

St. James United Church of Christ

9008 Meisner Road, Casco, MI 48064 / www.ourstjameschurch.org/

Newsletter
March 2023
Volume 9, Issue 3

News from Pastor Ken



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I must confess, mea culpa – mea culpa, I had a moment of envy when my daughter who lives in Alaska of all places found great pleasure in sending me pictures of her gardens starting to come up. Green shoots, little flowers, the whole bit. Plus, last year she built a greenhouse which only increases my level of coveting. More confession, maxi mea culpa, my initial response was not as Christian as I would have liked. Now, in all fairness she lives in SE Alaska, Sitka, which is a temperate rain forest. Her winters are much milder than ours and so are the summers. But even so....

All that being said, I love March if for no other reason than it's the month that officially starts spring, even though it may not feel like it.

And even though this year has been a pretty mild winter with a rollercoaster of weather, many of us struggle to get through winter and what can seem like endless cold, grey days of winter. Just a couple days ago, as I was walking up the driveway looking at my muddy dormant gardens searching for little green sprouts, I felt the warm sunshine on my face for a few moments. Then today the afternoon clouds and cold took over again. What a feeling of hope I had even though I knew in my heart there is more than a little winter left. That is what I like about March. Somehow, we know that regardless of what winter weather is left to come that spring will not be denied. So not withstanding my daughter's taunting, I wait with anticipation as snow melts and ice thaws to see the little buds starting to appear and the daffodil shoots pushing up. And I start to notice some of our spring time birds starting to appear. There is hope.

There is hope and preparation for greater things to come. That is what this month in the church calendar is about as well. This year March is full of Lent. It started Feb 22 with Ash Wednesday. Lent provides us a wonderful opportunity to consider and pray about how we can get closer to being the



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Pastor Ken Newsletter Continued

person God would have us to be and to consider what it is God would have us to do.

Many consider Lent simply a time of giving up something we like for a few days, but I think that just as Jesus spent time in the wilderness contemplating his ministry, we too are called to spend time considering our own ministry. I encourage us all to use this time for planning and preparing. Lent is a time of spiritual preparation. I invite you not to simply give up something but to take time to prepare your spirit for an exciting new journey. Here are a couple of suggestions. Spend a few extra minutes each day in prayer and meditation. Read a book on spirituality, commit to reading the Upper Room or Daily Bread every morning with your coffee (it's only a small page), read one proverb every day from the bible (there are 31), commit an anonymous daily and intentional act of kindness, remember to say grace before each meal (not just dinner), a simply thank you God works. You get the idea. Prepare yourself for what God has planned for you. Again, I encourage you to not just "give up" something but to add a little something that will feed your spirit.

Although most of us think of Lent as not an uplifting time of year I would like us to think about Lent the same way gardeners think about March. It is a time of thinking, planning, and preparing for spring. It is a time of great anticipation. We dream about and prepare for new growth in our gardens, we remember projects from last year that we want to finish, we sharpen our tools and start ordering seed. We remember the exciting successes of springs past and prepare to start this spring full of expectation and optimism.

This is my vision for us. As we begin our journey into Lent, let us not think of this as a season of spiritual winter but rather a time of preparing for our own spiritual spring, both personally and as a community of faith.

Remember, whoever you are and wherever you are at on life's journey, you are held in God's unconditional love, boundless mercy, and unending grace. And there is a place for you here.

Take care and be well, Peace!
Ken

Prayer List

Prayers for Claudette, Ralph, Wayne, Danielle, Keith, Karen, Ryan, Judy, Sue, Dan, Luran, Kathy, Art, Hazel, Gordie, Holly, Gina, Michael, Deborah, Cheryl, Lorraine, Trudy, Carolyn, Ken, Sharon, James, Melanie, Scott, Bernice, Gary, Marion, Debbie, Dorothy, Brenda, Families of St. John & St. James



Outreach Ministry

Helping Hands

Current Needs: Crackers, cereal, canned fruit and veggies, boxed foods like Hamburger Helper, Rice-A-Roni, Mac and Cheese

Not accepting books and furniture currently.

No expired or opened boxes of food accepted.

Kids in Distress

Current needs are as follows:

Socks and underwear – all sizes, hygiene items for both boys and girls and adults, shoes and especially boots – new or gently used, boys pants size 6 thru 14/16.

B-WARM

Continued prayers for the future of the mission. They are currently looking at the possibility of having some new people in place in the spring and re-opening in the fall. Pray that all goes well!!!

****Live streaming of Sunday Services will continue at 9:00am on the St. James Facebook page and at 11:00am on St. Johns Facebook page. Both will be available by video once live streaming is completed.****

Facebook

Please follow St. James on Facebook. New postings, events and Sunday Services are posted on a daily or weekly basis.

Weekly Emails of Encouragement and Enlightenment

Please sign-up for our weekly emails provided by Pastor Ken. Provide your email address to Pastor Ken at kgadd@oursstjameschurch.org

Birthdays in March

3/3 Taylor Lindke
3/12 Becky Pittman
3/12 Nancy Uppleger
3/13 Kathleen McCarthy
3/15 Josh Mahnke
3/18 Amy Klomp
3/21 Dan Klomp
3/24 Kayla Wendt
3/25 Hunter Wendt
3/26 Timothy Carl Pauley
2/20 Don Robertson

Anniversaries in March

3/7 Judy & Frank Traingali
3/7 Dense & Chris Brogan
3/16 Cindy & DanKlomp
3/17 Colleen & Rusty Stover
3/17 Sharon & Gerald Fritz

Earthly Gifts

Contributions for February were \$4,290.00. If you desire envelopes because you never received any of misplaced yours, please leave a phone message at the church 586-727-1623 or send an e-mail to www.ourstjames.org. Please let us know if you want the envelopes mailed (no charge) or you will pick up at the church next Sunday. Please remember this Sunday loose donations are given to the pastor to help him with other needy situations.

The Discretionary Fund March 5th, 2023

Did you know this fund is utilized to aid with rent, utilities, medical supplies, food, and transportation to doctors, etc.?

This is generated from the loose change collected the first Sunday of each month. Please empty your pockets and change purses that day to meet the needs of our church and community.

Spiritual Ministry

Please feel free to bring your children to church and partake in the bi-weekly Sunday School classes (2nd and 4th Sunday). Please contact Sue Tews if you are interested in helping with Sunday school.

Zoom Meeting will be beginning Wednesday March 1st at 7pm and will continue through Wednesday, March 22nd. The discussion will be on the Origins and Beginnings of Christianity. Sign up sheet in church basement.

St. Patrick's Day Blessings!!!

May the road rise
to meet you.

May the wind be always
at your back.

May the sun shine warm
upon your face.

And rains fall soft
upon your fields.

And until we meet again,

May God hold you in
the hollow of His hand.

MISSIONtoSave.com



Christmas Tote Bags for Local Community Charities

Christmas Tote Bags

A new updated list is available downstairs in the church of what is needed for this year. The tote bags are for both boys and girls between the ages of 2 and 14. The items accepted anytime: hygiene items such as: toothbrush holders, toothbrushes, toothpaste, washcloths, dental floss, comb/brushes, hair accessories such as head bands, ponytails, clips, bows, and barrettes and school supplies such as: notebooks, crayons, colored pencils, colored markers, pencil sharpeners, scissors (for youngsters and older children) , rulers, large erasers. Pens, pencils and socks, hats, scarves and gloves/mittens and toys.

Please donate travel size items, we only have so much space to store the items in for the year and we need to get all items to fit in the bags.

Bottle / Can Collection

We are continuing to collect all bottle and cans at church. They can be placed in the back-room downstairs at church.

All donations should be empty and clean bottles and cans. The money is used to support our Christian Education Program.

If you need someone to pick them up please contact Don or Betty Robertson at robertson3265@comcast.net.

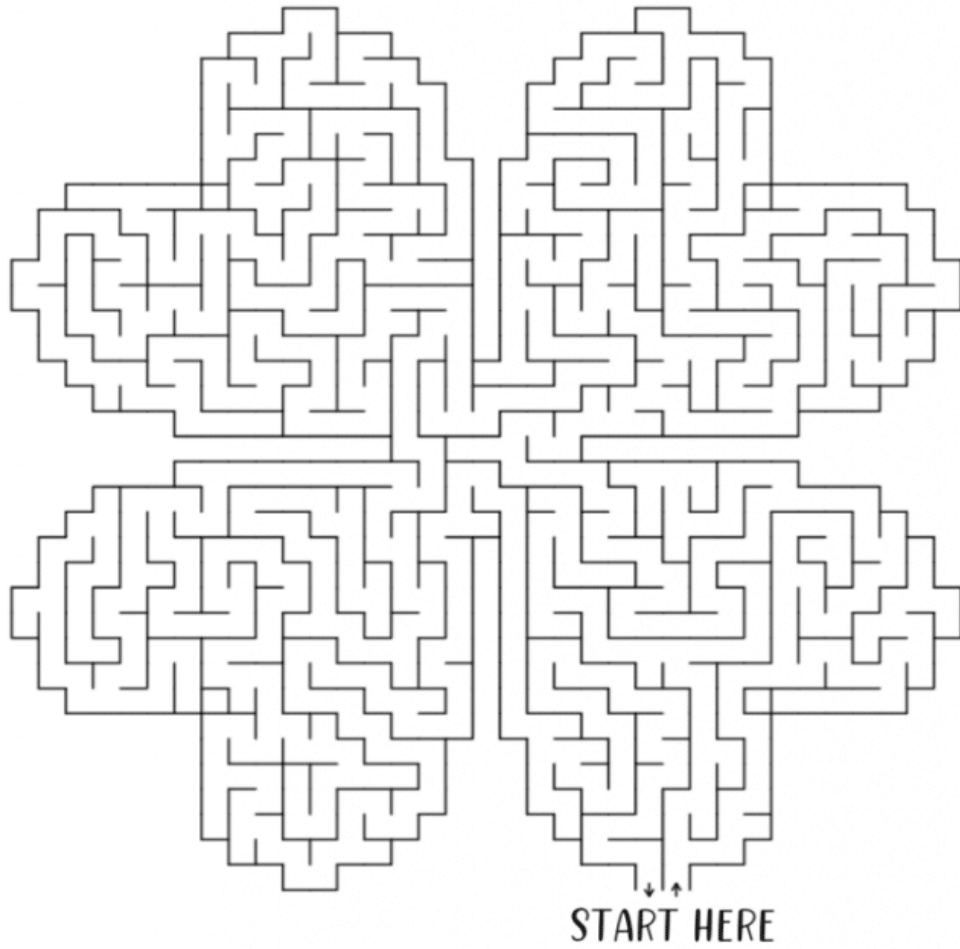


Military Prayer List

I will be including a list in the newsletter of our men and women in the military, to acknowledge those who serve and to pray for their safety. Please submit your loved one's, family member or friend's name, rank and branch of service to Roberta Fisher to be placed on the list.

Kid's Page

MAZE 1



March Activities

Wednesday, March 1 – Zoom Meeting with Pastor Ken – 7pm

Sunday, March 5 – Sunday Service with Holy Communion – 9am

Wednesday, March 8 – Zoom Meeting with Pastor Ken – 7pm

Saturday, March 11 – Euchre – 6:30pm.

Sunday, March 12 – Sunday Service – 9am.

Tuesday, March 14 – Council Meeting – 7pm.

Wednesday, March 15 – Zoom Meeting with Pastor Ken – 7pm

Saturday, March 18 – Prep corn beef and veggies for dinner – 9am
Church basement, bring cutting board, peeler, and knives

Sunday, March 19 – Sunday Service with Holy Communion – 9am.
Corn Beef Dinner at Perch Point – 4pm

Wednesday, March 22 – Zoom Meeting with Pastor Ken – 7pm

April Activities

Sunday, April 2 – Palm Sunday Service with Holy Communion – 9am

Thursday, April 6 – Maundy Thursday Service – 7pm. at St. James

Friday, April 7 – Good Friday Service and Stations - 12pm at St. James and 7pm.
at St. Johns

Saturday, April 8 – Great Easter Vigil – 7pm. at St. James

Sunday, April 9 – Easter Sunday Service with Holy Communion – 9am.

Tuesday, April 11 – Council Meeting – 7pm.

Saturday, April 15 – Euchre at St. James – 6:30pm.

Sunday, April 16 – Sunday Service with Holy Communion – 9am.

Sunday, April 30 – Sunday Service with Healing – 9am.



St. James UCC Casco

Annual Corned Beef & Cabbage Dinner

Honoring our own St. Pat (Pat Bandlow)

Sunday, March 19th 2023 – 4pm

Perch Point Conservation Club, Meisner Rd

Adults: \$15 for dinner and dessert
Children under 12: Good will offering
Cash bar available
Raffles* 50/50* Bake Sale

For reservations, please call: 586-915-7662

Scripture Readings for March

Sunday, March 5

Second Sunday in Lent

Gen 12: 1-4a

Ps 121

Rom 4: 1-5, 13-17

John 3: 1-17 or Matt 17: 1-9

Bold Blessing

Sunday, March 19

Fourth Sunday in Lent

1 Sam 16: 1-13

Ps 23

Eph 5: 8-14

John 9: 1-41

Restored

Sunday, March 12

Third Sunday in Lent

Ex 17: 1-7

Ps 95

Rom 5: 1-11

John 4: 5-42

Thirsty Voices

Sunday, March 26

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Ezek 37: 1-14

Ps 130

Rom 8: 6-11

John 11: 1-45

Breathe of Hope



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