

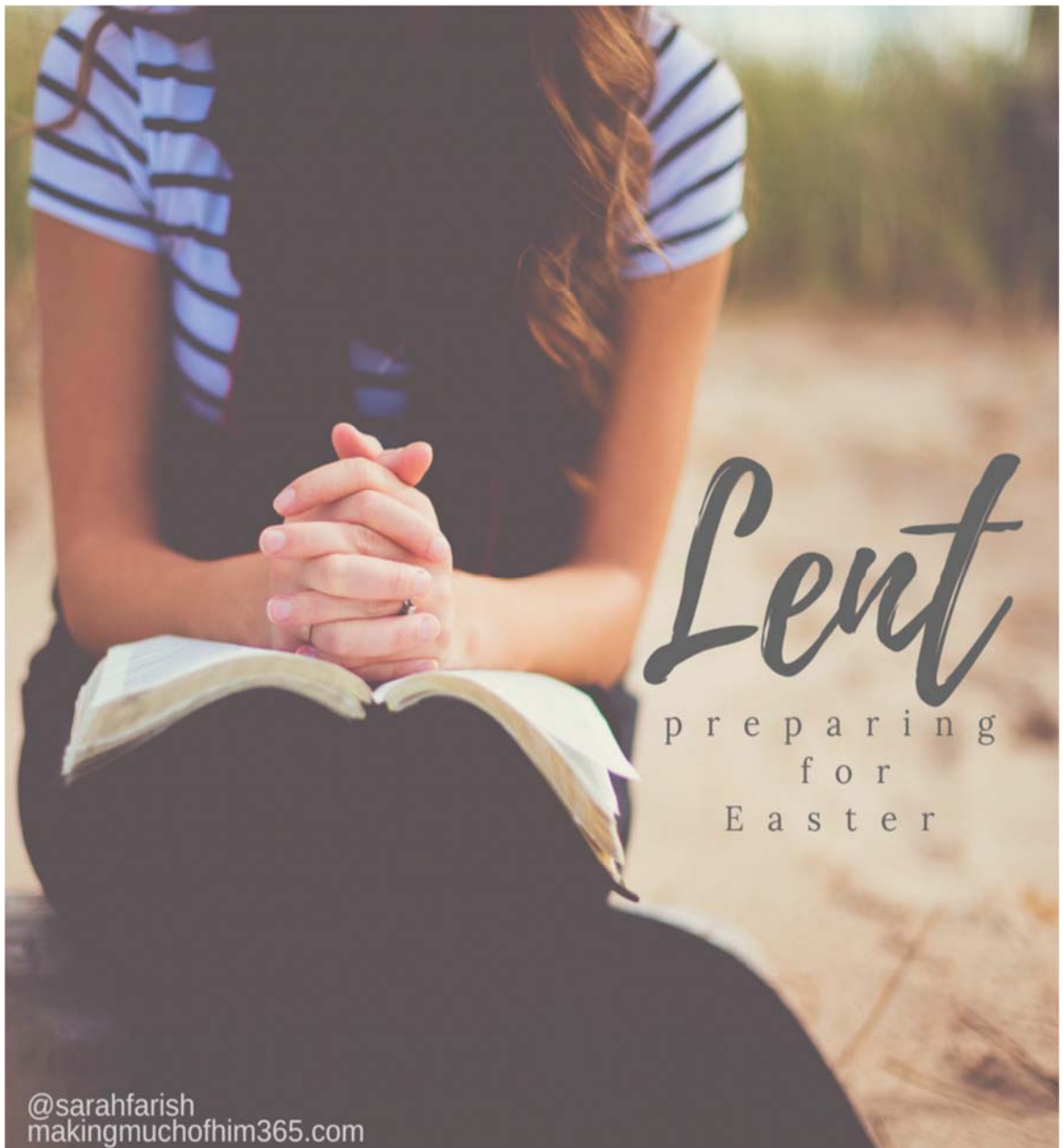
Newberg First Presbyterian Church

VOLUME 19  
ISSUE 3  
MARCH 2019



# PEW NEWS

Newberg, OR



PAGE I

## Lent and the Liberating Gospel of Luke

I am happy to remind you that we are entering the Season of Lent. Lent is an intentional season of spiritual renewal in preparation for Easter. This is the time in the church calendar when we slow down and reflect on where we are in our relationship with God. Yes, we can do this at any time, but Lent is a special time to remember God's grace, hope, and love as we deepen our intimacy with God through the spiritual practices of personal reflection, prayer, Scripture study, refreshing recreation, spiritual friendship, and service.

I am excited to explore Lent with you as we continue our study of the Gospel of Luke. The four Gospels all tell the story of Jesus, but Luke focuses the most on Jesus' heart for the poor, vulnerable and oppressed. He also shows a special concern for women and children, which is partly why we often center on Luke to explore the birth narrative of Jesus and the resurrection. The Gospel of Luke is a liberating message of hope in Jesus for those who are on the margins.

Lent begins officially on Ash Wednesday, which this year falls on March 6th. During this service we receive ashes on our forehead and remember our own mortality and that "we are dust and to dust we shall return". This is a worship service of humility and rest in God's abiding love.

In this Pew News, my wife Karen offers you a reflection on the experience of Lent and a spiritual exercise to support your own journey with God. We hope this can help you deepen your intimacy with God.

In this Season of Lent during Sunday worship, we will also explore the wilderness experience of Jesus, the power of Christ to bring healing and wholeness to our lives, and the Sermon on the Mount. We will enjoy music from our choir on Palm Sunday, a Maundy Thursday dinner, and a special prayer retreat on Good Friday. You may wish to give up something for Lent in order to focus your attention on God, or you may wish to add something to your life, like an intentional spiritual practice. For example, I think my intentional spiritual practice will be adding more fun family time to my life. Yes, fun time is spiritual! What you choose to add or give up is up to you and God, but I encourage you to see this time as a grace filled experience where God's love may be more fully experienced in your life. Welcome to the Season of Lent!

Grace, Hope, and Love,

Pastor Chris

# The Experience of Lent

By Dr. Karen Murphy, Ph.D.

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## What is Lent?

Lent (meaning “springtime”) is a period of 40 days (excluding Sundays) prior to Easter which the early church set aside as a time of preparation. It is a time of preparation of one’s heart, mind, and soul, which allows one to fully embrace, experience, and live into the depth of the Paschal mystery that is presented to us in Christ’s death and resurrection. It is a time in which we are called, in continuity with other Christians throughout the ages, to pray, repent, fast, listen, refocus, and remember.

During this season, we pray for grace, grace to see ourselves as we truly are. We pray for strength, strength not only to see our desperate, limited, and often desolate humanness, but also for the strength to see God as He truly is, with arms open wide, waiting to refresh us with hope, compassion, and peace. We pray that the Spirit of the living God will empower us in fresh, new ways as we seek to serve, to learn, to live, and to love. We repent of the times that we have fallen short, of the moments when we have not been kind, when we have not lived justly, when we have been selfish and fearful, when we were not present to the people around us.

During this season, we choose to fast, sacrificing our own desires, wants, and needs, in order that we may be re-sensitized to the needs of the world around us, to the cries for love and the cries for justice. We set aside our own incessant cravings that we may hear the ever-present still, small voice of God speaking to us in the midst of a world filled with noise, with busyness, with “doing,” with mindlessness. We fast in order that we may hear again, that we may recognize our own longings for life, for healing, for love, that we may live mindfully in the present, truly seeing one another as sons and daughters of God.

And, finally, during this season we remember. We remember that we are but dust, that we were created from dust and to dust we shall return. We remember that we were bought with a price, that we are not our own, and that we are deeply, deeply loved in the midst of our brokenness, in the midst of our shortcomings, in the midst of our failings, and in the midst of our weakness. We are reminded that God is ever present, never changing and that we are forever held by His great mercy. Lent is a time of prayer, repentance, fasting, remembering, and celebrating what and whose we are. During this Lenten season, may you experience God’s gracious and loving presence as you wait in expectation for the day when, by His Spirit, all is made new.

### Lectio Divina:

Mark 1: 9-13 “At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.” At once the Spirit sent him out into the desert, and he was in the desert forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him.”

Read the passage slowly three times and respond to the following questions.

What word or phrase stands out to you?

During this season of Lent, what do you feel called to fast from in your life in order to re-focus your attention on God?

What spiritual practice(s) would you like to add into your life?

What aspects of your life feel like a “desert” experience? How do you need God to meet you?

## Pew News Mission & Global Witness

Mission News:

**Light of Hope** - Taliilee and Urgessa report about the Arsi Oromo Scriptures: We are now preparing to publish a complete Bible. The printing will be done in South Korea. Light of Hope is responsible to raise \$30,000 to print 10,000 copies (this includes the shipping and customs costs).

**Wycliffe SIL** - Brian is developing a good rhythm with translation checking. He has set up a morphological parser on his computer (which helps break up words into their parts), and that has been quite helpful, though it takes a bit of work. Having the parser set up helps Brian maximize his time in his weekly talk with the translator. They no longer have to go through verse by verse first making sure Brian understands every word.

**CRU** – Erik says “One way we’re seeing leaders engaging is our SPORTS Team staff meeting coaches at our local high school in Lebanon to resource them and their athletes (our kids and their teammates could be impacted) as well as praying for open doors into club teams and elite athletes.”

**Smiths** - Dennis shares that in 1978 exiles gathered to form a new denomination that came to be known as the United Presbyterian Church (IPU). Forty years down the road, a new generation of women and men are stepping up to lead this small but vital denomination. We met to learn from them how they are being faithful to the Gospel today and how we can support new leaders as they finish their academic training.

**Tierra Nueva** - Now more than ever, families affected by immigration, incarceration and addiction are vilified in America. At Tierra Nueva, these populations are at the heart of our work. The “illegal immigrant,” the “criminal” and the “addict,” so scapegoated in the national fervor, are the “lost sheep” we embrace with the Good News in Jesus.

Every Third Thursday of the Month

5:00 pm

Friendsview Manor....Hess Creek Dining Room

No agenda...Just good food and conversation

This is open to **all who are interested**.....for a very reasonable price! No need to sign up.....just come and enjoy the time!



*toward a violence free life*

## **Wish List**

Gift Cards (for gas/phone service/grocery shopping, movie cards, etc.)

Month/Day Bus Passes (YCTA)

Diapers, wipes, formula

Canned foods, juice boxes

Adult/Teen/Children's clothing, shoes, books, toys.

Household starter kits (dishes, pans, coffee pots, towels, first aid kits, silverware, etc.)

Cleaning supplies

Paper products (toilet paper, paper towels, etc)

Office supplies (office printing paper, 1-3" binders, paper clips, pens, etc.)

**Deacons will be collecting items March 24th thru March 31st**

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GFU Koinonia  
African Night  
with Sara on the  
Panel representing  
Ethiopia



**Valentine's Luncheon** sponsored by Deacons— Just one of the Auction Items  
you could participate in.







**March 23rd is coming!** Save the Date for a fabulous Women's Gathering at Newberg First Presbyterian! All Women from College-age to Seasoned Citizen are invited to a morning gathering of fun! Friendship! Food! Faith! Saturday morning March 23, from 9 to 11:30 in Fellowship Hall.

What a great poem by the late  
Spike Milligan about smiling

Smiling is infectious  
You catch it like the flu

When someone smiled at me today  
I started smiling too

I walked around the corner  
And someone saw me grin

When he smiled I realised  
I had passed it on to him

I thought about the smile  
And then realised its worth

A single smile like mine  
Could travel round the earth

So if you feel a smile begin  
Don't leave it undetected

Start an epidemic  
And get the world infected.

The graphic features several yellow smiley face emojis: a wide-grinning face, a winking face, a face with thumbs up, a face with a single thumb up, a face with a single eye closed, and a neutral face.

**Adult Ed.**

This month Adult Ed. focuses on the theme of Lent.

- Mar 3: GFU Professor Tim Tsohantaridis leading discussions on Greek themes
- Mar. 10: GFU Professor Tim Tsohantaridis leading discussions on Greek themes
- Mar. 17: GFU Professor Tim Tsohantaridis leading discussions on Greek themes and Lent
- Mar. 24: GFU Professor Tim Tsohantaridis leading discussions on Greek themes and Lent
- Mar. 31: Margaret Wallace will lead discussions on the penitential season



## March

### Birthdays

- 1– Craig McCourt
- 2– Max McCourt
- 2– George Monto
- 17– Joshua Weible
- 18– Doris Feenstra
- 19– Pat Goodman
- 27– Elaine Johnsen
- 27– Karen Murphy
- 27– Miriam Staples
- 28– Ray Johnsen

### Anniversary

- 19– Pidge & Joe Steve
- 22– Mary & Bob Andrews
- 26– Janet & Robert Andrew

**Save a Stamp**– If you would like to receive the Pew News via email, please contact the office or fill out sign up sheet in the Fellowship Hall.

**Volunteering**—Susan will be going on vacation the first week of April and first week of June, If you would like to help answer phones please contact the office.

**Office: 503-538-3313**

**[firstpresnewberg@frontier.com](mailto:firstpresnewberg@frontier.com)**

## COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- 3/12– Session Meeting at 7:00 pm.
- 3/14– Deacons Meeting at 2:00 pm.
- 3/21– Finance & Facilities Meeting at 6:00 pm.
- 3/28– Mission & Global Witness 1:00 pm.

Pastor Chris Murphy may be reached at his email: [murphycb@frontier.com](mailto:murphycb@frontier.com)  
or by calling the church office at 503-538-3313

Our new website address is : [newbergfpc.org](http://newbergfpc.org)

ONE  
AND  
ALL

**Happy Birthday Newberg First Presbyterian Church -** We are turning 129 on Sunday March 17th. Join us for cake and a time of celebration after worship.

NEWBERG FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
501 MISSION DRIVE  
NEWBERG, OR 97132



GRACE. HOPE. LOVE.