

Montoursville Presbyterian Church

March 2020

Giving Up

Lent can be such a strange and wonderful season in the life of the Church. On the one hand, we increase our opportunities for worship and ministry, as we're invited to observe a holy Lenten season "by self-examination and penitence, by prayer and fasting, by works of love, and by reading and meditating on the Word of God," as we rush towards Palm Sunday (& Confirmation) and Easter. On the other hand, we are at the same time encouraged to slow down, in order to observe those Lenten practices, to reflect, to spend more time in contemplation—all of which run entirely counter to the culture we are living in: 24 hour news, instant replies to messages, blindingly fast shipping of packages to us, which still seem to come too slowly. To add to the list, many people decide to give something up for the season of Lent as an added discipline for this time.

Our congregation does not seem to be big on the "giving up for Lent" discipline, or at least, no one speaks much of it (which is right in keeping with Jesus' teaching on how to fast, or give things up!). So I'm not sure how many of us are planning to observe the season in this way. I was intrigued (and a little frustrated—hey, this was my idea for a newsletter, and now he's broadcast my idea to millions!) to find that Pope Francis, speaking to a part of the Church that has many giving something up for Lent, decided to tie right into our sermon series by encouraging folks to give up the sort of rude and thoughtless criticisms and attacks that often pop up on social media. After telling the faithful to "turn off the television and open the Bible" he reminded us that we live in a "polluted environment of too much verbal violence, of many offensive and harmful words, which the network (I think he was shooting for "internet") amplifies. Today one insults as if one said 'Good day.'"

My idea was a little bit different, but along the same lines: are we willing to consider giving up "habitual outrage" for Lent? I have not made much headway in my giving other drivers the benefit of the doubt or overabundant grace, so I think I'll have to keep working on that throughout Lent—don't even ask what happened on Market St yesterday on my way to the hospital. I'll only say that I fully expected to see this maniac pulling into the Emergency Department once I arrived, but, no, just in a really big hurry to go somewhere else! The author of the book that has shaped many of my ideas over these last weeks calls us to respond to a world "awash in anger, division, and hostility." This lines up so well with Lent, for he goes on to say that we are "living in a day—and this is indeed our moment—when we need to live like Christ, as gospel Christians in the midst of shouting, anger, and hatred." One way we can live like Christ, and observe a holy Lent, is to step out of the swirling pot of outrage being constantly stirred. Let us instead show ourselves to be followers of the Prince of Peace, declining to stir the pot but choosing rather to show love, seek peace, forgive and forbear in a time that wants nothing to do with such virtues. A preacher I was listening to this week quoted a wonderful line from a theologian who said that the Christian life should be a "living exegesis (or explanation) of the narrative of Jesus" Okay, that's a bit more of a paraphrase than a quote. His point was that our lives should reflect Jesus' life and love in such a way that folks seeing us, living with us, bumping into us, know more about Jesus from how it is that we live.

Giving up on outrage, giving up on winning the debate, giving up on scoring points. That's one way we can travel a road to a holy Lent. May God bless us in this season. *David*

I've meant all month to let you know about some of the books I'm working through for this series. Here are some: *Christians in the Age of Outrage: How to Bring Our Best When the World Is at Its Worst*, Ed Stetzer; *Alienated America: Why Some Places Thrive While Others Collapse*, Timothy P. Carney; *Them: Why We Hate Each Other and How to Heal*, Sen. Ben Sasse; *We Need To Talk: How to Have Conversations that Matter*, Celeste Headlee.

Committee Notes

Session

Met on February 11, 2020

- Co-Moderator of PCUSA General Assembly will be preaching at MPC on March 22. She also will be presenting at March 21 Presbytery meeting at Watsontown.
- Discussions are underway to have an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) installed in narthex.
- Appointed Elder Shimmel to serve as Commissioner to 621st Stated Meeting of the Northumberland Presbytery at Watsontown First Presbyterian Church, on March 20.
- Motion approved to advertise service times in Sun-Gazette *Celebrate Easter* special section to be published April 4.
- Wednesday evening Lenten suppers and services will begin March 4.
- Next meeting: March 10, 7:00 p.m., MCEC.

Pastor's Report

- Has been invited to preach at one of United Churches of Lycoming County's Lenten luncheons.
- Confirmation class is going very well.
- Choir is going very well with new director.

Please extend your sympathy and prayers to the families and friends of:

Gary Finn, Betty Heinzelman (Kathy Becker's mother), Joan Hunter

Greeters & Ushers for March 1st & March 8th

Greeters & Ushers (8:15) March 1st – *Karschner family*
March 8th - *Mike Yourish & Arlene Smithgall*
Greeters (10:45) *Bradley family*
Ushers – *J. Lapinski, D. Peace, J. Fetterman, M. Bogart*

Greeters & Ushers for March 15th & March 29th

Greeters & Ushers (8:15) *Doc & Kay Shearer*
Greeters (10:45) *Prindle family*
Ushers – *G. Casella Jr., D. Casella, D. Konkle, Dan Messersmith*

Greeters & Ushers for March 22nd Women’s Sunday

Greeters & Ushers (8:15) *Doris Schild, Cathy Rush, Ruth Reigle*
Greeters (10:45) *Jamie Hahn & Paula Shimmel*
Ushers – *B. Mathias, S. King, W. Smith, K. Rush*

Liturgists for March

March 1st– *Doc Shearer/Winnie Kremser*
March 8th– *Carl Fulton/Winnie Kremser*
March 15th – *Kellie Karschner/Dave Shimmel*
March 22nd – *Winnie Kremser/Diane Casella*
March 29th – *Kellie Karschner/Faye Konkle*

<u>Church Attendance</u>	<u>8:15</u>	<u>10:45</u>
February 2	34	77
February 9	27	88
February 16	38	77
February 23	25	100

Upcoming Events

Reception – March 1st

Everyone is invited to gather in Fellowship Hall after the second service to welcome our Director of Music Ministries, Ryan Neidig. Stop by to say hello and have some cake!

Lenten Dinner Sign-ups!

Starting March 4th our MPC church family will gather for worship at 7:00 p.m. and enjoy a time of fellowship with a simple meal before each service at 6:00 p.m.

Please consider hosting a Lenten supper. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board with the available dates (March 18th is the only date left). Thank you!

FISH Youth Group

March 8th - Come to the MCEC at 5:30 pm for dinner and FISH fun.

March 14th - Baked Steak Dinner - Grab a FISH friend and sign up to help!

March 22 - Swim party at the Shearers! More details to follow.

Baked Steak Dinner – March 14th

See Dave Shimmel if you still need tickets or if you would like to help at the dinner.

Palm Sunday Luncheon - Evangelism and Fellowship would like to invite our church family to join us on Palm Sunday, April 5th, for a potluck luncheon in honor our 2020 Confirmation Class. Join us immediately following the second service to celebrate this special day in their lives. Meat, beverage and cake will be provided, please bring a dish to share. We look forward to celebrating this wonderful occasion with all of you.

Announcements

Current Expense & Mission Budget

January giving	\$ 15,071.00
January expen	\$(18,230.88)
Excess(Deficit)	<u>\$ (3,159.88)</u>
YTD giving\$	\$ 15,071.00
YTD expenses	\$(18,230.88)
Excess(Deficit)	<u>\$ (3,159.88)</u>
Operating Fund Balance	\$ 8,966.15

EASTER FLOWER ORDER

Deadline for ordering is Sunday, March 29th \$10.00 each - 6" pots

Any questions, please contact the church office at 368-1595.

Order form can be placed in the box in the narthex along with payment, or mailed to 205 Tule St. Montoursville, PA 17754. Thank you.

Your Name(s):

In Honor of:

In Memory of:

Mums # _____

Tulips # _____

\$ _____ **Total Payment Included**

(Please make checks payable to MPC)

March 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1</p> <p>Communion</p> <p>Worship 8:15am</p> <p>Sunday School 9:30am</p> <p>Worship 10:45am</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Prayer 8:30am (MCEC)</p> <p>Yoga 10:15am-Noon (FH)</p> <p>Circle 1 Meeting Noon (FH)</p>	<p>3</p> <p>PSU Ext Class 5:00pm-9:00pm (FH)</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Lent Supper 6:00pm (FH)</p> <p>Lent Service 7:00 (S)</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Commission on Ministry 5:00pm (C)</p> <p>AA 7:00pm-8:00pm (FH)</p> <p>Choir 6:45pm</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Office Closed</p> <p>Yoga 10:15am-Noon (FH)</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8</p> <p>Worship 8:15am</p> <p>Sunday School 9:30am</p> <p>Worship 10:45am</p> <p>FISH 5:30pm (MCEC)</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Prayer 8:30am (MCEC)</p> <p>Yoga 10:15am-Noon (FH)</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Session Meeting 7:00pm (MCEC)</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Lent Supper 6:00pm (FH)</p> <p>Lent Service 7:00 (S)</p> <p>District 48 AA 6:30pm-8:30pm (FH)</p>	<p>12</p> <p>AA 7:00pm-8:00pm (FH)</p> <p>Choir 6:45pm</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Office Closed</p> <p>Baked Steak Dinner Set-up All Day (FH)</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Baked Steak Dinner Take Outs- 3:30-6:30pm Dine In 4:00-6:30 (FH)</p>
<p>15</p> <p>Worship 8:15am</p> <p>Sunday School 9:30am</p> <p>Worship 10:45am</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Prayer 8:30am (MCEC)</p> <p>Yoga 10:15am-Noon (FH)</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Deacons Meeting 6:00pm (C)</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Lent Supper 6:00pm (FH)</p> <p>Lent Service 7:00 (S)</p>	<p>19</p> <p>AA 7:00pm-8:00pm (FH)</p> <p>Choir 6:45pm</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Office Closed</p> <p>Yoga 10:15am-Noon (FH)</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>22</p> <p>Worship 8:15am</p> <p>Sunday School 9:30am</p> <p>Worship 10:45am</p> <p>FISH Swim Party</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Prayer 8:30am (MCEC)</p> <p>Blood Drive 1:00pm-6:00pm (FH)</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Toastmasters Dinner 5:00pm-9:00pm (FH)</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Lent Supper 6:00pm (FH)</p> <p>Lent Service 7:00 (S)</p>	<p>26</p> <p>AA 7:00pm-8:00pm (FH)</p> <p>Choir 6:45pm</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Office Closed</p> <p>Yoga 10:15am-Noon (FH)</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29</p> <p>Worship 8:15am</p> <p>Sunday School 9:30am</p> <p>Worship 10:45am</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Prayer 8:30am (MCEC)</p> <p>Yoga 10:15am-Noon (FH)</p>	<p>31</p>				