**“The Messenger”**

 **St. Paul’s UCC (513-422-4519); Rev. Rich Luh, Pastor (937-993-5464)**

**LENT BEGINS!**

Yes, the Season of Lent begins with our **ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE** on March 5th at1pm in the Chapel.

Lent is a time of reflection when we look at where we are at as a follower of Christ and figure out how much change must be made in our lives in order to continue that spiritual journey.

Sometimes, change is hard to come by, because we all tend to cling to what is most comfortable for us to do in our daily life. To let go of some of our habits, our old routines in order to take on the opportunities God give us to make our lives renewed through following His Son is not as easy as it might look.

However, if we really pray about it – if we really think hard about where we are at right now in our lives and look seriously at what we can be when we become determined to follow in the way of our Master, then the decision should not be that difficult. And you know something? This journey of change does not have to be done alone. First, Christ is with us through the Holy Spirit; and secondly, your church family is there to give you the encouragement and support that you need.

So, as we go through the season of Lent, let’s try with all our spiritual might to let go of those things that hinder us from being a committed follower of Christ and pick ourselves up and head down that road that Christ has laid out before us. Thus, we shall begin to truly live as God so wants us to live each day. How about it? Are you ready?

**Shalom,**

**Pastor Rich**

“LENT IS A TIME FOR DISCIPLINE, FOR CONFESSION, FOR HONESTY; NOT BECAUSE GOD IS MEAN OR FAULT-FINDING OR FINGER POINTING, BUT BECAUSE HE WANTS US TO KNOW THE JOY OF BEING CLEANED OUT, READY FOR ALL THE GOOD THINGS HE NOW HAS IN STORE.”

**SPECIAL CELEBRATION IN 2026**

Yes, next year we celebrate the **150th Anniversary of our church** and Darlene Adams and Steve Schnabl are Co-chairing this. They are seeking other volunteers to help make some plans so that we can really have a great celebration for such an important part of our church history.

So, if you are interested in helping and suggesting ideas for this special year, please let either one of them know and they will keep you abreast to meetings and other plans. Or, just call the church office and let Sue know if you can help in any way.

**DINNER FOR THE HOMELESS**

Once again, we are hosting a meal for the homeless through SHALOM. The date is **SUNDAY, MARCH 2** and will be at the **CHURCH OF GOD** on Tytus Avenue. We are seeking donations of fruit for these people (maybe cuties, apples or bananas) for their snacks which they can easily carry with them; plus breakfast juices, and bars for the next morning. Any of these donations can be left in our kitchen by March 2nd. Your contributions are greatly appreciated for this outreach ministry.

 **LITURGISTS USHERS GREETERS**

2 – Katie Schultz Larry/Darlene Adams Rick Lyons

9 – Marsha Minge Carl/Jennifer Batliner John Williams

16 – Corrine Lowman Tom/Marcia Shibley Judy/Steve Green

23 – Mike Ratliff Marsha Minge/Corrine Lowman Bryan Canter

30 – Hillary Fraley Steve Schnabl/Carl Batliner Hillary Fraley

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE**

2 – Rich Luh; 3 – Todd Edwards; 15 – Kathleen Batliner; 17 – Pat Beatty

23 – Austin Schultz; 25 – Jeff Adams; 30 – Elizabeth Batliner

May you all have a joyful celebration on your special day!

**BIBLE STUDY – 1-2 EVERY TUESDAY. Currently, we are studying the Apocrypha. Come join us in the Church Lounge**

**“Lent is not something we do for God; Lent is something we do with God”**

**DON’T FORGET TO SET YOUR CLOCKS**

Daylight savings time begins on Sunday, March 9th – where you set your clocks ahead one hour and lose that one hour of sleep.

**COME, JOIN US FOR WORSHIP**

2 – “Astounding Glory” – Transfiguration Sunday Communion (Pew)

5 – ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE IN CHAPEL 1PM (COMMUNION)

9 – “Wilderness Companions” 1st Sunday in Lent; Church Council meets after.

16 – “Strong and Tender” 2nd Sunday in Lent

23 – “Open Invitation” 3rd Sunday in Lent

30 – “Now What?” 4th Sunday in Lent; Lunch Bunch to Roosters

***“LENT IS ABOUT BECOMING, DOING, AND CHANGING WHATEVER IT IS THAT IS BLOCKING THE FULLNESS OF LIFE IN US RIGHT NOW.”*** SISTER JOAN CHITTISTER

**LENTEN LUNCH SCHEDULE**

This year, we are given a presentation each week from Paul’s first letter to the Thessalonians. Lunch begins at 12 noon and the program will be over by 1pm

We could use some donations of sandwiches and desserts when we host one of the lunches on **APRIL 2.** Please talk to Barb about what is needed.

March 12 – 1st Baptist Church; Pastor Kim is the speaker on 1Thess.1

March 19 – 1st United Methodist Church; Pastor Rich is speaker on 1Thess.2

March 26 – 1st Christian Church; Pastor Scotty speaking on 1Thess.3

April 2 – St. Paul’s UCC; Pastor Jeff speaking on 1Thess.4

April 9 – 1st Baptist Church; Pastor Daniel speaking on 1Thess.5

**FUTURE’S COMMITTEE UPDATE**

We met with a representative (Pastor) from a Pentecostal church that were initially interested in coming into our building and sharing space. We also went to Springboro UCC in January to see what would come of us working together.

Unfortunately, none of these seemed to pan out and we are back to square one.

Actually, Pastor Rich is working on getting Springboro and First Christian Church(which we already have an ongoing relationship with as far as Lenten Services and our summer joint picnic/worship) to share some news of activities/ministries they have and we do the same for them and have them publicized in our respective newsletters – so at least we can offer people from these churches and from ours, *opportunities* to join in on some projects, activities, fellowship with one another.

Which leaves us asking if any of you have any ideas we can explore as we look down the road at what our congregation’s life will become, let’s say, three years from now.

If you have any ideas – if you know of any church wishing to partner with us as far as sharing our building and/or sharing ministries with us, please let the Church Council know. We are anxious to hear your ideas on this matter.

Thank you for your consideration and interest.

**LIFE OF MAN**

**SCHOOL TABLET**

**ASPIRIN TABLET**

**STONE TABLET**

**DATES TO REMEMBER:**

**March 2 – SERVING THE HOMELESS AT THE CHURCH OF GOD – 4:30pm**

**March 5 – ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE 1PM**

**March 12,19,26 – LENTEN LUNCHES 12 Noon**