



The Messenger

Red Oak First United Methodist Church ♦ Jenn Van Nostrand, Pastor ♦ March 2023

From Jenn's Pen

Let me just admit right here and now that the device we call a cell phone has been a life changer for me. All I do is tell it where I want to go and like magic, it tells me exactly how to get there. I honestly cannot think of a time when it has led me astray. There may be times it took me a little longer to get to my destination because it did not take me on the most direct route, but it does its job and gets me to where I'm going. It has probably enabled me from paying attention to my surroundings and learning how to get places. Instead, I just listen to Siri's beautiful voice tell me where to go.



Which brings us to Lent which is the 40 days from Ash Wednesday to the day before Easter. The Sundays are excluded to remind us of the joy Easter Sunday gives us. The season's forty days come from the gospel passage about Jesus' temptations in the wilderness. After his baptism, Jesus spends 40 days in the wilderness, fasting and praying.

Those 40 days prepared Jesus. And if we allow Lent to do what it was created to do, it can prepare us for our Savior's resurrection. Like the directions my phone assists me with, Lent can help us with the directions of our lives.

Maybe we are racked with guilt and have a hard time holding our heads up. Maybe we cannot carry this guilt any longer and need to put it down at the foot of the cross. Maybe we know we are headed in the wrong direction and need a change. Maybe we want to do better by making a bigger impact on the world around us. Maybe we want to be less distracted by the traffic of the world and need to prioritize our relationship with God more.

Whatever our needs are, we can use Lent as a time to reset our minds, hearts, souls and bodies to the setting God desires for us; Matthew 22:37-38 says, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

I encourage you during this season of Lent to either give up or take up something that will draw you closer to the Lord. Whatever it is, allow this practice to help you keep your focus on Jesus who gave up his life on the cross for our sake. Perhaps you might consider participating fully in our Lent sermon series called "The Grace of Les Misérables." I will be preaching on it every Sunday during Lent and the Bible study is Tuesdays at 10am.

Pastor Jenn



Lenten Sermon Series & Bible Study



Our Lenten Bible Study and Sermon Series are based on *The Grace of Les Misérables* by Matt Rawle. Sunday messages include:

- March 5: The poor are always with you; Matthew 25:31-46
- March 12: When Grace and Justice Collide; Matthew 5:38-48
- March 19: The Gift of Love; 1 Corinthians 13
- March 26: Building the Barricade; Luke 19:28-44
- April 2: Palm Sunday; John 12:12-19
- April 9: Easter; The Blessed Garden, A hopeful Vision; John 20:1-8

Every Tuesday at 10 am, we gather in an interactive Bible Study to delve a little deeper into the themes of Les Mis and how they tie into our lives through Lent and beyond. The study is just starting, so if you'd like to join the discussion (or just listen in) now is the time. Just show up next Tuesday. Hope to see you there!

Lenten Project

We are preparing Easter Care Kits for Open Door Mission Assembly in Omaha. There are three ways you can join in this mission project:

1. Donate items. The following items can be dropped off at the church any Sunday morning or Monday-Friday 9am-1pm.
Women's Kits: Chocolate bunny or cross, body wash, deodorant, disposable razors, and shaving cream in a purple or pink gift bag.
Men's Kits: Chocolate bunny or cross, body wash, razors, and shaving cream in a blue or green gift bag.
 2. Join us at the church Tuesday, March 28th at 1:30pm to help assemble the kits.
 3. Help deliver the kits to Open Door Mission Assembly in Omaha.
- Have questions or need more info? Call Nicole at 712-623-2367.

Lenten Opportunities

Jesus Revolution

The *Jesus Revolution* movie is coming to the Red Oak Grand Theater. It's the true story of a national spiritual awakening by a community of teenage hippies in the early 1970's. It stars Kelsey Grammar, Kimberly Williams-Paisley, and Jonathan Roumie (who stars as Jesus in *The Chosen* series).

Showtimes at the Grand Theater:

- Friday, March 17th at 7pm
- Saturday, March 18th at 7pm
- Sunday, March 19th at 2pm



Villisca Women's Spring Dinner



Beef & Noodle Dinner
Wednesday
March 15th
5-7pm

The free will offering
will help support
summer camp scholarships.

A FEW REMINDERS

WE'RE REQUESTING FLOWERS

We're looking for artificial flowers. Any size, shape, or color. If you have any that you no longer need, please donate them! They can be stems, bunches, garlands, or anything floral. Bring them to the church office any Sunday morning or Monday through Friday 9am to 1pm. Thanks!



Our Women's Fellowship now meets at 2pm on the 2nd Tuesday of every month instead of Wednesdays. Our next gathering is March 14th. All women are welcome.

SPONSOR A COMFORT LAMB



From time to time, we all need a little comfort in our lives. We now have huggable plush lambs to give to anyone who is going through a tough time -- whether they're in our church family or not. If you know someone who would benefit from one of these, tell Nicole in the office. If you would like to sponsor a Comfort Lamb, you can donate \$13 to our Comfort Lamb fund. If you would like to buy a lamb to have at home, you can donate \$15 -- they're no longer on sale so that's the cost of replacing our current "give away" lambs.

The next Nishna Productions Lunch will be 22nd at 11:30 at Pizza Ranch. All are welcome. We treat the Nishna folks; church members purchase their own.

Do Something!

Have you heard it? **Do Something** is a song by Matthew West that fits our church so well, it's become our new "theme song." Check it out on YouTube!!

I woke up this morning; saw a world full of trouble.
Thought, how'd we ever get so far down? How's it ever
gonna turn around? So I turned my eyes to heaven; I
thought, God, why don't You do something? He said, I
did. I created you!

SO, I SHOOK MY FIST
AT HEAVEN, SAID,
**GOD, WHY DON'T YOU
DO SOMETHING?**
HE SAID,
**I DID, I CREATED
YOU!**

@Matthew_West > DO SOMETHING

MARK YOUR CALENDARS



Holy Week Schedule

April 2 - Easter Cantata at 9am
April 6 - Joint Maundy/Thursday Services
at 5:30 at Red Oak First UMC
(Progressive Meal)
April 7 - Joint Good Friday Service
at 7pm at Villisca UMC
April 9 - Easter Services with communion
at 9am.

The Chapel will be open Monday - Friday
during Holy Week from 10 to 1 for
prayer and meditation.

Holy Week will be a busy time at Red Oak First United Methodist Church. Mark your calendars so you don't miss any of these special opportunities. We're looking for volunteers to help "man" the chapel from 10am to 1pm when it's open for prayer and meditation the week of Easter. If you are able to help out, please call the church office.

We will also need people to help with the Maundy/Thursday service and meal prep. Again, please call the church office if you're able to help.

Jenn's Schedule

Leading up to our busy Holy Week, Pastor Jenn's days will be even busier. Her upcoming calendar includes:

March 4 - Villisca Confirmation field trip to Tri-Faith Center

March 8 - Course of Study (COS) class from 6 to 8

March 15 - Course of Study class (COS) from 6 to 8

March 16 - Sub-circuit meeting at 10am; District Committee on Ministry (DCOM) meeting at 1pm; Red Oak and Villisca Youth going to Sidewalk Prophets concert in Corning at 7pm

March 18 - Meet and greet Bishop Kennetha at Corning UMC from 3 to 5pm.

March 22-25 - Working remotely from Colorado for her mom's 70th birthday.

March 28 - Lenten Project putting Easter kits together at 1:30 at Red Oak First

March 30 - At Residence in Ministry (RIM) class in Des Moines

MARCH 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>Red Oak First United Methodist Church 600 East Hammond Street Red Oak, Iowa 51566 712-623-2367 Email: office@redoakfumc.org Website: redoakfumc.org Office Hours: 9am – 1pm Monday-Friday</p>			<p>1</p> <p>6 – Choir Practice 6:30 – Youth Group</p> <p> Patrick Wolfe</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p> <p> Michael Fisher</p>
<p>5</p> <p>9 – Church 10:30 – Sunday School</p> <p> Mark Gregg</p>	<p>6</p> <p>9 – WIC Clinic</p> <p> Ryan Adams</p>	<p>7</p> <p>10 – Les Mis Bible Study</p> <p> Donald Torbett</p>	<p>8</p> <p>6 – Choir Practice 6:30 – Youth Group</p> <p> Fred Trumble  Grant Vrba</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p>
<p>12</p> <p>9 – Church 10:30 – Sunday School</p> <p> Daylight Saving Time</p> <p> Donna Mae Walker</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p> <p>10 – Les Mis Bible Study</p> <p>2 – Women's Fellowship</p> <p>6 – Ad Board</p>	<p>15</p> <p>6 – Choir Practice 6:30 – Youth Group</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p> <p>St. Patrick's Day</p> <p></p> <p>7 – Jesus Revolution</p>	<p>18</p> <p></p> <p>3-5pm Meet Bishop Kennetha at Corning UMC</p> <p>7 – Jesus Revolution</p>
<p>19</p> <p>9 – Church 10:30 – Sunday School</p> <p>2 – Jesus Revolution</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p> <p>10 – Les Mis Bible Study</p>	<p>22</p> <p> 11:30 – Nishna Lunch at Pizza Ranch (All are welcome)</p> <p>6 – Choir Practice 6:30 – Youth Group</p> <p> Marlys Fisher  Kate Walker</p>	<p>23</p> <p> Kathy Harris  Adenia Stanley</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>
<p>26</p> <p>9 – Church 10:30 – Sunday School</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p> <p>10 – Les Mis Bible Study</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p> <p> William Stanley</p>	<p>31</p> <p> Carlos Guerra, IV</p>	