

# NEW HOPE PRESS

FEBRUARY 2016

## LENT

Lent is the period of 40 days prior to Easter, the celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on the Easter Vigil.

The word "lent" comes from the Latin word for "lengthen," because the days of Lent occur during the springtime of the year, when the daylight hours increase. The period consists of 40 days because the number 40 has special biblical significance: Moses and the people of Israel were in the wilderness for 40 years; Jesus was tempted in the desert for 40 days.



Since the days of the early church, in the decades and centuries after the death and Resurrection of Christ, Christians have regarded the period of Lent as a time for repentance and reflection. It is invariably marked by fasting (going without food and/or water for a period of time), by giving up something during Lent (sweets; the sports page), and by taking on such habits that will increase one's devotion to Christ.

Ash Wednesday: February 10th - We begin Lent with a Soup Supper dinner at 5:45 pm, followed by a worship service at 7:00 pm.

Palm Sunday: March 20th - Word and Sacrament at 8:45 am and 11:00 am

Maundy Thursday: Thursday, March 24th - Word and Sacrament at 7:00 pm

Good Friday: Friday, March 25 - Service of the Word at 7:00 pm

Easter Vigil: Saturday, March 26 - Service of Light, Word, Baptism and Eucharist at 7:45 pm

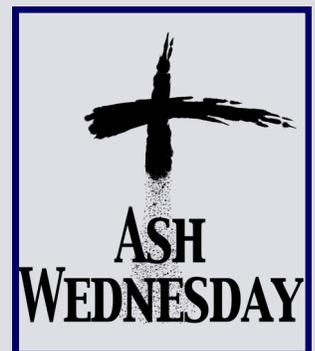
Easter Sunday: Sunday, March 27 - Word and Sacrament at 8:45 and 11:00 am

## *Ash Wednesday*

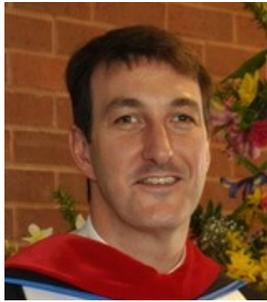
Ash Wednesday February 10th, marks the beginning of Lent, the 40 days of prayer, fasting, and preparation before Easter.

In worship, at 7:00 pm, we will observe the imposition of ashes and share the Lord's Supper. Ashes, placed on the forehead in the sign of the cross, are a powerful symbol of both our own mortality and the need for repentance and forgiveness.

Before worship, the Fellowship Committee will serve a simple soup supper at 5:45 pm, with breads, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and drinks. Cost: \$2.00 per person or \$5.00 per family. Sign-up inserts are available on the information table. Please RSVP by completing a form and placing it the offering plate along with your cash or check made out to NHPC and marked Soup Supper.



## A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR...



One of you recently shared with me this quote from Miriam Beard: "Travel is more than the seeing of sights; it is a change that goes on, deep and permanent, in the ideas of living." That pretty well sums up what we mean by The Journey.

When this was first introduced at the congregational dinner back in November, there was a lot of interest in The Journey, just as there was a lot of uncertainty about what it is. Substitute the word "faith" for "travel" in the above quote, and you might get a sense of what we're after.

Faith is not some static "thing," flat and lifeless. Rather, faith results in "a change that goes on, deep and permanent, in the ideas of living." The Journey is an opportunity to explore what this really means in and for our lives. Faith does not reside in some list of rules or precepts that we pretend to follow, but most of the time ignore. Faith lives in each step we take, each breath we breathe, each word we utter. It's how we react to what is happening around us. The life of faith is never a straight line of certainty and assurance. It's a circuitous route where hope competes with doubt, offering with resistance, and sacrifice with selfishness. Along this winding road, we are told not to fear, but a lot of the time we are afraid anyway. We are told not to worry, but that's often the only thing we consistently do well. Then, there are those occasions we come to church and put on that smile we hope will make everyone else think we have it all together. But still, underneath it all, we question and wonder and worry and fear.

The Journey welcomes all and invites us to bring those questions, that wonder, worry and fear into community with others who are likely asking some of those same questions, wondering how and why this or that could be so, worrying about life, in general, and much of the time, afraid of it all. "What does it mean?" is the question at the heart of The Journey. It's a safe place to explore faith, share joy, wonder aloud, reflect on scripture together for one's own life and live more deeply in the life and presence of God.

For long-time members of the church, The Journey offers spiritual renewal. For those new to our community of faith, it leads to church membership, but goes well beyond that, offering so much more. It offers community, belonging, fellowship and renewal. For those new to the Christian faith, it leads to the waters of baptism and a spiritual home among us as a part of God's family in this place.

Throughout our strategic planning process last year, one of the things our Planning Team heard was the need for us to change our congregational culture to be more relational and caring toward one another. Even this early in the process, we are seeing The Journey move us in that very direction. One person has said about The Journey, "this shows we are trying to care for one another in this church." Another has said of the Celebration of Welcome in worship on January 31st, "in this service I felt like a child of God." What a gift!

Indeed, The Journey is a gift of the church, by the church, for the church. We are blessed to be a part of it and I am excited to see where it takes us from here. God's Spirit is certainly moving among us! As we move into the season of Lent together, may it help to renew us all in the life of God's love for the world.

Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chris".

## *Resources for Lenten Spiritual Practices*

Resources for Lenten Spiritual Practices (for individuals and for families):

Check out the links below for 2016 Lenten calendars and more ideas for spiritual practices for Lent.

*Lent 2016 Daily Calendar from Environmental Ministries and Enough for Everyone Programs*

[http://www.pcusa.org/site\\_media/media/uploads/environment/2016\\_lentfinal.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/environment/2016_lentfinal.pdf)

*A Daily Calendar of Lenten Spiritual Practices*

<https://tracismith.wordpress.com/2016/01/26/its-here-its-here-2016-family-practices-calendar/>

Spiritual Practices for Lent: Repentance, Penance, and Healing

[http://www.pcusa.org/site\\_media/media/uploads/curriculum/pdf/ideas/spiritualpractices.pdf](http://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/curriculum/pdf/ideas/spiritualpractices.pdf)

*Lenten Practices 101*

<http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/curriculum/lenten-practices-101/>

## *Going Flowerless for Lent: Reflections on the Season*



LENT

The Worship, Music & the Arts Committee has been exploring ways to help our worship lift up the meanings of Lent as a season of the liturgical year. The season of Lent is 40 days, a significant number in the Bible and in our liturgy. It rained for 40 days and nights while Noah was on the ark and God was wiping all wickedness from the face of the earth; the children of Israel wandered for 40 years in the wilderness on their way from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the land of Canaan; the Israelites were under the oppression of the Philistines for 40 years before Samson was born; Elijah prepared for ministry for 40 days and nights; Jonah warned the people of Nineveh that they had 40 days in which to repent; Jesus fasted and was tempted for 40 days before he began his public ministry; there are 40 days from Jesus' Resurrection to his Ascension.

Not only does the number 40 have biblical and liturgical significance, but it has biological significance, as well. In weeks, 40 is the length of human fetal development from conception to birth. So, this number is a part of the development of human life.

At Easter, we celebrate the ultimate triumph of life. During Lent, we prepare for that and strive to empty ourselves of everything that gets in the way of living truly as God would have us live. The undeniable Christian confession is that there is no resurrection without death. Lent is the time to come face to face with the fact of our mortality. Penitence and repentance are "churchy" words often associated with Lent. Like Jesus in the wilderness, Lent is a time for us to travel the dry, dusty road to Jerusalem and experience the barrenness of our own particular wilderness that we might, too, know the joy of resurrection life at Easter.

To that end, we will do without our customary flowers in worship during the season of Lent that we might be all the more enlivened by their return on Easter morning. Rather, our Worship, Music & the Arts Committee has other adornments planned to help us observe Lent as a season of walking with Jesus through the wilderness to Jerusalem, the cross and beyond.

## *Recommended Lenten Readings*

**Learning to Walk in the Dark** by Barbara Brown Taylor (New York: HarperCollins, 2014)

*By venturing into caves, underground night clubs, subterranean chapels, and unlit cabins in the woods on nights with no moons, Taylor leads us on a journey of how to find God, or rather how to let God find us, even when it is dark. She leads us to learn how the darkness can allow us to learn much about God, as well as ourselves.*

**The Rebirthing of God** by John Philip Newell (Woodstock: Skylight Paths Publishing, 2014)

*As a scholar, peacemaker and spiritual leader, John Philip Newell invites us to be a part of a new holy birth of sacred living, exploring eight major features of a new birthing of Christianity for the 21st Century.*

**Hoping for More: Having Cancer, Talking Faith and Accepting Grace** by Deanna A. Thompson (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2012)

*A story about one women's journey with breast cancer, from diagnosis through the fight, to emerging on the other side.*

**The Christian Life: A Geography of God** by Michael L. Lindvall (Louisville: Gene Press, 2001)

*Part of the Foundations of Christian Faith series, this volume explores the Christian life as a journey of discovery.*

**This We Believe: Eight Truths Presbyterian Affirm** by Stephen W. Plunkett (Louisville: Geneva Press, 2002)

*An introduction to the Christian faith that helps grapple with what it means to be a Christian in a world of conflicting ideologies and competing claims.*

**40 Days and 40 Nights** by Gail Ramshaw (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2006)

*An insightful devotional booklet for each day of the Lenten season.*

**Called to Be Human: Letters to My Children on Living a Christian Life** by Michael Jenkins (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2009)

*A wonderful compilation of letters written by a Presbyterian seminary professor to his grown children to address some of the "big questions" young adults are asking about life, love and vocation.*

**An Altar in the World** by Barbara Brown Taylor (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2009)

*A series of rich reflections on ways to discover the sacred in the ordinariness of our everyday lives.*

**Tokens of Trust: An Introduction to Christian Belief** by Rowan Williams (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007)

*An exploration of the Nicene and Apostles' Creeds that guides readers through the central elements of the Christian faith.*

**The Worshiping Life** by Lisa Nichols Hickman (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005)

*A series of short essays on the order of worship which offer insight and reflection on what exactly we Christians do when we gather on the Lord's Day.*

**Speaking of Sin: The Lost Language of Salvation** by Barbara Brown Taylor (Cambridge: Cowley Publications, 2000)

*A good look at some of the most basic words of our faith—sin, repentance, forgiveness, salvation—and how they still have real meaning for us today.*



## *Presbyterian Women*

On February 14, PW and MME will host a Valentine's Day chili cook off after church. Bring your favorite chili, taste a variety of wonderful recipes, and vote for your favorite with dollars to support New Hope's summer mission trip.



## *Church-Wide Fellowship*

The Fellowship Committee is planning a church-wide outing on Saturday, February 13th, at 9:00 am. Transportation will be provided from church to the National Great Rivers Museum in Alton, Illinois. There will be museum tours, arts & crafts for the kids, and free tours of the Melvin Price Locks and Dam for a chance to see wild eagles from a bird's eye view!

There is also the opportunity to see the "Masters of the Sky" Show at 11:00 am featuring live birds from the World Bird Sanctuary. The one-hour long show features live eagles, owls, falcon, vultures and hawks! Tickets for this show are limited and cost \$5 for adults and \$3 for children.

Transportation spaces are also limited. If you are interest in attending, please complete a reservation form found on the Information Table. If you are planning on purchasing tickets to the "Masters of the Sky," please prepay for your ticket with cash or checks made payable to NHPC. You may contact the office or visit the website for more information: [www.mtrf.org](http://www.mtrf.org).



## *Spring Directories*

2016 Spring Directories will be available in the coming weeks. If you have changed any of your contact information (address, phone numbers or email addresses), please contact the church office or email Laurie Meinert at [lbrown@nhpres.org](mailto:lbrown@nhpres.org).

*Church  
Directory*

## Easter Lilies



You may order a "live" lily to adorn our sanctuary on Easter Sunday and take it home with you after the 11:00 am service that day. You may also purchase a "virtual" lily, the cost of which will go to the Deacon's Benevolence Fund. Whichever you choose, you may still dedicate your gift in memory, honor or gratitude to someone. The list will appear in the Easter Sunday bulletin.

Please use the envelope provided on the Information Table for your order. The cost of either the live or "virtual" lily is \$10.00 each. Checks can be written to NHPC. Orders must be received by March 20th.

## Female Connection

February

Join us for a night of mystery and mayhem, as well as dinner! On Thursday, February 18 at 6:30 pm Female Connection will host a Murder Mystery Dinner Party. We will be taking part in two mysteries, "A Chocolate Covered Killing" and "Pushing Up the Daisies". There are 2 ways to sign up. You can send an email to Jana Gerard at [jgerard1234@icloud.com](mailto:jgerard1234@icloud.com) or there is a sign-up sheet on the Information Table in the narthex. Jana will assign the parts in advance of the evening so you will have background on the situation and information on your character. Come join the fun and discover who dunnit! For more information, please contact Jana Gerard or Deb Mackin.



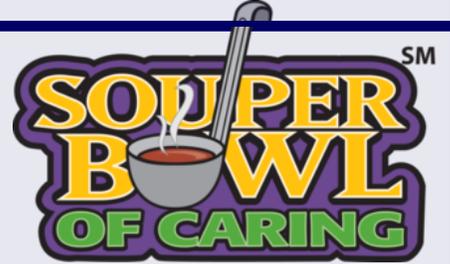
Leaping Leprechauns during Lent



The Female Connection is going to play "Bunco" for a celebration of St. Patrick's Day and the beginning of Spring on Thursday, March 17 at 7 PM in the Narthex at the Church. Please join us for an evening of fun & fellowship. All women are invited to attend; no sign-up is necessary and we'll show you how to play (it's extremely easy). Following Bunco tradition, please bring a gift in the range of \$7-10 to exchange at the end of play; an Easter or spring item would be appropriate. Wear your green!! Also, please bring a snack to share; drinks will be provided. For more information or questions, please contact Deb Mackin. We hope to see you there!

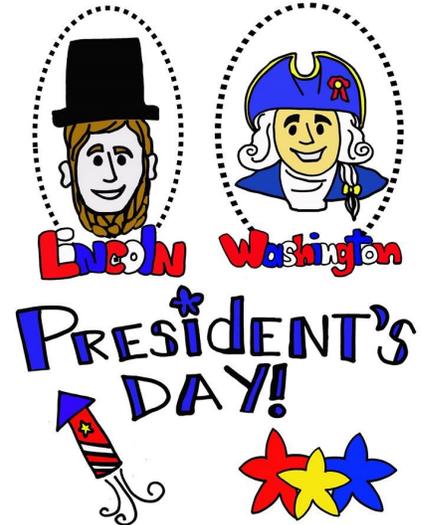
## Souper Bowl Sunday

Did your favorite NFL teams make the Super Bowl this year? Either way, before watching the big game, do a touchdown dance with the youth as they collect cans and donations for the "Souper Bowl of Caring." Our Make sure to bring your donations on February 7th, and help tackle hunger!



### February Birthdays

Amelia Ward	02/01	Ann Ray	02/18
Erik Isbell	02/02	Ernest Smith	02/18
Carrie Newman	02/02	Craig Graber	02/19
A.J. Ward	02/03	Bill Lamey	02/19
Ann Rademan	02/04	Cindy Wilson	02/20
Robert Graber	02/05	Brian Saeger	02/21
Tyler Etling	02/06	Rachel Garten	02/22
Nicole Brown	02/07	Christopher James	02/23
Lindy Stacy	02/08	Paul Hacker	02/24
Erica Carr	02/10	Jerry Dyer	02/26
Craig Clarke	02/10	Mel Fairchild	02/27
Lauren Martinez	02/10	Gary Looman	02/27
Kim Carr	02/14		
Gregory Newman	02/17		
Liam Schrautemeier	02/17		



### February Anniversaries

Kurt & Jeanna Groat	02/10/2002
Bill & Martha Lamey	02/11/1996
Jim & Anne Finks	02/13/1965
David & Vicky Howell	02/15/2001
Gary & Kathy Freeman	02/23/1983

## FEBRUARY 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b> 7:00pm Deacons' Meeting	<b>2</b> 9:30am PW Coordinating Team 7:00pm Christian Marriage Class 7:00pm A.A.	<b>3</b> 6:00pm Girl Scouts 7:15pm Choir	<b>4</b> 10:00am Jubilee Circle 1:00pm Agape Circle 5:50pm Employment Ministry Committee 7:00pm Employment Ministry 7:00pm Joy Circle	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> <i>Souper Bowl of Caring</i> 8:45am Worship 9:45am Christian Ed 11:00am Worship 12:20pm The Journey	<b>8</b> 10:00am Prayer Shawl 6:00pm Fellowship Committee 7:00pm Session Meeting	<b>9</b> 7:00pm A.A. 7:00pm Christian Marriage Class	<b>10</b> <i>Ash Wednesday</i> 5:45pm Soup Supper 7:00pm Worship Service	<b>11</b> 7:00pm Boy Scouts	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> 9:00am National Great River Museum 9:45am OASIS Food Pantry
<b>14</b> <i>Valentine's Day</i> 8:45am Worship 9:45am Christian Ed 11:00am Worship 12:20pm The Journey 12:30pm Chili Cook-Off	<b>15</b> <i>Presidents' Day</i> 7:00pm Mission, Ministry & Evangelism Committee	<b>16</b> 7:00pm A.A. 7:00pm Christian Marriage Class	<b>17</b> 6:00pm Girl Scouts 7:15pm Choir	<b>18</b> 5:50pm Employment Ministry Committee 6:00pm Boy Scouts 6:30pm Female Connection 7:00pm Employment Ministry	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 8:00am Men's Fellowship Breakfast
<b>21</b> 8:45am Worship 9:45am Christian Ed 11:00am Worship 12:20pm The Journey	<b>22</b> 7:00pm Formation for Discipleship Committee	<b>23</b> 7:00pm A.A.	<b>24</b> 7:15 Choir	<b>25</b> 5:00pm Cub Scout Blue & Gold Banquet	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> 8:45am Worship 9:45am Christian Ed 11:00am Worship 12:20pm The Journey	<b>29</b>					

### *FINANCIAL CORNER*

**CONTRIBUTIONS**  
Budget  
To-date Actual

**January 2016**  
**35,614.00**  
**32,909.00**

**Year To Date 2016**  
**35,614.00**  
**32,902.00**

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