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**Be sure to check-out the new sections added this week.**

**Worship this Sunday, February 27:**

Welcome to the last Sunday in our series of Praying Our Goodbyes. This morning we will hear from the Apostle Paul as he writes to the church in Philippi. We will read Paul's opening words in the first chapter (verses 1-18). Paul writes from prison. He hopes to visit this church again, but is not optimistic. His words are powerful and good for our day.

Music for Sunday will include Lousie Wepfer on piano, our Chancel Choir, Adam Peterson and Diane and Lisa.

This Sunday we will also be collecting a special offering for One Great Hour of Sharing. Your generous gift to One Great Hour of Sharing – United Church of Christ enables our church and our worldwide partners to make a difference in the lives and communities around the world. Together, we are responding to disasters, supporting sustainable farming, education, and health initiatives, as well as pitching in to assist people fleeing violence from their home communities. We receive this offering with joy, believing that, with everything else going on in the world, that love remains.

You can send a check to the church marked OGHS or contribute online.

Join us in person (masked) or on Facebook Live at 10:30. You can also watch the service afterwards on Facebook. We value our online community of members and friends. It is a safe alternative for those concerned about Covid. It's also a wonderful way for people living now in other parts of the country to connect with our church.

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## CHURCH ACTIVITIES

### **Sunday:**

Worship at 10:30 in person and on FB

### **Tuesday:**

Church Council meeting.

### **Wednesday:**

Men's Breakfast, 9 a.m. in FH

**Prayer Group now meeting Wednesday 6:30 by zoom.**

Adult Bible Study class, 7 p.m. (Zoom ONLY)

### **Thursday:**

Men's Coffee, 9 a.m. in FH

Thurs. Night Supper, 6 p.m. (drive-thru)

### **Monday/Wednesday/Friday**

10 a.m. to Noon—Food Pantry

### **Church Office Hours**

**9:30—noon. Mon, Wed, Fr, ONLY**

Contact the church office if you are interested in joining any of these events.

### **Children's Ministry**

Sunday School led by Sarah Peterson will be meeting every Sunday morning after our time with children in the worship service. This is for all children who are not yet in seventh grade. In the coming weeks, they will be studying the service of Holy Communion in preparation for their sharing with us during worship on March 6. The children will also be singing on March 6.

### **Youth Ministry**

Rick Olsen shares this message with all our sixth through twelfth grade youth: We will meet at 3:00 on Saturday, February 26 at the Island on Phoenix to help collect money for Warm Your Heart. At 4:00 we will return any pop cans that haven't been turned in already. We may also have a speaker from the Animal Hospital. At 5:00

we will go to the church and have dinner. After we will have a game night until around 8:30.

### **Young Adult Ministry (18-55 and their families)**

Join us for our "Prepare for Lent" Zoom Worship Experience on Sunday, February 27 at 6:00. Contact Pastor Mike at [michaeljamestupper@yahoo.com](mailto:michaeljamestupper@yahoo.com) for the Zoom invite. Rick Olsen will be joining us for our service based on an Ash Wednesday Service involving water, dirt and a drop of oil. We'll also be talking about what we might give up and what we might do during the upcoming season of Lent.

**New Book Study Coming!** Chris Valentine will be leading a Book Study on the book, "Jesus and John Wayne" which was written by Calvin University professor Kristin Kobbs DuMez. The subtitle is: "How white evangelicals corrupted a faith and fractured a nation." It is a controversial look at the history of the evangelical movement from Billy Graham to Donald Trump. Join in the Zoom discussion on February 24, March 3 and March 10 at 1:00 p.m. Contact Pastor Mike at [michaeljamestupper@yahoo.com](mailto:michaeljamestupper@yahoo.com) for the Zoom invite.

### **Open and Affirming news**

The Welcoming Team is planning two events. The first will be a Discussion Series on Inclusive Language starting on March 17. The second will be a book study on "Torn" starting on March 28. More details to come.

### **Ash Wednesday:**

**Ashes-to-Go** returns to First Congregational Church on Wednesday morning, March 2nd from 7:30 to 9:30 am. Pastor Travis Wilson and Pastor Jeffrey Dick will greet you, and offer a brief prayer and ashes. You can stay in your car or come into the Narthex. Peace Lutheran will also offer an evening Ash Wednesday Service at 7 pm and all are welcome to attend.

## **Lenten Worship theme will be: "Good Enough"**

We live in a culture bent on definitions of a good life as continuous upward mobility—climbing ladders of prosperity with increasingly fabulous experiences that we can post to ever-more-likable social media accounts. We are always encouraged to do more, have more, want more, and then add to that. Where does it end? We all know that life happens, and not every step is moving up. When do we say, “This is good enough”? Well, that is what we will be exploring on Sunday mornings during Lent.

## **Women's Fellowship News**

There will be a Women's Fellowship meeting in Fellowship Hall Thursday, March 10 at 1:00. The main purpose will be to discuss the retirement party plans and deadlines, as well as catching-up. All women and friends are welcome to attend and help with this project. Monetary gifts may be made to the office. A sign-up for food, set up, and kitchen help, etc. will be available in the next few weeks, Stay tuned!

## **Notes regarding the Sanctuary:**

From Pastor Dick: Being in a wheelchair has given me some new perspective on our building. In the sanctuary, there really is no place for a wheelchair. I have brought this up to the Trustees. The Trustees had already been looking at other issues with the pews in the sanctuary regarding safety, especially in the case of an emergency. At the February Council meeting, there was discussion on removing the two front pews and creating space for wheelchairs by removing a partial pew. The Council will review this again at its March meeting. If you have comments on this, do speak to a member of the Trustees or send a note to Elaine Fluck, Church Moderator.

Along those same lines, using a restroom in the church while in a wheelchair is very difficult. That issue, plus the idea of having covered entrances to the building will be looked at by the Trustees in the coming year.

**If you have prayer requests**, please let the church office know. These will be added to the Tuesday and Sunday lists.

Please hold the following in your prayers:

Greg O'Niel

Elaine Stephens (now at home)

Ross McNicholas

Lori Tupper

Jeffrey Dick

Bonnie Deke

Margaret Guimond

Sharon McNicholas

Elsie Hoffman

Grieving families of

Danah Peterson (Janice Peterson's sister-in-law)

Loraine (David Venstra's sister)

Dr. Robert Brouwer

Please keep in your prayers our brothers and sisters at **First Congregational, in Battle Creek**

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