



Grace Notes

Community of Grace UMC Community of Grace UMC

MARCH 2020

304-525-9664 E-Mail: CommunityofGraceUMC@gmail.com

Lent – Giving Up, Taking On, Finding God

After his baptism, the Lord Jesus “was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted 40 day and 40 nights and he was famished.” Matthew 4:1-2

February 26th is Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the Lenten season. Lent is a time of repentance, fasting and preparation for the coming of Easter. It is a time of self-examination and reflection.

The forty days represents the time Jesus spent in the wilderness, enduring the temptation of Satan. Sundays in Lent are not counted in the forty days because each Sunday represents a "mini-Easter" celebration of Jesus' victory over sin and death.

In the early church, Lent was a time to prepare new converts for baptism. Today, Christians focus on their relationship with God, often choosing to give up something or volunteering and giving of themselves for others.

I'm often asked about this...is it better to give up something for Lent, or take on some new task? Either choice is fine as long as you're giving up or taking on for the right reasons. First: it should be a sacrifice. Second: the purpose is to bring you closer to God.

When we give up something, we often find more time (especially when we give up time-consuming activities) to focus on our relationship with God. Or when we give up something we love (like a certain food), each time we think about having that thing, we are reminded of not just our sacrifice, but Jesus' sacrifice for us. Our “hunger” for what we have given up can be re-channeled as a hunger for God.

When we take on something for Lent, volunteering or adding to our prayer time, we find that our routine is challenged. We have to reorganize, reprioritize what we have been doing to fit in the new thing. In that process we put God at the top of the list, setting other things aside to make room to serve God.

The point of giving up something or taking on something is to find a deeper more meaningful relationship with God. During this Lenten season, take time to repent and reflect as we prepare our hearts to receive the risen Christ on Easter Sunday.

Striving to be Faithful,

Pastor Donna

This Lenten Season I would like to encourage you to put prayer at the top of your to-do list. God has been talking to several people in our congregation about specific, directed prayer for Community of Grace and the United Methodist Church as we seek to live out the mission and vision of the church. Please consider adding time to your prayer time and being deliberate in your prayers for people, for our community, our church, our city, and the world.

New Prayer Ministry:

Beginning Sunday March 1st at 2pm in the Chapel, those interested will gather for a time of weekly prayer. Please keep this new ministry in your prayers, and please come and pray in community.

Faith and Finances

Our January/February Giving

General Fund Income: \$30,247.92

General Fund Expenses: \$32,218.73

Change offering for Local Missions: \$751.39

Total Annual Apportionments: \$62, 502.00

Apportionment Paid to Date: \$ 9,735.50

86% of our Apportionment stays in WV

Thank you to all who give of their time,
their talents, and their treasure to support
the mission and ministries of COG.

United Methodist Women:

The United Methodist Women (UMW) will have their district meeting on March 28 at Cross Roads UMC with registration from 9am-10am with coffee. Meeting begins at 10am. Lunch will be served at 12noon at a cost of \$6.00. Speaker will be Mitch Webb from the City Mission. Contact Linda Beaver if interested.