

The Growing Edge

(A Monthly Publication of Fridley United Methodist Church)

*Making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the
Transformation of the World.*

February 2024

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

From the Pastor	2
Education	3
Events & Opportunities	5
Missions	4
UWF News	6
55+ Breakfast	6

February 11
Transfiguration Sunday



February 11
Souper Bowl: 11:30 AM



ASH WEDNESDAY, February 14

We will have two opportunities on Ash Wednesday:

- 1) Imposition of Ashes at 11:30 AM
- 2) A Worship Service at 7:00 PM



Prayer Chain Information

*Call to share your joys
and concerns:*

*National United Methodist
Prayer Chain:
1-800-251-2468*

WE NEED PRACTICE

Some say that developing a new habit takes 21 days of practice. Others say it requires 28 or 38 or even 66 days. For those who follow the Judeo-Christian faith we'd say it takes 40 days.

Why 40?

- Noah and the animals floated in the ark for 40 days.
- Elijah traveled 40 days to Mt. Horeb to see God.
- Moses lived on Mt. Sinai 40 days.
- It took the Israelites 40 years to reach the Promised Land.
- Jesus was in the wilderness 40 days.

The days of Lent number 40. Ash Wednesday, which is early this year – February 14 – marks the first day, or the start of the season of Lent. It begins 40 days prior to Easter, which we'll celebrate on March 31. The six Sundays in-between are not included in the count because each one represents a mini-Easter.

Lent is a period of preparation. It is a sacred time to practice our faith, to exercise spiritually, to develop new habits, to live differently. It is meant to be a spiritual workout.

In this season before Easter – our preseason, our spring training – I invite you to practice your faith each day. Here are four spiritual exercises for the Lenten season.

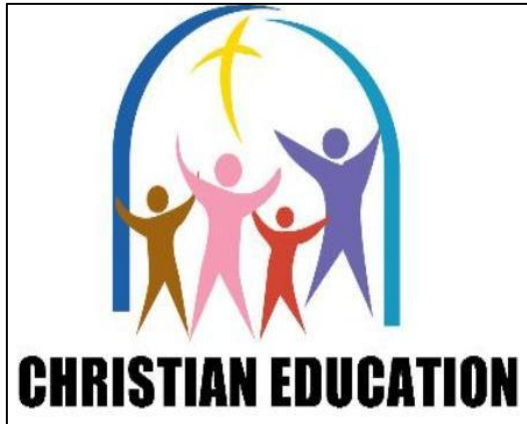
- **Read the Bible.** Challenge yourself to read 30 minutes a day. Begin with the Gospel of Mark, the shortest of the four, and then read the Gospel of John. These are the Gospels that will inform our Sunday morning worship services this year during Lent and Easter.
- **Recite the Jesus Prayer.** Slow your breathing. Quiet your heart and mind. Breath in, “Lord Jesus, Christ.” Breath out, “have mercy upon me.” Do this for 3 minutes – then 5 – and build up to 15. If the weather is nice, walk outside and recite while you are walking.
- **Observe the Sunset or Sunrise.** The cycle of life happens every day – an ending and a beginning. Every day is a day to let go of the old and begin anew. Notice the sunset or sunrise for 5 to 10 minutes each day. Remember, God is continually recreating life; including yours.
- **Serve Others.** Go beyond yourself to serve in our congregation or community. Commit to volunteering your time and talent on a regular basis, 1-2 hours per week. Put your faith into action.

A Franciscan priest says, “We do not think ourselves into new ways of living, we live ourselves into new ways of being.”

So practice. Practice your faith each day so you might live differently, so that you might live anew as a follower of Jesus.

Peace, Donna

EDUCATION



EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

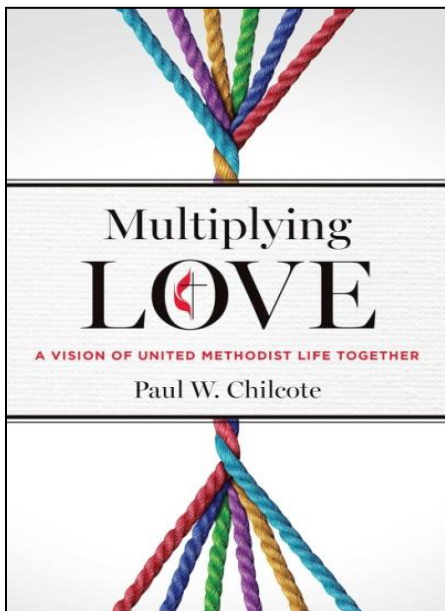
Sunday School starts 11:30 AM.

LINKING FAITH AND LIFE CLASS meets in the computer room. Come check us out.

Children are welcome to attend worship with their family. Children's coloring pages and crayons can be found on the back sanctuary table.

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE SHAPING at 9:30 AM.

Come join us in the lounge, or join us by Zoom.



LENTEN STUDY

Pastor Donna will be leading a four week Lenten book study on *Multiplying Love: A vision of United Methodist Life Together* by Paul W. Chilcote beginning Sunday, February 25. This book invites us to explore the power of the Wesleyan approach to the gospel, and to embrace anew Jesus' central vision of love. This study will dovetail the video messages prepared by Bishop Lanette Plambeck and the appointive cabinet.

To order the book, so you're ready for the study, please go to Amazon:

<https://www.amazon.com/Multiplying-Love-Paul-W-Chilcote/dp/1791032818>

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

A Men's Bible Study Group meets every Friday morning at 7:30 AM at the Sunset Grill in Blaine. We eat breakfast; take turns leading that week's lesson, guiding us through a reading of scripture, story and discussion. We share prayer concerns. All men are welcome. For more information contact Bill Ekstrum.

A GATHERING FOR GUYS

Grit & Spit meets every Saturday at 9:00 AM in the Lounge. Join us for coffee and courageous conversation and prayer. See you there.

BOOK RETREAT

Hello Fellow Readers! The next Book Retreat will be on Saturday, March 2, 2024 from 9:00 -12:00, in the church Lounge. The Book we will be discussing is *A Knock at Midnight*. The author is Brittany K. Barnett. This will be led by Myrna Kuehl. For all UWF members, this book is on the Reading List! This book is a Los Angeles Times Book Prize Finalist and NAACP Image Award Nominee. Men and women are invited to join us. Please let Dawn Bushnell know that you are coming!

MISSIONS



HABITAT FOR HUMANITY / TWIN CITIES CHAPTER

Habitat for Humanity – Twin Cities Chapter has been selected as the mission for the month of February. This organization’s mission is to bring people together to create, preserve, and promote affordable homeownership and advance racial equity in housing.

Providing affordable housing has truly become one of society’s major problems as the financial divide continues to expand. The median price for a Minnesota home is \$330,500, making home ownership a distant dream for people and families challenged financially. Between 2019 and 2021, the number of cost burdened renters spending more than 30% of their income on housing increased to a record 21.6 million households. 11.6 million people are spending over 50% of their income on housing.

Established in 1985 by a Lutheran congregation in South Minneapolis, Habitat has partnered with more than 1,500 families to help them achieve affordable homeownership. Twin Cities Habitat is one of the highest-regarded Habitat affiliates worldwide. From the beginning, Habitat has worked to help close the ownership gap and offer opportunities to people of every race and color. In fiscal 2022 Black homeowners made up 44% of the people who partnered with Habitat to build their homes.

Research has shown that children in homeownership situations achieve better education outcomes, including high school completion and college attendance, than children in rental households. Benefits associated with homeownership are especially strong for low-income households.

An affordable mortgage means parents don't have to work second or third jobs and can spend more time with their family.

Everyone deserves housing. How that looks is different for everyone, but everyone's basic needs deserve to be met. Today, many can't afford the starter homes their parents were able to buy. That's why Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity is so important. The cost of housing has skyrocketed over the last few decades and wages haven't kept up.

Owning a home can be a pathway to greater financial strength for a family, but there are other tangible benefits to keep in mind. Stable housing makes families more resilient to hardships, can improve overall health, and opens the door to more opportunities in both education and employment.

A lot of studies have found a link between homeownership and improved health outcomes for families. It impacts things like respiratory illness rates, mental health, and exposure to harmful chemicals.

"A safe, decent, affordable home is like a vaccine. It literally prevents disease. A safe home can prevent mental health and developmental problems; a decent home may prevent asthma or lead poisoning; and an affordable home can prevent stunted growth and unnecessary hospitalizations." — Dr. Megan Sandel, Associate Professor, Pediatrics, at Boston University School of Medicine.

As one happy new home owner stated,, "Habitat for Humanity staff are dream-makers, they are wish-makers, and deserve a thousand million thank-yous. They are changing lives."

We are so grateful and appreciate your continued ministry to the missions of FUMC. Giving is easy using the "Give Online" button on the FUMC website and then select "Missions." You can also mail your donation to the church. Please write "February Missions" on the memo line of your check. Thank you for your generous support of our mission programs!

EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES



FEBRUARY 11, 2024

All are invited to join us in the fellowship hall at 11:30 AM on Sunday, February 11. We will be serving 3 kinds of soup, bread, and bars, free will offering.

KNITTING/CROCHET GROUP

All are welcome to join us on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 1:30 PM in the lounge. The next time we will get together is February 13, 2024.



55+ BREAKFAST!

55+ folks, join us for breakfast at Perkins at 7520 University Ave in Fridley, every *first* Monday of each month at 9:30 AM. This is just a social time – come, relax and enjoy the company of FUMC friends.



UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

NAOMI FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE will meet Friday, February 9 at 1:00 PM in the church choir room. Marilyn Hodgeman will bring treats. February is Pledge Month so we will collect pledges to UWF. Pat King will provide a short devotion, and then we will send Valentine cards to shut-ins.

RUTH CIRCLE will meet on February 20 at 1:00 PM in the lounge. Linda Paulson, devotions; Diane Jachymowski, program; Kathy Bednar, hostess; and Jean Mills, co-hostess. February is Pledge Month.



Dear friends of FUMC,

Thank you for your generous donation of \$915 to the International Institute of Minnesota. Your gift offers essential programs and services to New Americans. Thanks to you, New Americans have a place they can rely on. We are deeply grateful for your generosity.

With gratitude, *Jane Graupman, Executive Director*

We would like to thank everyone for helping us celebrate our wedding day. We are so blessed to be part of a truly loving church community.

Lee & Judy Wallace

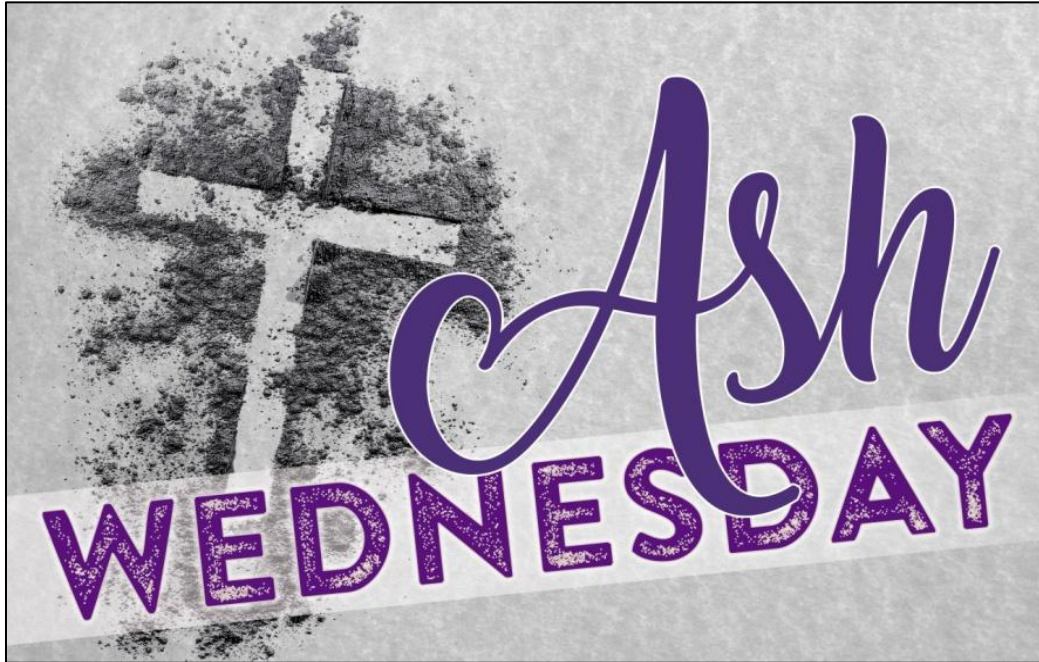


February 14, 2024

ASH WEDNESDAY: ALL ARE WELCOME!

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HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY



FORGET
CUPID
Jesus
LOVES ME