



THE APPLESEED

FEBRUARY 2021 NEWSLETTER

FROM A WELCOMING CHURCH... TO AN ONLINE-WORSHIPPING CHURCH

AN ONLINE-WORSHIPPING CHURCH IS STILL A WELCOMING CHURCH

"Shout praises to the Lord!" - Psalm 147:20c

Have we anything new in our lives that is worthy of shouting praises to the Lord? Let us shout while we can! Thanks be to God! Welcome to February 2021. The amazing gift of God's peace and grace is beyond comprehension. He knows us better than we know ourselves; He even knows the words we want to say before they reach our tongues. He holds dominion over all of His creation. God rules the whole earth; nothing compares with Him (*see Isaiah 40:25*). Even though we are not fully freed from the darkness of COVID-19, we can now start to let go of anxiety as vaccines affirm our hope that the light of the scientific world, co-existing with the spiritual world, moves forward for the common good. We can shout with gratitude that the light at the end of the tunnel is now brighter than before.

As we are still living in the shadow of COVID-19 – even as vaccines give us hope for a return to normalcy sooner rather than later – I implore you to stay focused as people of faith. Trust God. Why should we trust Him? It is said, *"You can believe in your dreams if you believe in the giver of dreams."* God is the giver of all things. He moves at the appointed times for things, and when we put Him first, and trust in his timing, and keep the faith, miracles happen. We have to be patient and wait for His direction. A breathing practice, such as the one we do during mindfulness meditation, can be quite helpful: I can inhale deeply, and slowly exhale, while reciting a breath prayer; then repeat... and repeat once more. The feelings of peace and comfort that come during quiet meditation such as this enable us to be more calm throughout the day; we can then pray to God for His direction, and our prayers will be clear, and He will hear and answer them.

The Psalmist indicates that joy and praise come from someone who has endured difficult things, knowing that without God there is nothing to praise. Merciful God has done it all. The concept of praising, or showing gratitude with intention, can be therapeutic during times of trouble. It is by practicing hopefulness during times of difficulty that we can see the light that remains hidden to most people. I have heard that *"Faith works better during darkness."* Faith enables curiosity and anxiety to create positive intuition. The Psalm invites us to see the wonderful goodness of God who, besides the light of nature, remains committed to us. We are fortunate in our faith. We are free to follow the lighted paths of our lives, and as people of faith we are enabled to focus our target on the One in whom we believe. We have endured the darkness of pandemic for so long, yet we must continue to be patient for a while longer. Perseverance will succeed. God is still within reach. *"Keep the faith, and in all things pray without ceasing. God is the same from yesterday, today, and tomorrow as well"* (Hebrews 8:3).

May the grace of the Holy Spirit envelop us all, with focused dreams enhancing the beauty of our journey, now and forever. ***Please join our live Zoom worship service on Sunday, February 14th at 10:30 a.m.***

Shalom

Pastor Iunisi Tovo

A DELICIOUS TRIBUTE

part two

The recipe book honoring Jennie Cheshier is afoot! Susan Kinder is gathering folks' favorite receipts and memories of Jennie. Admin Ann will help with design and production.

If you have a recipe card that Jennie gave to you, Ann would like to take a photograph of the card itself. Likewise, if you have old photos, Ann wants to snap a photo of your photo (you can send digital photos as JPEG files, to her email: sebumc@sonic.net). We especially want photos that show Jennie in the kitchen or serving table – where else would she be? Susan will coordinate the gathering of stories, as well as gathering and returning the original recipe cards and photos. You can call her, or she will reach out to you. Thanks much to those who have already called and emailed with your special stories... it's going to be a lovely and useful book, and we can think of Jennie every time we use it. – Susan Kinder

707-823-2139
susankinder@comcast.net

HELP SUPPORT OUR YOUTH

BUY EQUAL EXCHANGE
FAIR TRADE COFFEE
CALL PAT MUNSCHE
707-823-2790

a Prayer to Face Down Fear

*Tender God, who embraces us with love,
through the ages you have told us,
“Fear Not.”*

*Whisper it again in our ears,
Write it on our hearts.*

Amen.

JOIN OUR LIVE ZOOM WORSHIP SERVICE SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14 AT 10:30 A.M.

The Worship Team invites us all to a Transfiguration Sunday/Valentine's Day live ZOOM online worship service!

*To join this service,
either as a video participant or by phone,
please contact Carol Wegner
707-479-4800 – carolwegner@yahoo.com
to receive your long-in instructions...
or... WATCH FOR AN EMAIL
WITH THE ZOOM LINK
closer to the day of the service.*

The service will be hosted by Carol Wegner and the Worship Team; Barbara Stranzl will lead worship; Pastor Iunisi will deliver the Message; Jim Johnson will provide music.

*Let us come together in worship
as we prepare for the Lenten season.*

*To join the Zoom Meeting,
on February 14th at 10:30 a.m.,
click the link in your email invitation,
OR
click this link:*

<https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/81535301437?pwd=KzBMeDZwNzZ5TUplLVdlnaowrMDlqdz09>

A THOUGHT

Many of us will receive stimulus checks from the Federal government in the near future. While some of us may be experiencing extreme financial difficulty as a result of the pandemic, others of us are not. One church member has suggested that perhaps those who are not experiencing financial hardship may want to consider donating to a fund which helps provide assistance to the many people in our community who are having a difficult time right now – specifically, low-income workers who are not documented, many of whom support families and do not receive any form of public assistance funds during this time of hardship. To meet that need, a local nonprofit organization called UndocuFund has been established to channel funds to these hard-hit neighbors in need. If you would like to donate all or part of your stimulus money to them, here is their info:

UNDOCUFUND

PO Box 503, GRATON CA 95444

*more info can be found via online search,
or you can call Dee Schilling, 707-823-8847*

THANK YOU

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED AT THE FOOD PANTRY

The Sebastopol Inter-Church Food Pantry is looking for TWO VOLUNTEERS to fill positions that are very important to the workings of the Pantry. The work is done from home using computer and phone. The people who are being replaced will train the new volunteers and help them get started.

The positions are: **Weekday Volunteer Coordinator:** This person makes sure that we have enough volunteers scheduled 3 days a week from a list of volunteers. For more information please call Nancy Davison at 707-823-9771.

Shopping coordinator. This person checks our supply of food weekly and orders by computer from the Redwood Empire Food Bank. For more information please call Mary McAulay at 707-824-8685

Karen Bohn ekbohn@comcast.net
707-791-4186 or 707-823-7963

SOUPER BOWL 2021

Donate Soup During February

Your Mission Team has again decided to sponsor “SOUPER BOWL” during February 2021. We are asking that you purchase and donate cans of soup that will be given to the Sebastopol Inter-Church Food Pantry. The pantry depends heavily on donations in order to provide soup to their clients – especially seniors – who can make a meal out of it.

As many of you know, the Sebastopol Inter-Church Food Pantry has been serving the community for the past 38 years and is located at St. Stephens Episcopal Church in downtown Sebastopol. Even during the pandemic, the pantry has continued to serve the community four days a week. During the first eleven months of 2020, they served an average of 420 people a month. The majority of their clients are low-income seniors and families.

We realize that some people are staying close to home during the ongoing pandemic. Some volunteers from our church have agreed to pick up soup donations at homes on Friday, February 26. Please call Barbara Stranzl, 707-829-9323, before February 25th to get on the list of pickups; then put out your soup donations before 10 a.m. on Friday, the 26th, and we will pick up your donations.*

If you cannot get out to shop for your soup donations, and you do not have someone to shop for you, you may call Barbara Stranzl before February 16th to see if another arrangement can be made.

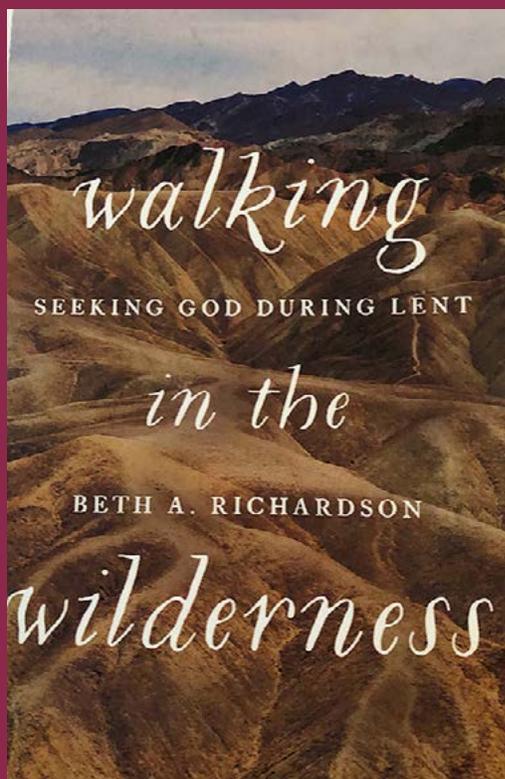
Please join us in supporting the Sebastopol Inter-Church Food Pantry again this year with your soup donations.

** Pastor Lunisi adds: if you want to drop off your donations of soup to church, please CALL HER FIRST with drop-off time, and she will open the church hall for you.*

– With thanks from your Mission Team

Lent begins on ASH WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17

*imposition of ashes will take place
during our February 14 ZOOM worship*



LENTEN STUDY GROUP

Our six-week Lenten Study Group will meet on **Feb. 23, March 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30** on Zoom from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. Our text is *Walking in the Wilderness: Seeking God During Lent* by Beth A. Richardson. The book is available through Cokesbury and Amazon.

If you feel like you're living in the wilderness these days, you're not alone. People of faith are struggling as they witness chaotic events around the world; a global pandemic, racism, acts of violence, immigration crises, and crashing economies.

Each daily meditation in *Walking in the Wilderness* invites us to pause and connect with God in the midst of these challenging times. The readings begin on Ash Wednesday (February 17) and continue through Easter Sunday (April 4). Sunday readings introduce six spiritual practices: being present, lament, lectio divina, trust, compassion and hospitality.

Beth A. Richardson is director of prayer and worship life at The Upper Room and dean of The Upper Room Chapel. She is an ordained deacon in The United Methodist Church.

For further information, contact Carol Wegner at carolwegner@yahoo.com 707-479-4800

Ash Wednesday

FEBRUARY 17, 2021

This is the beginning of Lent. Lent comes from an ancient word that meant "springtime," – a period of the calendar during which the days lengthen. Even after the word Lent no longer referred to spring, it was still used by the church to describe the season before Easter. As we know, the season of Lent lasts for forty days, from Ash Wednesday until Easter. – this is to remind us of the duration of Jesus's temptation in the wilderness.

*This is how the days of Lent are counted:
Start from Ash Wednesday and continue until Easter.
Sundays are not counted in the 40 days.*

Readings

FOR ASH WEDNESDAY

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 – Prophet Joel was calling for repentance and alert people of a near approach of the Divine Judgement. The calling was directed at the Jews to rend their hearts rather than their garments, which set the truth of repentance in what is inward, rather than in what is outward. The echo of similar calling of Christ for changing dramatically beginning from within.

Psalm 51:1-17 – When we are called for repentance, we need to learn from David. He knew of his iniquities and a great need for repentance. He called upon the mercy of God and stepping right in to the Spirit of God. The recognizing of wrong doings and be transformed with the Spirit of God.

2 Corinthians 5:20b–6:10 – God made him who had no sin to take on sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. We are all redeemed by the One Son of God – so we are free to choose love and all fruits of the spirit as we are children of God. Be righteous, as He is righteous.

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 – We recognize that we all have faults. Focus less on the shortcomings we perceive in others, and work on rebuilding others' lives to become better people. Give up worries and anxieties, and trust in the Lord. Seek those who are in need of physical or spiritual help.

– Pastor Iunisi

DAILY READINGS FEBRUARY 2021

- **Monday, February 1, 2021:** Psalm 35:1-10; Numbers 22:1-21; Acts 21:17-26
- **Tuesday, February 2, 2021:** Psalm 35:1-10; Numbers 22:22-28; 1 Corinthians 7:32-40
- **Wednesday, February 3, 2021:** Psalm 35:1-10; Jeremiah 29:1-14; Mark 5:1-20
- **Thursday, February 4, 2021:** Psalm 147:1-11, 20c; Proverbs 12:10-21; Galatians 5:2-15
- **Friday, February 5, 2021:** Psalm 147:1-11, 20c; Job 36:1-23; 1 Corinthians 9:1-16
- **Saturday, February 6, 2021:** Psalm 147:1-11, 20c; Isaiah 46:1-13; Matthew 12:9-14
- **Sunday, February 7, 2021:**
Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany
- **Monday, February 8, 2021:** Psalm 102:12-28; 2 Kings 4:8-17, 32-37; Acts 14:1-7
- **Tuesday, February 9, 2021:** Psalm 102:12-28; 2 Kings 8:1-6; Acts 15:36-41
- **Wednesday, February 10, 2021:** Psalm 102:12-28; Job 6:1-13; Mark 3:7-12
- **Thursday, February 11, 2021:** Psalm 50:1-6; 1 Kings 11:26-40; 2 Corinthians 2:12-17
- **Friday, February 12, 2021:** Psalm 50:1-6; 1 Kings 14:1-18; 1 Timothy 1:12-20
- **Saturday, February 13, 2021:** Psalm 50:1-6; 1 Kings 16:1-7; Luke 19:41-44
- **Sunday, February 14, 2021:**
Transfiguration Sunday
- **Monday, February 15, 2021:** Psalm 110:1-4; Exodus 19:7-25; Hebrews 2:1-4
- **Tuesday, February 16, 2021:** Psalm 110:1-4; Job 19:23-27; 1 Timothy 3:14-16

- **Wednesday, February 17, 2021:**
Ash Wednesday
- **Thursday, February 18, 2021:** Psalm 25:1-10; Daniel 9:1-14; 1 John 1:3-10
- **Friday, February 19, 2021:** Psalm 25:1-10; Daniel 9:15-25a; 2 Timothy 4:1-5
- **Saturday, February 20, 2021:** Psalm 25:1-10; Psalm 32; Matthew 9:2-13
- **Sunday, February 21, 2021:**
First Sunday in Lent
- **Monday, February 22, 2021:** Psalm 77; Job 4:1-21; Ephesians 2:1-10
- **Tuesday, February 23, 2021:** Psalm 77; Job 5:8-27; 1 Peter 3:8-18a
- **Wednesday, February 24, 2021:** Psalm 77; Proverbs 30:1-9; Matthew 4:1-11
- **Thursday, February 25, 2021:** Psalm 22:23-31; Genesis 15:1-6, 12-18; Romans 3:21-31
- **Friday, February 26, 2021:** Psalm 22:23-31; Genesis 16:1-6; Romans 4:1-12
- **Saturday, February 27, 2021:** Psalm 22:23-31; Genesis 16:7-15; Mark 8:27-30
- **Sunday, February 28, 2021:**
Second Sunday in Lent
- **Monday, March 1, 2021:** Psalm 105:1-11, 37-45; Genesis 21:1-7; Hebrews 1:8-12
- **Tuesday, March 2, 2021:** Psalm 105:1-11, 37-45; Genesis 22:1-19; Hebrews 11:1-3, 13-19
- **Wednesday, March 3, 2021:** Psalm 105:1-11, 37-45; Jeremiah 30:12-22; John 12:36-43



FEBRUARY 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p align="center">~~~ Sunday, February 14 ~~~ ZOOM WORSHIP SERVICE at 10:30 a.m. to participate by video or phone, contact Carol Wegner by Feb 10th 707-479-4800 – carolwegner@yahoo.com</p>					<p align="center">"Sebastopol UMC" is our YouTube channel</p>	
	<p>1 Finance Committee Mtg (Zoom) 7pm</p>	<p>2 Trustees Mtg (Zoom) 7pm</p>	<p>3 SPRC Mtg (Zoom) 10am</p>	<p>4 Zoom Fellowship 2pm</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>
<p>7 Worship online COMMUNION</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9 Zoom Discussion Group 2pm</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11 Zoom Fellowship 2pm</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p>
<p>14 10:30 a.m. ZOOM WORSHIP Transfiguration Sunday + VALENTINE'S DAY</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16 Zoom Discussion Group 2pm</p>	<p>17 ASH WEDNESDAY LENT BEGINS</p>	<p>18 Zoom Fellowship 2pm</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>
<p align="center">· PLEASE SUBMIT ITEMS FOR THE NEXT APPLESEED THIS WEEK!! THANK YOU ·</p>						
<p>21 Worship online FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23 LENTEN STUDY 2pm week 1 of 6</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25 Zoom Fellowship 2pm</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27 Saturday Table</p>
<p>28 Worship online SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT</p>	<p align="center">SCRIP IS AVAILABLE NOW! PAT WILL DELIVER TO YOU! Need SCRIP? Pat Schoch can take your order by phone and deliver it to you! Please call 707-823-3889</p>					

ALL SERVICES AND MEETINGS ON CHURCH GROUNDS CONTINUE TO BE SUSPENDED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE
 by order of our Bishop

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