



THE APPLESEED

MARCH 2021 NEWSLETTER

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

AN ONLINE-WORSHIPPING CHURCH IS STILL A WELCOMING CHURCH

*"I press on toward the goal to win the prize
for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." – Philippians 3:14*

Peace and grace in our Lord Jesus the Christ, from whom Christians believe all blessings flow. Blessed be to Him and to His wisdom and superb guidance. Welcome to the month of March, which falls within the forty days of Lent, a truly special time when Christians revisit Jesus's forty days of fasting in the wilderness. Though he was sorely tempted, he achieved his goal with perseverance and with the power of his Father God. Lent, for us today, is a time of mindfulness, when we can explore our beliefs and press on toward our goal, physically and spiritually; it is a good time to reflect on what is essential in our lives, and what we can let go of, weighing the worth of thoughts and things and taking a step back to revitalize ways to survive in this continuing time of uncertainty.

The apostle Paul encourages us to "press on" toward our goal. Often, anxieties and fear can cause us to lose hope and also to lose sight of our goal. Paul focuses on moving forward, not on prior mistakes; we cannot move ahead if our thoughts and vision are focused on the past. Paul had a clear goal: to be with God. That is the ultimate prize. Only with consistent endurance can we reach such a goal and claim such a prize. We may claim ownership of the earth, and dominion over everything on it. We believe we hold the highest honor among God's creations, co-existing with all things around us. The prize of pressing on in life is to be with our Lord at the end of time. Jesus told his followers that he would leave, and also that he would return at the right time to receive us all unto himself.

As Christians, we are encouraged to adapt so that we can press on through another season in the shadow of the pandemic. We are assured of a prize – let us let God be the Light shining on our accomplishment. Our place in Eternity is secure: it begins the moment we fully trust in Christ and let our attitudes be transformed by His grace. Although we are not a perfect community of faith, we are still able to model the qualities that will bring us to Jesus.

In this Lenten Season, while revisiting the life of Christ, we can also revisit our personal commitment to follow His teaching and reaffirm our faith in the Christ we believe in. My own experience is this: I have one true way to achieve the goal – by staying close to Christ through prayer. You, too, can stay close to Him – pray any time, anywhere. Paul proclaimed that faith in Jesus guarantees a share in his life.

May you all find a way to bind yourselves to our Lord through prayer, fasting, meditation, and reading devotions, as His word is the light and lamp to your path and foot. Let us press forward, with the grace that is already embedded within us. We can all worship the Lord, trust in the Lord, and praise the Lord forever and ever.

Shalom

Pastor Iunisi Tovo

Prayers for Lent

During Lent's forty days, Lord, may we be gracious toward everyone who observes Lent, and also to everyone who does not observe. May we be careful in sharing our practices, avoiding hypocrisy. Keep us busy choosing love over judgement and prejudice.

Lord, we are eternally grateful for everything you do, and have done, for all mankind. Help us to focus our hearts and minds on what you have endured for us.

O God, shine your light on the areas of our lives that need to be transformed. Draw our attention away from temptations, and strengthen us with positive and hopeful ideals.

Help us to see the world with a resurrected view, adopting your ways to revitalize our lives with a broader perspective, for everyone's sake.

Help us, Lord, to fear nothing and to know that you are always with us. Open our hearts and minds to understand cultural and historical contexts of your life, and to gain a greater understanding of your earthly suffering born of your steadfast love for all mankind.

Shine your light when we doubt, O Lord, and remind us of who you are and that you are protecting and providing shelter for us. Bring us peace when we are weary, give us rest when we are restless, and lead us to find victory in you.

— Pastor Iunisi

**"Sebastopol UMC"
is our
YouTube channel**

HOLY WEEK

FIVE DAYS OF FAITH AND FELLOWSHIP VIA ZOOM

The Worship Team invites you to join our Holy Week Zoom meetings Monday, March 29 through Friday, April 2 All meetings start at 5:00 P.M.

Each meeting will feature short meditations and readings by members of SUMC.

To join any, or all, of the Zoom Meetings in Holy Week, please click this link:

<https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/89482000925?pwd=bHMoSVdoS1JaeHZGNDZlBVG5coZmQT09>

Meeting ID: 894 8200 0925
Passcode: 447899

If you would like to be a reader, please contact Carol Wegner carolwegner@yahoo.com

EASTER SUNDAY ZOOM WORSHIP

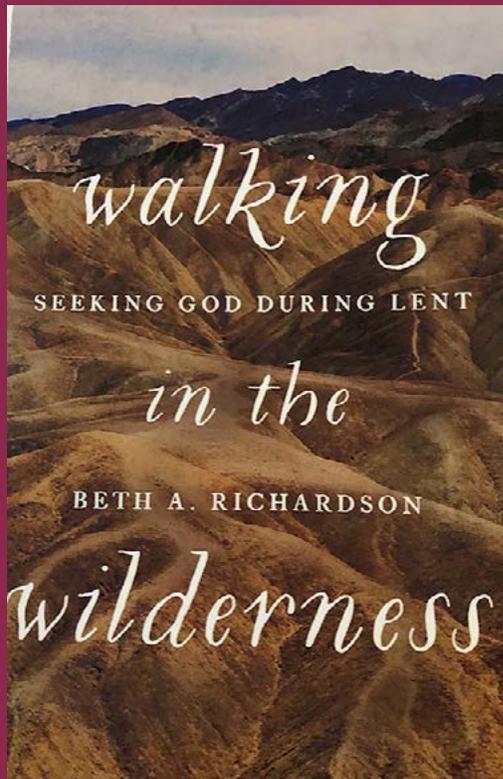
Sunday, April 4, 2021
starting at 10:30 AM Pacific Time

To join our Zoom Easter Sunday
Worship,
please click this link:

<https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/87140176043?pwd=eUJkeWhkTkNHWkFSdEgib04zTWVUZz09>

Meeting ID: 871 4017 6043
Passcode: 200072

*(we will send the links and reminders again
by email right before Holy Week)*



LENTEN STUDY GROUP

Our six-week Tuesday Lenten Study Group continues on **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

Suggested Scripture Readings for Holy Week

Palm Sunday:
Matthew 21:1-11

Monday Blues:
Matthew 21:12-17

Tuesday Troubles:
Matthew 21:23; 24:1-2; 26:1-2

Wednesday Preparation:
Matthew 26:6-16

Thursday Supper:
Matthew 26:26-39, 47-50

Good Friday:
Matthew 27:35-37, 45-54, 57-61

Forgotten Saturday:
Matthew 27:62-66

Easter Sunday:
John 20:1-18

– Pastor Iunisi



SOUPER BOWL SUCCESS!



Barbara and Co. gathering and delivering hundreds of canned goods to the Pantry

photos by Vicky Ness



Our Mission Team's 2021 "Souper Bowl" canned food drive benefitted the Sebastopol Inter-Church Food Pantry and was – despite the pandemic – a big success! We collected and delivered 247 cans of hearty soups to the Pantry. Thank you to everyone who contributed. A special thanks goes to Barbara Stranzl and Vicky Ness for picking up and delivering the soup, which will be very much appreciated by our neighbors in and around Sebastopol who depend on the Pantry for healthy food. – Karen Bohn

YOU NEED COFFEE!

*"Life without coffee is like...
Something, without Something...
Sorry, but I haven't had my coffee yet!"*

If this is you, we have Equal Exchange **COFFEE** for that. Or **TEA**, or – if things are *really* rough – some strong **CHOCOLATE** to help you (and your memory) get through the day.

Help support our SUMC youth through your purchases, and do good by supporting small-scale, fair-trade farmers and their worker-owned cooperatives.

Remember, love (like Spring) is in the air, and it smells like coffee!

To order coffee, tea, chocolate, or **OLIVE OIL**, call Pat Munsch – (707) 823-2790. *Thank you!*

AN UPDATE ON OUR SCRIP FUNDRAISING

A note from Pat Schoch:

First of all, I want to thank all of you faithful SCRIP users. In 2020 we earned a significant sum for our church. I have enjoyed delivering SCRIP to you these past months, sometimes on foot, sometimes by car (Paul driving).

For those of you who don't quite understand SCRIP, here's how it works: If you Google "**GLSC**" (Great Lakes Scrip Center), you can peruse their retailers list and let me know what you want. The site tells you what percentage of your purchase price the church gets, and what denominations are available. SCRIP works like a gift card.

About once a month I make an order. The SCRIP comes to me and I deliver it to you! You can find major retailers such as Amazon, Staples, Safeway, Home Depot, you name it. Check it out and let me know if you want to try it. It really helps!

Call Pat Schoch to order scrip – 707-823-3889

DAILY READINGS MARCH 2021

- **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
- **Thursday, March 4, 2021:** Psalm 19; Exodus 19:1-9a; 1 Peter 2:4-10
- **Friday, March 5, 2021:** Psalm 19; Exodus 19:9b-15; Acts 7:30-40
- **Saturday, March 6, 2021:** Psalm 19; Exodus 19:16-25; Mark 9:2-8
- **Sunday, March 7, 2021: Third Sunday in Lent**
- **Monday, March 8, 2021:** Psalm 84; 1 Kings 6:1-4, 21-22; 1 Corinthians 3:10-23
- **Tuesday, March 9, 2021:** Psalm 84; 2 Chronicles 29:1-11, 16-19; Hebrews 9:23-28
- **Wednesday, March 10, 2021:** Psalm 84; Ezra 6:1-16; Mark 11:15-19
- **Thursday, March 11, 2021:** Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22; Genesis 9:8-17; Ephesians 1:3-6
- **Friday, March 12, 2021:** Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22; Daniel 12:5-13; Ephesians 1:7-14
- **Saturday, March 13, 2021:** Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22; Numbers 20:22-29; John 3:1-13
- **Sunday, March 14, 2021: Fourth Sunday in Lent**
- **Monday, March 15, 2021:** Psalm 107:1-16; Exodus 15:22-27; Hebrews 3:1-6
- **Tuesday, March 16, 2021:** Psalm 107:1-16; Numbers 20:1-13; 1 Corinthians 10:6-13
- **Wednesday, March 17, 2021:** Psalm 107:1-16; Isaiah 60:15-22; John 8:12-20
- **Thursday, March 18, 2021:** Psalm 51:1-12; Isaiah 30:15-18; Hebrews 4:1-13
- **Friday, March 19, 2021:** Psalm 51:1-12; Exodus 30:1-10; Hebrews 4:14-5:4
- **Saturday, March 20, 2021:** Psalm 51:1-12; Habakkuk 3:2-13; John 12:1-11
- **Sunday, March 21, 2021: Fifth Sunday in Lent**
- **Monday, March 22, 2021:** Psalm 119:9-16; Isaiah 43:8-13; 2 Corinthians 3:4-11
- **Tuesday, March 23, 2021:** Psalm 119:9-16; Isaiah 44:1-8; Acts 2:14-24
- **Wednesday, March 24, 2021:** Psalm 119:9-16; Haggai 2:1-9, 20-23; John 12:34-50
- **Thursday, March 25, 2021: Annunciation of the Lord**
- **Thursday, March 25, 2021:** Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; Deuteronomy 16:1-8; Philippians 2:1-11
- **Friday, March 26, 2021:** Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; Jeremiah 33:1-9; Philippians 2:12-18
- **Saturday, March 27, 2021:** Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; Jeremiah 33:10-16; Mark 10:32-34, 46-52
- **Sunday, March 28, 2021: Liturgy of the Palms**
- **Sunday, March 28, 2021: Liturgy of the Passion**
- **Monday, March 29, 2021: Monday of Holy Week**
- **Tuesday, March 30, 2021: Tuesday of Holy Week**
- **Wednesday, March 31, 2021: Wednesday of Holy Week**
- **Thursday, April 1, 2021: Maundy Thursday**
- **Friday, April 2, 2021: Good Friday**
- **Saturday, April 3, 2021: Holy Saturday**
- **Sunday, April 4, 2021: Easter Vigil**
- **Sunday, April 4, 2021: Resurrection of the Lord**
- **Sunday, April 4, 2021: Easter Evening**



MARCH 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
HELP SUPPORT OUR YOUTH! Buy Equal Exchange Fair-Trade coffee + tea! call Pat Munsch 707-823-2790		SCRIP IS AVAILABLE – PAT WILL DELIVER TO YOU! Pat Schoch can take your order by phone and deliver it to you! Please call 707-823-3889				
	1	2 Zoom Lenten Discussion Group 2pm	3	4 Zoom Fellowship 2pm	5	6
7 Worship online COMMUNION THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT	8	9 Zoom Lenten Discussion Group 2pm	10	11 Zoom Fellowship 2pm	12	13
14 Worship online FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT	15	16 Zoom Lenten Discussion Group 2pm	17	18 Zoom Fellowship 2pm	19	20
· PLEASE SUBMIT ITEMS FOR THE NEXT APPLESEED THIS WEEK!! THANK YOU ·						
21 Worship online FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT	22	23 Zoom Lenten Discussion Group 2pm (also on 3/30) 	24	25 Zoom Fellowship 2pm	26	27 Saturday Table
28 Worship online PALM SUNDAY	29	30	31	1	2	3
HOLY WEEK ZOOM WORSHIP + FELLOWSHIP – MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY + EASTER SUNDAY <i>(see details inside newsletter)</i>						

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

Sebastopol United Methodist Church 500 North Main Street, Sebastopol CA 95472
 office phone: (707) 823-7971 email: sebumc@sonic.net website: sebumc.org