

From the Pastor...

Have you noticed? This year Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday share the celebrations with other holidays. Ash Wednesday was on February 14, Valentine's Day, and Easter is on April 1, April Fools' Day. The last time this happened it was 1945. The next time it will happen is 2029.

Because of the way that the date of Easter is figured every year (the first Sunday after the first full moon following the vernal equinox) combined with the added factor of Leap Year every four years, this rare occurrence is something that most of us will only see once or twice (or, if you were born in the right time frame, three times) in our lifetimes.

What can we say about this confluence of events? Do these coincidences matter? Neither Valentine's Day nor April Fools' Day are a part of the Christian calendar, but when Valentine's Day coincides with a day of remembering that we are all mortal, what do we do with that? Some people have given us a way to laugh at the coincidence—candied hearts with 'You are dust' and '2 dust u shall return'—some have pointed to the love God shows us by enabling us to know that we are mortal, that we will all die, that this life is a gift to treasure while we have it.

And what about the foolishness of Easter? We won't say "Christ is risen. April fools!" But we do know at some level how foolish those first Christians must have seemed to everyone they talked to about Jesus' resurrection from the dead. 'How could this happen?' 'Why would they say such a thing?' 'Are these people crazy?'

The foolishness of Christ is wiser than the wisdom of humans and we are reminded of that especially this Easter. What a foolishly extravagant God we follow, who gives love without expectation of return, who allows an only Son to be killed by evil to bring about a greater good.

I hope that you will be one of the foolish many who celebrate the resurrection of Christ on Easter Sunday and you will be one of the joyful fools who, on the Sunday following Easter, celebrate the resurrection laugh that puts death in its rightful place—as something that has no power over those who believe in Christ.

"We preach Christ crucified, which is a scandal to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles. But to those who are called...Christ is God's power and God's wisdom. This is because the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength." (1 Corinthians 1:23-25)

Faithfully,
Holly

A Special Thanks

We would like to thank our church family for the many prayers and cards on the death of our mother, mother-in-law, grandmother, and great grandma. A special thanks to all those who helped with the luncheon after the service.

Thanks also to Pastor Holly for her words of comfort.

You are a blessing.

Sincerely,

The Family of
Joyce Keacher

Thank You (from New Pathways)

Thank you so much for your generous donation to our shelter program. Your support will go a long way to ensure that we are able to continue helping families experiencing homelessness in our area. It has been busy here with many move-outs just before Christmas and now new families contacting us to enter the program. We have had some great success stories. We had two heads of household recently who attended vocational training while in our program and now have jobs in high-demand areas (nursing, welding) that have excellent growth potential. And, because of that, they have now found permanent housing. Thank you for making this all possible!

Valentine's Treats

Many thanks to the Tuesday morning Spiritual Prayer Group for coordinating and sending Valentine's cookies and treats to our college students. Lois S., Janet R., Carole A., and Diane D. helped our students remember that we love them and God loves them!



March Celebrations

Birthdays

3-2 Sharron F.

3-3 Madelyn J.
Madelynn K.

3-17 Jessica S.

3-18 Samantha Jo K.

3-19 Steve K.

3-27 Tommy C.

Andy E.

Kaylee E.

Donna K.

3-28 Janet R.

Gary S.

3-29 Bessie G.

Linda R.

3-30 Mike H.

Anniversaries

3-31 Karl & Jeanne L.



*If you do not see your special date, please let Michelle know!

Welcome New Members!

On Sunday, February 25 we welcomed three new members to our congregation. It was our joy and privilege to receive them into our church fellowship. Be sure and greet them the next time you see them in church:

CLARE JEWSON comes to us from Worthington, MN where she's been a member of First United Methodist Church since 1991. She's a retired Registered Nurse who enjoys reading, sewing, cards, swimming, cooking and baking. She moved to Forest Lake to be closer to family and still enjoys visiting her cabin nearby in the summers.

GAY GRONLUND lives in Chisago City and loves to volunteer at Fairview Hospital as well as water ski. Her joining our church today is a coming home of sorts, as they were members here from 1995 to 2002.

TOM GRONLUND is joining our church today with his wife, Gay. He is a former Vice President of U.S. Bank who in his spare time enjoys sports and the YMCA. They have moved back to this area from Fruitland Park, FL.

Stitch 'n Rip Quilters

Did you know that all sorts of people come on Wednesdays to quilt at our church? Anytime between 9 and 4:00 on any given Wednesday you can see women from Linwood, Mendota Heights, Lindstrom, Eden Prairie, Scandia, Forest Lake, Chisago City, Anoka, Woodbury and Wyoming. They are connected via email and Facebook and phone and in person due to their love for the fabric arts. Anyone is welcome to stop in or to come for an hour or two or seven and enjoy the company of fellow quilters. Some come to knit, too. Sometimes it's only four or five people in the Fellowship Hall, sometimes the women number to 15 or 16. Come and see!



Ash Wednesday Ministry

Wyoming's first ever Ashes to Go event at The Nesting Grounds was an event not to be missed. Pastor Holly set up at a table inside The Nesting Grounds bright and early on Ash Wednesday morning and for the next three hours she administered ashes and prayed with people and gave them a prayer card that contained church information as well as a prayer for them to pray throughout lent. Administering ashes to those ages 1 to 81, by the end of the morning, seventeen people had come through to receive the mark of the cross. Sharing ash with three additional people in quilting and twelve more at the service that evening, a total of 32 people were blessed by this Wyoming United Methodist Ash Wednesday ministry.

Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion! Shout, daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you, a righteous one bringing salvation. He is lowly, riding on a donkey—on a colt, the foal of a donkey. -Zech 9:9



Save the Date

April 19-21, Hosanna Lutheran Church in Forest Lake is again sponsoring a Feed My Starving Children MobilePack. Feed My Starving Children is an organization that literally saves children's lives every day. It runs largely through the help of generous donations and volunteer hours to make a difference in the lives of God's hungry children throughout the world. In partnership with Hosanna Lutheran Church and other local churches we are planning to pack 250,000 meals over that April weekend. Each meal's ingredients costs \$.22 so your Mission Team will be collecting donations from you in April to help defray the cost of the food. More info coming in April!



Troutlily Fest (a benefit to support New Pathways)

Welcome spring to Minnesota, gear up for fishing and gardening season, and help local families experiencing homelessness, all at the same time! You are invited to our Troutlily Fest on Saturday, April 21, from 5:00-9:00pm at Creekside Farm in Rush City. Enjoy the buffet dinner and music, and participate in other fundraising activities such as a raffle, silent auction, live auction, games and door prizes. It will be a good time together, all benefitting a good cause. For more information you may visit our website at www.newpathwaysmn.com or call 763-391-0121.

Wyoming United Methodist Church

Messenger



March 2018

March is Minnesota FoodShare Month

Since 1982, March has been selected as the month to *fill the food shelf shelves*. Donations are typically down during March so this is an opportunity for us to help alleviate hunger. Sadly, for the first time in history over 1/2 of the public school students in America are from low-income families. Three out of four public school teachers report they see students regularly come to school hungry. Wyoming UMC has partnered with Wyoming Elementary School to provide funds and packing volunteers for weekend food to go home with students in need. If we collect funds during March for this program, a percentage of the funds we raise will be doubled! Mark your check (written to WUMC) or envelope with the word "Food" and it will be directed to this mission program. Your money will go a long way as the food shelf can buy 7-10X more food than we can as they purchase their food from Second Harvest.

Worship Services in March

The ancient faith statement called the Apostles' Creed outlines for us the basic tenets of the faith, helping us to understand what are some of the core beliefs we hold as Christians. We may have said these words without thinking, but what does it really mean when we say 'we believe in the holy catholic church' or 'we believe in the resurrection of the body?' Some of these statements are confusing and together we'll look at these statements of faith and what they mean for our lives today as we continue our series Searching for Truth.

Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest! -Luke 19:38

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Pastor Holly's email: hollyaastuen@gmail.com • Church email: office.wyomingumc@gmail.com

Easter is Coming!

You can help make our worship space beautiful by purchasing plants for our Easter garden. If you would like to purchase a plant or flowers, please sign up in the nook, the counter which is in the narthex (lobby) of the church, no later than Palm Sunday, March 25. Depending on what is available, your choices include azaleas, hydrangeas, tulips, daffodils and other spring plants. As always, you are invited to take your plants home following Easter Sunday worship. Please see the signup sheet for more info.

March 4

Searching for Truth:
What About the Holy Spirit?
John 3:1-8

March 11

Searching for Truth:
What's this 'Catholic Church' About?
John 17:20-26

March 18

Searching for Truth:
Can I Be Forgiven?
Matthew 26:27-28;
Luke 23:33-34

March 25

PALM/PASSION SUNDAY
Searching for Truth:
What is the Resurrection of the Body?
1 Corinthians 15:3-6, 35-37, 42-44a

Holy Week Services

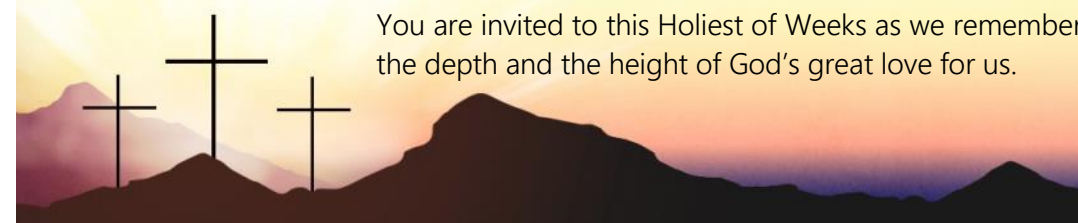
Holy Week begins with Palm/Passion Sunday, where we will remember Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem and the subsequent events of Jesus' last week on earth.

On Good (or Holy) Friday, March 30, we will share in communion as we remember Christ's Last Supper with his disciples, then go into a service of descending darkness, or Tenebrae service, where we remember how, one by one, people abandoned Jesus in his final hour.

Easter Morning, April 1 we will have a joyous Easter celebration at our church! Here's our Easter morning schedule:

- 8:00-9:30 Easter breakfast, served by our Saturday Men's Ministry group. You are invited to start your Easter celebrations with a delicious breakfast.
- 9:15 Easter Egg Hunt (outdoors, weather permitting!)
- 10:00 Easter Worship with the Flowering of the Cross and Communion

You are invited to this Holiest of Weeks as we remember the depth and the height of God's great love for us.



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