than the second century. While observed for centuries by Catholic, Orthodox, Lutheran, Anglican, Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Methodist Christians (and certainly others), Lenten traditions and practices have evolved over time. Yet, despite a turbulent church history, to say nothing of the ebb and flow of human migration, the rise of kingdoms, the decline of empires, the essence of

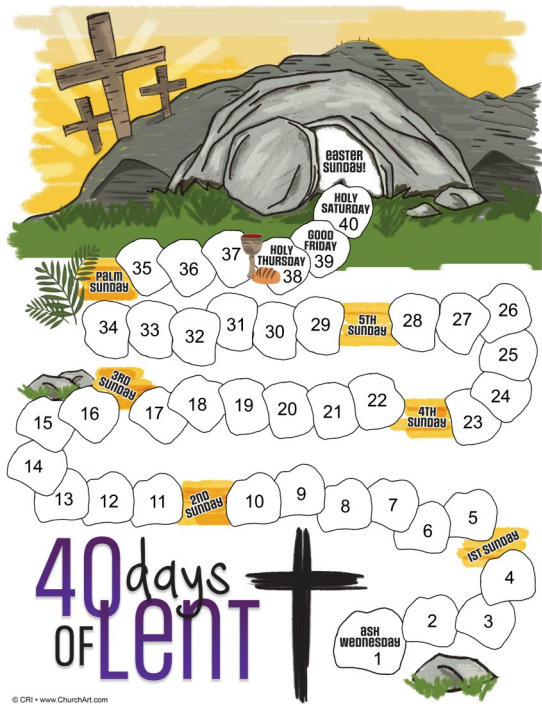
Lent remains largely unchanged from its earliest history. In recent years, Lent has seen a renewal among evangelical Christians who have been historically wary of some of its trappings.

So, how to tell the short version of a very long history? Let's answer a couple of key questions to find out. Where did Lent come from, and how has it changed over the centuries?

Church historians agree that the forty days before Easter became more widespread quickly after the Council of Nicaea in 325AD and based on Jesus' forty days in the wilderness. Fasting has always been a part of Lent, and Council records state that fasting was at first generally observed by new converts as a period of repentance and reflection before baptism at Easter. Nevertheless, Lent observances quickly became widely practiced in 325AD and included a one meal a day only fast. These early practices and the forty-day observance varied area to area and even congregation to congregation. Pope Gregory (590-604) standardized the period of fasting to begin on a Wednesday forty-six days (not to include Sundays) before Easter with a ceremony of ash. Thus, Ash Wednesday was born.

After Nicaea, the practices of Lent were unchanged for centuries. However, in the 800s the strict observance for the fast relaxed and by the 1400s, Christians had begun eating the one meal earlier in the day and adding a smaller meal to keep up their strength. Later the one-meal restriction was lifted, and newer practices developed, e.g., the idea of giving up some luxury or need as a personal sacrifice for the season. Later that idea developed into "giving something up" and continues to this day in some Christians groups.

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The Protestant Reformation dramatically changed the tradition of Lent. While many Protestants, such as the Lutherans, continued to observe Lent, in 1536 the emerging Calvinists following John Calvin's interpretations (one of Presbyterians' forefathers) criticized Lent saying there was no scriptural basis for it. Mostly this was a reaction to the state of the Roman Catholic Church's excesses which led to the Reformation. The 18th and 19th centuries saw the rise of evangelicalism, with many famous evangelists such as Charles Spurgeon, expressing distrust of Lent as a tradition of men and not of the Lord. Following the Reformation, Lent evolved and remained an important part of the lectionary and was voluntary for individual observance. But with the force of church law behind it, it remained a "Sacred Tradition" in the Catholic Church.

In the last hundred years or so, Lent has become less strict in nearly every western tradition. For example, the Catholic Church reduced the number of obligatory fasting days during the season of Lent from six days a week to three, and then down to only Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. In 1966, Pope Paul VI affirmed the American tradition of "fish on Friday." No matter which tradition, the tradition of "giving up something" has remained strong. Even with all the changes over the centuries, Lent is still close to its beginnings nearly 2000 years ago.

Here at Eastminster, we follow the basic traditions in observance of Lent. Using the Lectionary scriptures, we are

taken each Sunday through some aspect of Jesus' life and ministry. Lent is about what Jesus did. We look to the Cross to reflect on our sins and shortcomings as we prepare our hearts to celebrate Christ's Resurrection. We ask God to forgive us our shortcomings. One thing we should do in our self-reflection and meditation is to examine what our purpose here is. Some find their purpose in weekly corporate worship and the special services, such as remembering Jesus's institution of His Supper. Some find it in serving and working with the Saturday Breakfast, some at the Panty, some in singing in the choir, some in helping broadcast the service, some in keeping the paraments clean and appropriate for the liturgical season, and many other things around the church and the community.

Coming together to worship together is what Christians should do, and by doing so, listening to others in our church family and beyond. By praying and meditating, God can speak to us and help us find our purpose in being a follower of Jesus, a member of this family of believers, and beyond.

In order to help with our individual, and our congregational soul searching and reflection on Jesus' life, ministry, and sacrifice, we try to select hymns, songs, and anthems during the Lenten season to help us. During Lent, we don't sing alleluias to keep our focus on the cross, but music that points us toward the cross and resurrection. We don't sing music that lays guilt trips on us for our failures in living up to our beliefs. We do sing music that recognizes Jesus' lessons, actions and sacrifice from his ministry to his death on Good Friday. Pay attention to the words of the hymns, songs and anthems, pray for God to help you find your purpose(s), and pray for our church family as we try to do God's will in this part of His world.

Join with us in person at Eastminster and with other Christian Churches around the world during this season as we seek to be measured up, be encouraged by, and find God's purpose for each us.

Fred

House & Property

What has been done in the month of November:

We had one control board for one of the Fellowship Hall HVAC systems replaced.

DFW Security reset two panic buttons. Thank God for a quiet month.



Operation Deep Clean

Operation: Deep Clean! All hands-on deck on **Saturday, March 25th 9am - Noon.**

We plan to deep clean the sanctuary on that day. Please come and help.

We will dust, clean windows and try and clean all surfaces that normally don't get cleaned on a weekly basis.

Our Workday is scheduled for April 8th 10am-1pm. We will:

- Clean out attic area above the kitchen
- Organize Maintenance closet
- Caulk and paint circular window above kitchen in the attic
- Finish staining Ark
- Finish touch-up painting of hallways, fellowship hall, fellowship restroom
- Adjust exit door to playground
- Replace Exit Sign lights

- Plant flowers in the courtyard and in front of the sanctuary

Thank you, Vicki Thiebaud for donating and planting new flowers in the flower pots at the entrance to the sanctuary.

You can help! Pick up trash that you see in and around the building. Turn off lights if you know you are the last to leave a room. Let the House and Property Committee know if you see something that doesn't look right or is not working properly. Let's all share in the stewardship of God's house.

Blessings,

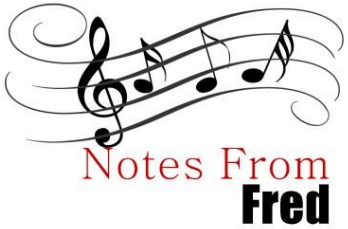
Blair Garrett, Chairman

House and Property Committee:
Bruce Turner and Jo Byrd, Members



IN THE *Pulpit* for March

- 5 – Alex Pappas
- 12 – Service in Liturgy and Music
- 19 – Harry Meissner
- 26 – David Schaefer



Lent is an interesting time. It is both rich and scary. The season is rich because we are invited to dig deep into our individual and congregational faith practices and determine whether we are on the right path as disciples of Jesus Christ. We are encouraged to look at our whole lives, and Eastminster's ministry and missions, and to lay them next to the life of Jesus to see how we as individual followers, and as a congregation, measure up. That is where it might be a little scary.

It is a very difficult exercise to be honest with ourselves. Perhaps that's part of why we need forty days to do it. We need tons of grace, diligence, and discipline to see ourselves as we truly are. In fact, it might be argued that we are incapable of doing this Lenten thing on our own. It is simply beyond our capabilities and certainly beyond our inclinations. The only hope we have is to be gathered up in Jesus as individuals and as a congregation.

Rev. Dr. Derek Weber, Director of Preaching Ministries for the United Methodist Church says: "The season of Lent is essential for those who truly seek to be disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Because a part of what we learn in this time of self-examination is that we are what might be most in need of transformation. We might find that we need to grow in faith and discipleship in the church and that the transformation of the world and helping others begins with building bridges and gathering up rather than with condemnation."

In Matthew 4:1-11, the gospel text for the First Sunday in Lent on February 26, Jesus goes into the wilderness. He was there to meditate on his

coming ministry and examine his purpose in this life. Lent can be where we find our individual purpose as a member of this community and as a Christian. Some find purpose in working the Saturday Morning Breakfast, some in leading worship through the choir, or as liturgist, the food pantry, or the Presbyterian Children's Home and Services, helping keep the church's grounds clean and trimmed, and many other ways members of our community have discovered their purpose and enriched theirs and others' lives.

Join with us in person at Eastminster during this season and beyond as we seek to strengthen our faith, be encouraged by each other and the Spirit, worship God, be gathered up in Jesus, and to find our purpose.

Join us on the Journey of Lent and discover your purpose!



Come join us Sunday, March 5

We welcome one of our own to the pulpit, Alex Pappas. Following worship, there will be a reception to congratulate her on her 2020 ordination here at Eastminster. Unfortunately at that time we could not gather so we are giving her a belated congratulations!

See you there!

Puzzle!

Slow down and uncover this message and Bible verse, using the code below.

A	B	F	G	K	L	O	R	U	V
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D	E	H	I	M	N	S	T	W	Y

W

5	1	3	5	4	4
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4	1	3	3	4	4	2	4	1
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1	3	1	3	2	4	4	1	3
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1	1	4	4	2	3	3	1	3	1
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”

“God doesn’t just give us grace; he gives us Jesus, the Lord of grace.”

—Joni Eareckson Tada

“Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are.”

—John Wooden

“Still round the corner there may wait / A new road or a secret gate.” —J.R.R. Tolkien

“To experience genuine human love, to be part of a community of love is to experience the presence of God.”

—John J. McNeill



L E N T

Answer: We must talk to God and listen for God. “Be still, and know that I am God.” (Psalm 46:10)

Loading Lenten Lunch Bags

This year's Lenten project is a simple one that will go a long way toward spreading Eastminster's fellowship into the community. We're going to stuff bags with non-perishable items to be shared with our guests at the Neighborhood Breakfast and with those stopping by who need a lunch to-go.



"Loading Lenten Lunch Bags" will have two parts. First, collect specific items for the bags. A display in the narthex shows exactly what goodies we'll need. Bring those items to the church between now and March 12, when we'll begin "Phase 2" of the project. It's the most important.

Put March 12 on your calendar now. Plan to meet right after Worship for a – wait for it – "LIVELY LITTLE LUNCHEON TO LOAD LENTEN LUNCH BAGS," where we'll have sandwiches and load the bags.

Listen to announcements and look for an email with more details.



What is One Great Hour of Sharing?

The One Great Hour of Sharing Offering, received during Lent, has a seventy-seven year history as an ecumenical endeavor that now involves nine denominations and Church World Service. Founded in 1946 by Episcopal Bishop Henry Knox Sherrill, a goal was set to raise one million dollars in one hour for World Relief.



Today, projects supported by One Great Hour of Sharing are under way in more than 100 countries, including the United States and Canada. In recent years Presbyterians have given about \$10 million annually.

Allocations within our denomination have changed over the years, but the 202nd General Assembly (1990) voted to accept the current structure:

- ♦ 32 percent to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
- ♦ 32 percent to Self-Development of People
- ♦ 36 percent to the Presbyterian Hunger Program


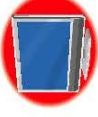



Eastminster's One Great Hour of Sharing receipts will be equally divided between PCHAS (Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services) and the denomination.

There are many opportunities and many different ways to contribute to One Great Hour of Sharing. Included in this newsletter is a One Great Hour of Sharing Calendar with interesting ways to begin your contribution. Truly, the calendar explains not only the needs but the daily reminders just how much we are blessed.

The Offering will be received March 26, April 2, and April 9 Easter Sunday.

Please prayerfully consider this special offering. Thanks be to God.

One Great Hour of Sharing Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>March 19</p> <p>When homes are destroyed by floods, One Great Hour of Sharing can help rebuild them. Give 50 cents for every year your home has remained standing.</p>	<p>20</p> <p>If you had to work today, put in a dollar and thank God you are able to work.</p>	<p>21</p>  <p>“I was thirsty and you gave me drink.” 50 cents for every drink today.</p>	<p>22</p> <p>People are in darkness this day. Give 25 cents for every window in your home.</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Did you eat out this week? \$1.00 for every one who ordered.</p>	<p>24</p> <p>50 cents for each TV and radio in your home.</p> 	<p>25</p> <p>A cow can make all the difference. It provides milk for a family to drink or sell. Give 25 cents for each food item in your home that comes from a cow.</p>
<p>March 26</p> <p>Natural disasters bring with them not just physical damage, but also separation from family and friends. Give a dime for every hour your family or group spends together today.</p>	<p>27</p> <p>“Give us this day our daily bread...” 50¢ for every loaf of bread in your home.</p>	<p>28</p> <p>It’s a good day today! 50 cents rain or shine.</p> 	<p>29</p> <p>A hungry world is a dangerous world. Put in 75 cents today.</p>	<p>30</p> <p>75 cents if you don’t have to wear glasses. 50 cents if you do. What a joy to be able to see!</p>	<p>31</p> <p>Are your clothes nice and clean? 75 cents for your washer, and 75 cents for your dryer.</p>	<p>1</p> <p>Trees help keep the soil in place so homes don’t wash away and people have good soil for planting. Give 10 cents for every plant in your home and every tree in your yard.</p>
<p>2</p> <p>Staying clean helps keep us healthy. People need toothbrushes, soap and shampoos. Give 10 cents for everything you have that helps keep your body clean.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Children are a blessing! \$2.00 for each one in your family.</p> 	<p>4</p> <p>A dime for each between-meal snack you had today.</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Jesus said, “I am the door;” 25 cents for every door in your home.</p>	<p>6</p> <p>A dime for each time you opened the refrigerator today.</p> 	<p>7</p> <p>\$1.00 if you have not been sick this month. Thank God for good health!</p>	<p>8</p> <p>One Great Hour of Sharing helps deliver first aid and medicine – a luxury for many families. Give ten cents for every over-the-counter medication that your home is blessed with.</p>
<p>April 9</p> <p>After a flood, people need mops, gloves, sponges, detergent, and many other things to clean their homes. Give 10 cents for each thing in your house that you clean with.</p>	<p>This Sharing Calendar is a fun way for your family to make an offering to One Great Hour of Sharing while you learn about how contributions help people around the world.</p>	<p>Offering divided between the Denomination and PCHAS. The denomination supports Disaster Assistance, Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People.</p>	<p>Each day, participate with your family in a different activity. Create a pattern of sharing, learning about the needs of others, and deepening the relationship in your home.</p>			



In the Gospels, Jesus raised several people from death. Which of the following was not one of them?

- A. Tabitha
- B. Jairus's daughter
- C. A widow's son
- D. Lazarus

Answer: A (See Acts 9, Mark 5, Luke 7, John 11.)

Lighthearted blessings

May the hinges of your friendship never grow rusty.

May the luck of the Irish lead to happiest heights and the highway you travel be lined with green lights.

As you slide down the banister of life, may the splinters never point the wrong way.

May you be in heaven a full half-hour before the devil knows you're dead!

May good luck be your friend in whatever you do, and may trouble be always a stranger to you.

May the good saints protect you and bless you today, and may troubles ignore you each step of the way.

THE IDEA FOUNDATION



Scripture Readings for March

1 Pss. 5; 147:1–11	12 Pss. 84; 150	23 Pss. 27; 147:12–20
2 Pss. 27; 147:12–20	13 Pss. 119:73–80; 145	24 Pss. 22; 148
3 Pss. 22; 148	14 Pss. 34; 146	25 Pss. 43; 149
4 Pss. 43; 149	15 Pss. 5; 147:1–11	26 Pss. 84; 150
5 Pss. 84; 150	16 Pss. 27; 147:12–20	27 Pss. 119:73–80; 145
6 Pss. 119:73–80; 145	17 Pss. 22; 148	28 Pss. 34; 146
7 Pss. 34; 146	18 Pss. 43; 149	29 Pss. 5; 147:1–11
8 Pss. 5; 147:1–11	19 Pss. 84; 150	30 Pss. 27; 147:12–20
9 Pss. 27; 147:12–20	20 Pss. 119:73–80; 145	31 Pss. 22; 148
10 Pss. 22; 148	21 Pss. 34; 146	
11 Pss. 43; 149	22 Pss. 5; 147:1–11	

Surrender



What a privilege and opportunity it is to utterly come to the end of one's hope — not only to run out of answers but to run out of questions. To be beyond fighting, to come to that suspended animation where we are so confused and so weak that we can neither fight [nor] run.

When you come to the end of yourself, you find the beginning of God. And there and nowhere else, you find the answers you seek. You find fulfillment for the longings of your soul.

—Max Anders

Come be energized

After some time away from the church, author Donald E. Miller returned to the fold. He writes: “One thing that brought me back ... was asking simply: What are the alternatives to the church? Where are the communities that sanction the pursuit of meaning and truth as a legitimate enterprise? that have material and personal resources to assist in this search? that provide regular occasions for confession of failures? that renew and inspire? that provide a setting where children are nurtured? where family members can be buried? where births can be celebrated? where social issues can be debated?”

Miller concludes: “There are a number of institutions that deal with one or several of these questions, but historically the church has demonstrated its ability to energize all of these activities.”



Saturday Morning Breakfasts



February has been another wonderful month of

Saturday morning breakfasts. Despite weather craziness, our numbers have been running in the 40s and 50s. Staffing has been great, especially with Chelli, DD, and Ivan the Terrible's help.

The strong sense of community just keeps getting stronger. We are experiencing small and large moments of grace every Saturday. More families with children are showing up every week. It is quite a sight (and sound) to see Blair or Jim pushing our large plastic toy car full of children around the room. The memory makes me smile every day.

Last week, the conversations ranged from Super Bowl quarterbacks to Andre the Giant. That was all interrupted when KT's neighbor started playing beautiful classical music on the piano.

Outreach is planning an event this month to put together to go bags of food, toiletries, or toys for the children (Kenison's idea!).

Come see for yourself on Saturday from 8-10:00 a.m. or find a way to help if you can't come Saturday. Or just talk to us about how it is going. Eastminster's faith community continues to do God's work in the neighborhood around us!

Tom

Resurrection faith

In spring 2020, while Manhattan pastor Timothy Keller was writing a new book about Easter, the world — and his world — stopped. The coronavirus pandemic ravaged New York City, and Keller received a stage 4 cancer diagnosis. Suddenly the theologian had to confront death head-on and reassess his views on eternal life.

"I realized I only half-believed I was going to die," he tells *The Christian Post*. "In some ways, I also only half-believed in the Resurrection — not intellectually so much, but all the way down deep in my heart. I realized I needed to have a greater, a deeper faith in the Resurrection, both intellectually and mentally."

While undergoing cancer treatments, Keller took a deep dive into historical and scriptural evidence for Easter's main event. He also prayed that the Holy Spirit would make the Resurrection, which can seem abstract, real to his heart.

Facing your own mortality puts earthly things into clear perspective, says the pastor, and it's a wake-up call for Jesus' followers to act. "The Resurrection means that God has not at all given up on the world," Keller writes in *Hope in Times of Fear*. "But beyond that, it gives meaning to suffering and gives hope that through the suffering will come healing. The Resurrection guarantees that this renewal is certain and is also a call for Christians to work now against what is wrong and unjust."



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Jennifer Benson	3/1
Jacqueline Robert	3/9
Jake Davis	3/13
Philis Knox	3/22
Chandra Anderson	3/27
Jim Bender	3/31



MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

Susan and Kevin Karlen	3/2/1996
Michele and Tom Pappas	3/21/2023



Eastminster Session

- Chandra Anderson
- Betty Crabtree
- Blair Garrett
- Philis Knox
- Dick Knox
- Jim Lee
- Tom Pappas
- Charlotte Turner
- Sean Turner
- Fred Watkins



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



HIGHLIGHTS from the STATED SESSION MEETING

February 19, 2023

At the February 19 Stated Meeting, the Session:

- ◆ Enjoyed a meal provided by Tim and Kathy Kreger.
- ◆ Welcomed Guest Moderator, Rev. Mary Stewart Hall, and ratified all previous motions during business conducted in the absence of an ordained moderator.
- ◆ Heard a report from the Treasurer that revenues were up for January. She further noted that the financial markets are continuing to improve.
- ◆ Approved a request from the Stewardship Committee to accept the following Special Offerings: One Great Hour of Sharing, Mothers Day, Fathers Day, and Christmas Joy.
- ◆ Set the date for the financial records review (2022) on 1 April 2023. Reviewers will be Tony Bennett, Jim Lee, Dick Knox, Blair Garrett, and Darlene West.
- ◆ Approved plans for the Lenten Service Project.
- ◆ Approved David Schaefer to be Pulpit Supply for Sunday, 26 March, 2 April, and 9 April. He will also fill pulpit supply for Thursday, 6 April (Maundy Thursday.)
- ◆ Heard a report on the Presbytery meeting from 21 January.
- ◆ Noted that the 2022 Statistical Report has been filed.
- ◆ Heard a report on the meeting with First Presbyterian Church Garland concerning the possibility of shared ministry.



Special dates

- ◆ World Day of Prayer, March 3, 2023
- ◆ Daylight saving time begins, March 12, 2023
- ◆ First day of spring, March 20, 2023