

St. James United Church of Christ

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

Newsletter
March 2024
Volume 10, Issue 3

News from Pastor Ken



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Greetings to all.

What a fickle winter we have had and then there is the weather. No snow, then a bunch of snow. Single digit temperatures and 50 degrees in the same 48 hours. Snow, ice, sunshine, cold and gray. It is the time of year when Mother Nature starts to think about spring but still loves the way the snow clings to the trees and the ice twinkles in the moon light. I cannot say I blame her.

Nonetheless, I really enjoy March if for no other reason than it is the month that officially starts spring, even though it may not feel like it.

Many of us struggle to get through winter and what can seem like endless cold, grey days. Just a couple of days ago, as I was walking up the driveway looking at my icy-muddy dormant gardens and I felt the warm sunshine on my face for a few moments but then again today the afternoon clouds and cold took over. 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, I wait with anticipation as the snow melts to see the little buds starting to appear and the daffodil shoots pushing up. And I watch my bird feeders to see what new arrivals are making an early appearance. 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 we enter March in Lent and March is full of Lent right up until the last week. Lent provides us a wonderful opportunity to consider and pray about how we can get closer to being the person God would have us to be and to consider what it is God would have us to do.

Pastor Ken Newsletter Continued

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 do not just mean our role in church. In fact, I am thinking about our greater purpose in life. When I recognize that I have always belonged to God, before-during and after this physical experience, I realize that all that I do and say is a ministry of some sort or another.

I encourage us all to use this time for a little, thinking, praying, 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. Consider one or two as a daily practice. Spend a few extra minutes each day in prayer and meditation. Read any book on spirituality, commit to reading the Upper Room or Daily Bread every morning with your coffee/tea (it is only a small page), read one proverb every day from the bible (there are 31), commit to an anonymous daily and intentional act of kindness, 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. Who knows, you may find it rewarding enough to continue.

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 continue 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, as we close the month with Holy Week, 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 Christopher, Gary, Michael, James & Family, Gina, Trudy, Rosemary, Kathy, Bev, Sharon, Nancy, Ron

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 for girls and boys, hygiene items for both boys and girls and adults, adult gloves, coats for girls and boys all sizes, boys pants size 3 and up.

B-WARM

Continued prayers for the future of the mission. They are currently looking at the possibility of having some new people in place at the beginning of the New Year. Pray that all goes well!!!

Birthdays in March

3/3 Taylor Lindke
3/12 Becky Pittman
3/12 Nancy Uppleger
3/13 Kathleen McCarthy
3/15 John Mahnke
3/18 Amy Klomp
3/21 Dan Klomp
3/24 Kayla Wendt
3/25 Hunter Wendt
3/26 Tomothy Carl Pauley
3/30 Don Robertson

Anniversaries in March

3/7 Judy and Frank Tringali
3/7 Denise and Chris Brogan
3/16 Cindy and Dan Klomp
3/17 Colleen and Rusty Stover
3/17 Sharon and Gerald Fritz

Earthly Gifts

Our monthly goal for February was \$5,558.25, the total reached was \$14,269.00 plus \$10.00 Mission and \$300.75 from Euchre. If you need contribution envelopes, please either call the church 586-727-1963 or send an e-mail to ourstjameschurch.org or if you're at service let the greeter know. Thanks

The Discretionary Fund March 3, 2024

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.

St. Patrick's Day Poem



An Irish Blessing

May the sun shine bright
on your windowpane,
May the rainbow be certain
to follow each rain,
May the hand of a friend
always be near you,
And may God fill your heart
with gladness to cheer you.



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, ponyes a, 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 will be used towards St. James Painting Project.

If you need someone to pick them up please contact Art Wagner at 586-855-2953.



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 love one's, family member or friend's name, rank and branch of service to Roberta Fisher to be placed on the list.

Ian Riley - Marines

Kid's Page

Free Activity Sheet for Saint Patrick's Day

Make your own unique shamrock:



Find all ten words:

Saint
Patrick
Ireland
Roman
Britain
Priest
Bishop
Shamrock
Trinity
March

S	A	I	N	T	L	F	Y	P	A	I
H	S	R	O	M	A	N	X	R	T	H
A	A	E	J	E	B	M	L	I	Y	B
M	I	L	W	X	R	O	L	E	S	I
R	P	A	T	R	I	C	K	S	H	S
O	A	N	K	G	T	Q	V	T	A	H
C	T	D	P	M	A	R	C	H	M	O
K	R	M	A	Q	I	Z	G	O	W	P
W	U	H	M	R	N	U	T	K	O	Y
B	T	R	I	N	I	T	Y	L	C	O

Unscramble these Saint Patrick's Day Words

LRADNEI _____

RKMAHCOS _____

KKTACPI _____

GRAHM _____



March Activities

Saturday, March 2 – Euchre at St. James – 6:30pm.

Sunday, March 3 – Sunday Worship with Holy Communion – 9am

Wednesday, March 6 – Lenton discussion group on How to Live a Better Christian Life – Zoom at 7pm

Tuesday, March 12 – Council Meeting – 6:30pm

Wednesday, March 13 – Lenton discussion group on How to Live a Better Christian Life – Zoom at 7pm

Saturday, March 16 – Euchre at St. James – 6:30pm

Sunday, March 17 – Sunday Worship with Holy Communion – 9am

Sunday, March 24 – Palm Sunday Sunday Worship – 9am

St. James Corn Beef Dinner at Perch Point at \$16.00 per adult ticket, children 12 and under – free will offering – 4pm to 7pm

Painting Fund

St. James has started a Painting fund to cover the future costs of paint, painting and scaffolding to repaint the inside of the church. If you would like to donate to this fund, place an envelope in the collection plate earmarked “Paint Project” or mail your donation to church at 9008 Meiner Road, Casco, MI 48064

Thank you Box

For all the things that get done in the background of church that no one receives a thank you for. A box with paper has been set up in the front vestibule for you to leave a “Word of Thanks” for anyone for whatever reason. This box will allow members to voice a thank you for that exact reason. The box will be checked for any Thank Yous and will be read in church along with the announcements each week.



Scripture Readings for March

Sunday, March 3
Third Sunday in Lent
IEX 20: 1-17
Ps 19
1 Cor 1: 18-25
John 2: 13-22
Beautiful Law

Sunday, March 17
Fifth Sunday in Lent
Jer 31: 31-34
Ps 51: 1-2 or Ps 119: 9-16
Heb 5: 5-10
John 12: 20-33
Deep in Our Hearts

Sunday, March 31
Easter
Acts 10: 34-43 or Isa 24: 6-9
PS 118: 1-2, 14-24
1 Cor 15: 1-11 or Acts 10: 34-43
John 20: 1-18 or Mark 16: 1-8
Now What?

Sunday, March 10
Fourth Sunday in Lent
Num 21: 4-9
Ps 107: 1-3, 17-22
Eph 2: 1-10
John 3: 14-21
No Matter What

Sunday, March 24
Palm Sunday
Liturgy of the Palms
Ps 118; 1-2, 19-29
Mark 11: 1-11
or John 12: 12-16
Into Jerusalem

Lenten and Holy Week Schedule St James / St John

March 3 – Holy Communion 9am St James, 11am St Johns

March 6 – Discussion Wednesday 7pm Zoom How to live a better Christian Life

March 10 – Morning worship 9am St James, 11am St Johns

March 13 – Discussion Wednesday 7pm Zoom How to live a better Christian Life

March 17 – Morning worship with Communion 9am St James, 11am St Johns

March 24 – Palm Sunday 9am St James, 11am St Johns

March 28 – Maundy Thursday w/ Communion, Stripping of the Alter, 7pm St James

March 29 – Good Friday service w/Stations of the Cross 12:00pm St James, 7pm St Johns

March 30 – Great Easter Vigil 7pm St James

March 31 – Easter Communion Service (potluck breakfast 8am) 9am St James, 11am St Johns



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NEWSLETTER