

From the Pastor...

When I was young, I remember Lent as a time when we would go to extra worship services at church and experience at those special services either a Lenten drama or some special musical offering that was meant to help us as we prepared our hearts for Easter.

When I was older, I was introduced to the concept of giving something up for Lent and for the weeks between Ash Wednesday and Easter I would give up something like chocolate or Facebook as a way of making room in my life for something more holy.

In recent years, I have been encouraging people to consider adding something to their daily lives rather than giving up something. They may need to cut back on some other activity, but the emphasis is on adding daily devotions or some kind of book or Bible study that would help all of us focus on the reason for the season of Lent. Just like Advent, Lent is a season of preparation and self-examination where we prepare our hearts and minds for the shockingly good news of Jesus' resurrection after an excruciating time of torture and death. What I have found most helpful in preparing my heart for the deep sorrow of Good Friday and the power of the resurrection on Easter is to spend time studying and remembering Jesus' life, and how it has impacted people through the ages.

This Lent you are invited to join a class studying Adam Hamilton's book "Revival: Faith as Wesley Lived It." We will meet Monday evenings from 7-8:30 starting Monday, February 15 and continuing until Monday, March 21. It will be a time of watching a brief video, working through some discussion questions and diving into the Bible as we learn more about John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Movement and how his example will renew our faith.

I'm looking forward to this first Lenten season with Wyoming United Methodist Church. May our time together bring more meaning to our Christian walk as we together learn more about how we might revive and renew our faith together.

In God's care,
Holly



Thank You

Thank you for all the gifts you gave my family and me at Christmas time! Your homemade treats, gourmet goodies, gift cards and presents were a delightful surprise. We are so grateful for your thoughtfulness! — Pastor Holly

Christmas Offering

Thanks to your generosity, we raised \$3592 to help pay for the weekend/school break food for the students in need at Wyoming Elementary School. This should cover their food needs for the remainder of 2016. God bless you!

Human Relations Day Offering

Many thanks to those who contributed to our collection for the Special Sunday "Human Relations Day." We collected \$149 to go toward this call by the UMC.

Care Crew

Thank you to those helping with Care Crew North! We had a couple of unusual needs in January that were met, resulting in very satisfied clients!

Valentine's Cookies

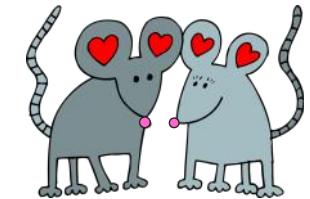
The Tuesday morning Spiritual Prayer Group will be sending cookies to our college kids for Valentine's Day! If you have an address for your student(s), please let Michelle in the office know by Sunday, Feb. 7th.



Birthdays February Celebrations

2-04	Alan Kilian	2-18	Neil Amlee
2-06	Abby Jackson	2-20	Mike Keacher
2-07	Lisa Sveiven	2-21	Pam Bloom
2-08	Candi Horn	2-24	Deb Hulbert
	Chuck Spawn		Donna Lindau
2-09	Rich Richnofsky	2-25	Nancy Kramer
	Hannah Smith		LeAnne Pampusch
2-11	Wade Rylander	2-28	Katie Anderson
2-12	David Keacher		Trevor Jackson
2-14	Joyce Keacher		
	Rick Kramer		

*If you do not see your special date listed, please let Michelle in the office know!



Anniversaries

2-02	Jeremy & Hannah Smith
2-15	Buck & Yvonne Broadbent
2-27	Norb & Deb Hulbert

Where are they fleeing?

Thousands of Syrians flee their country every day. They often decide to finally escape after seeing their neighborhoods bombed or family members killed. The risks on the journey to the border can be as high as staying: Families walk for miles through the night to avoid being shot at by snipers or being caught by soldiers who will kidnap young men to fight for the regime. Hundreds of thousands of refugees are also attempting the dangerous trip across the Mediterranean Sea from Turkey to Greece.

Respond with prayer

Prayer is one immediate response Christians can take—prayer for peaceful means to bring an end to military actions causing such widespread displacement of people from Syria and Iraq; prayer that refugees will be welcomed around the world with warm, calm hospitality; prayer for those who provide asylum and refuge.



Today, our global community, and particularly Europe, is confronted with the largest mass migration of people since World War II. Hundreds of thousands of displaced persons are pouring out of Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and various parts of Africa across the Mediterranean Sea to Europe. The total number of refugees that have arrived in European countries so far this year is 549,000, and some 794,000 persons have applied for asylum across Europe. The number of refugees in Europe by the end of 2015 is expected to be 4.7 million. This mass migration has created a crisis for humanitarian organizations, churches, and governments.

~ Bishop Bruce R. Ough

The scope of the crisis

Syria's civil war is the worst humanitarian disaster of our time. The number of innocent civilians suffering—more than 11 million people are displaced thus far—and the increasingly dire impact on neighboring countries can seem too overwhelming to understand. But one fact is simple: millions of Syrians need our help.

When did the crisis start?

Anti-government demonstrations began in March of 2011. Divisions between secular and Islamist fighters, and between ethnic groups, continue to complicate the politics of the conflict.

What is happening to Syrians caught in the war?

The civil war has killed more than 220,000 people, half of whom are believed to be civilians. More than half of the country's population of 23 million is in need of urgent humanitarian assistance, whether they still remain in the country or have escaped across the borders.

Respond with financial support

The pathways of the current refugees are from southern and southeastern Europe toward northern and western Europe, notably Germany. The small—very small—United Methodist communities on the route are joining neighbors to meet immediate needs for food, water, and clothing. United Methodist leaders in Europe and the United States are encouraging church members to contribute to the work of the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR).

Refugee resettlement

Congregations that want to apply as sponsors for refugee resettlement must follow the rules of their respective countries. In the U.S., for United Methodists this means Church World Service (CWS), our long-time partner in refugee resettlement.





Last year's Costa Rica team.

Thoughts of a Warmer Place by Jan Freemore

As I sit writing this on a VERY cold January day, I am reminded of last January in Costa Rica. Cool mornings, but quickly warming to weather for shorts! Sunshine that warmed our bodies and our hearts as the smell of tropical plants permeated the air. Seeing the bananas growing on the trees right outside my workspace was a glorious sight and having fresh brewed coffee which was grown only a few miles away prepared me for the work of the day.

This is only a small part of the beauty of Costa Rica. We were so blessed by our trip last year that we are now planning to lead a trip to the same area in 2017. We hope many of you will decide to join us in this blessing!

Just what does it take? For starters, a passport (which will soon be required for all U.S. air travel) and planning for two weeks away (Jan.18-Feb.1, 2017) along with starting to put away the dollars needed (\$2000 with around \$500 additional for tour expenses while we are there). Like any vacation it requires lots of planning, but we are going to be working on that for you. We know it will be exciting and worth every minute of preparation!

If you are even a little curious after reading this, please grab a brochure from the table by the guestbook in the church foyer. After looking at it, you can ask all the questions you would like and hopefully we can answer them and help you make this a trip of your dreams! What could be better than being Jesus' hands and feet while enjoying beautiful weather?

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MESSENGER

February 2016



Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, which is the 40 days before Easter, not counting Sundays, and is a season of preparation for Easter. On Wednesday, February 10, you will have the opportunity to come to the church any time between noon and 7pm to receive communion and the imposition of ashes on the forehead or hand. When you come to the church, you are welcome to spend as much time as you desire sitting in the sanctuary in prayer and meditation on your own or using some readings that will be provided. When you wish to participate in communion and receive the ashes, Pastor Holly will come and participate in those rituals with you.

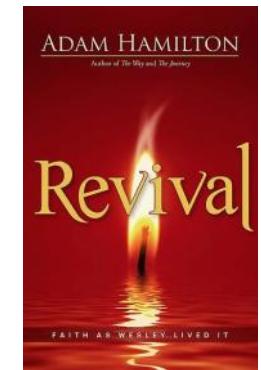
Ash Wednesday is a powerful time of remembering our mortality and anticipating our eventual reunion with God as we enter eternal life. Consider yourself invited to a time of prayer, meditation, communion and ashes any time between noon and 7pm on the 10th.

Special Offering

On February 14th (Valentine's Day) we will take an offering as suggested by Bishop Ough. He asks us to give to UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) to help the European immigrants/refugees. We will talk about this offering and learn more about the crisis in worship during Mission Moments. For more information, please see page 3 or the bishop's letter on the bulletin board in the hallway.

Lenten Study

You are invited to participate in weekly study sessions on the book *Revival: Faith as Wesley Lived It* by Adam Hamilton. John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Movement, still has a message that speaks to us today. His message, that revived the Anglicans in 18th century England and started a new church that spread like wildfire in the New World of America, points to a need in every age to revive our hearts and souls so that our world might be changed. This Lent you are invited to join in this six-week journey starting Monday, February 15 at 7pm as we travel through England, following the life of John Wesley and exploring the defining characteristics of a Wesleyan Christian. Meeting every Monday evening of Lent, ending Monday, March 21, we will journey through this DVD-based study that is designed alike for long-time Christians and people who are simply curious. If you need childcare, please contact the church office by February 10.



Sunday, February 7th

"I Hardly Recognized You"
Matthew 17:1-9

Sunday, February 14th

"Revival: Precursors to Revival"
Revelation 2:1-5

Sunday, February 21st

"Revival: A Longing for Holiness"

1 Peter 1:13-16

Sunday, February 28th

"Revival: A Crisis of Faith"
Romans 4:3-5, 5:1-2



Worship Services in February

Beginning with the first Sunday of Lent (February 14), we will be learning about the faith and life of John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Movement. Meant to supplement what we'll be learning in our Monday night Lenten study, these sermons will take us through Wesley's beginnings as a 'brand plucked from the fire,' through his conversion experience of a 'heart strangely warmed' and on to the end of his life, where his final words were 'The best of all is, God is with us!' My hope and prayer is that you'll find this journey through Lent an opportunity to deepen your faith as we are inspired by one of the great men of faith, John Wesley.