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Join Our Lenten Journey to the Cross

Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. Lent comes from the Anglo Saxon word lencten, which means "spring." The forty days represents the time Jesus spent in the wilderness, enduring the temptation of Satan.

The early Christians observed the days of Christ's passion and resurrection with great devotion. It became customary in the church to precede the Easter celebration, with a 40 day period of spiritual preparation. This was a time when converts were readied for baptism. It was also a time when those who had committed serious sins were reconciled by repentance and forgiveness. Finally it was a period of quiet reflection, fasting, and prayer for all Christians, a sort of "tithing of time" since the season is about 1/10th of a year.

Today, Christians focus on their relationship with God, often choosing to give up something or to volunteer and give of themselves for others. Sundays in Lent are not counted in the forty days because each Sunday represents a "mini-Easter" and the reverent spirit of Lent is tempered with joyful anticipation of the Resurrection.

This year our congregation's Lenten emphasis is on fruitfulness. We will be considering five practices of fruitfulness in worship, Sunday School and other small groups, and in our daily devotion. If you do not already attend Sunday School, this would be an excellent time to visit; call Jennifer Fox to get more information on a class you might attend. And if you have not already picked up our 40-Day devotional guide for your personal use, call the church office to reserve your copy today.

Additional opportunities for your Lenten journey are listed throughout this newsletter, and we will be posting additional resources online at DowntownForGood.com. I pray God's blessing upon your journey as you join us!

– David Fleming

This Lent, Don't Just Give Something Up – "Get Up and Give"

Often, when a child or family arrives at a Methodist Family Health facility, they have only the clothes they're wearing. They lack basic necessities, such as socks, underwear and toiletries.

The season of Lent, which begins Feb. 22, is traditionally a time to give up something. Methodist Family Health encourages United Methodists in Arkansas to use Lent as a time to "get up and give" something that will make a difference in the lives of others. This year marks the third annual Get Up & Give collection for Methodist Family Health, a nonprofit organization providing emotional and behavioral health services for more than 1,400 children and families each day.

Churches, church groups, community groups and individuals are encouraged to collect necessity items for children and families served by the Methodist Family Health hospital, alternative schools, group homes and clinics throughout Arkansas. Items on the collection list include **socks, underwear, diapers, baby wipes, paper towels, toothbrushes, toothpaste, toilet paper, backpacks & duffel bags. All items must be new.**

Items may be brought to the church and placed in the designated bins from now through April 4. On April 9, they will be delivered to one of the seven Methodist Family Health counseling clinics around the state—in Batesville, Fayetteville, Heber Springs, Jonesboro, Little Rock, Magnolia or Mount Ida.

"The generosity of our communities will bring a smile to the faces of the kids and families we serve on a daily basis," says Andy Altom, Methodist Family Health chief executive officer. "Many of the children who arrive here come with nothing more than the shirt on their backs. Get Up & Give is an opportunity for us to engage our surrounding community to make a difference in these children's lives."



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday, February 26

8:30 am - Worship in the Chapel

9:45 am - Sunday School

10:45 am - Worship in the Sanctuary

Message: Rev. David Fleming

"The Practice of Radical Hospitality"

Romans 15:7



PRAYER CONCERNS

Present - Lena Rose and Agnita Ballenger (JRM),

Continuing - Nan Simmons, Janet

Cash, Sarah Holtzen, Phyllis Allison, Gerald Rainwater, Hunter Williamson,

Spencer Fuller, Jo & Lloyd Black, Bob Gray, Ernest Ingram, Joe Ralph Thompson, Mike Irvin

(Afghanistan), Louie Edwards, Joyce & Tom Agerton, Tommy May, our nation, and our military

IN MEMORIAM

Mrs. Edna Taylor

THANK YOU TO MY CHURCH FAMILY

Thank you for all the cards, calls, and prayers you have sent me. Your encouragement means so much to me. Please continue praying for my recovery.
Love, Norma Fletcher

SPECIAL WORKSHOP IN LITTLE ROCK

Join Pastor Edna on Saturday, March 10 from 8 am to 3:15 pm at St James in LR for a special adult workshop. Topics include Boomers or Bust, Transitioning from Stage to Stage, Adults and Technology, and Adults Spiritual Needs. Cost is \$20 and includes travel, lunch, and workshops. Call Edna for more to sign-up and

Youth

No Youth this Sunday

There will be no youth on Feb. 26 due to Veritas.

Wednesday Night meal

The youth will be cooking the fellowship meal on Wednesday, Feb. 29. Please be here at 4:30 pm to serve and bring a dessert.

Wednesday Nights ~ 6 pm at the church

Wednesday nights are filled with fellowship, games, and planning of a mission event.



Host Homes needed.

We need homes to host Sunday Night Bible Study for the youth. If you would like to volunteer your home, please contact Carissa.

Breakfast Meetings

Breakfast meetings are on Tuesdays at 7:30 at the White Hall McDonalds and on Thursdays at 7:20 at the Watson Chapel McDonalds. Food, encouragement, and prayer. Bring a friend and join us.



ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES

**Wednesday, February 22
Noon and 6:00 pm**

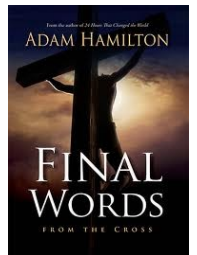
We will have a mid-day service at noon in the Chapel followed by a light lunch. The evening service will be at 6:00 pm in the Sanctuary. Join us at 5:00 pm for a Fellowship meal. The message will be given by Rev. Edna Morgan, "Know God for Ourselves."

LENTEN BOOKS NOW AVAILABLE

"Forty Days of Fruitful Living", a devotional guide for Lent, is now available for \$8. Stop by the office to pick up your copy.

NEW WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY

You are invited to join us on Wednesday evenings during Lent (February 29—April 4) as Pastor David leads us in a Bible Study based on the seven last words of Christ. Bring your Bible; no other text or preparation is required. Those who wish may purchase a copy of Adam Hamilton's "Final Words from the Cross." Please place your order (\$10) by calling the office — 535-0935. (This is also the text we will be using in the Men's Bible Study on Tuesdays at noon.)



NEW COMPUTER CLASS FOR ADULTS

It's never too late to learn! Join Jill and Mike Healy as they walk you through the basics. Classes will meet on Wednesday nights in the FUMC computer lab February 29, March 7, 14, and 28 at 6-7pm. Call the office to sign-up

WEDNESDAY ACTIVITIES

Fellowship Meal ~ 5 - 6 pm

Our cook crews:

February 29 ~ Youth

March 7 ~ Disciple 21

NO Children's Choir ~ 5:30 - 6 pm

NO Small group studies ~ 6 - 7 pm

NO Youth & Chancel Handbells ~ 6 pm

Chancel Choir ~ 7 - 8:30 pm

MISSION NEEDS

We are collecting clean or new **children's shoes** for Honduras through April. And we need 144 cans of **vegetable soup** each month for Neighbor to Neighbor. **Super job** — we turned in 161 cans this month.

THANKS TO OUR HABITAT HAMMERERS

Many thanks to our FUMC members that worked on the Habitat storage building for 6 hours on a very cold Saturday February morning. They were **Clyde Campbell, Gene Hudson, Will Fox, Mike Healy, Kirby Mouser, Marc Oudin, Rick Pierce, and Larry Stone.**

