

Midweek Message



Pixabay

Midweek E-mail from First Presbyterian Church of Jamestown, New York

March 20, 2019

Peggy Hallberg

Coordinator of Children, Youth, and Family Ministry Communications

The sun was so bright yesterday morning, I thought someone forgot to turn the hallway light off last night. I saw my first robins Friday. They were on time, as usual, right after the leprechauns arrived. These long awaited heralds to the season change always brings a *spring* to my step, but this year, we are still in Lent. We're not even half way through. It doesn't seem right, but why?

I wrote my Midweek Message last week; it's a good one about walking in a snow laden Narnian world (Allen Park) listening for robins while looking for signs of spring. But after yesterday morning's sunshine and last night's worm moon as big as a beach ball, I just can't go back to dark frozen places. No more looking for spring, it SPRANG! So, I'll have to save my message for next year.

Is Lent easier when it happens in February when there is still so much of winter left? Does our Lenten journey have to be riddled with despair, sacrifice, struggle, darkness and anguish? This year's theme is "Don't Be Afraid of the Dark". Does the Lenten journey have to be dark so we can hibernate and accentuate the winter's laborious misery so that we can be born again on Easter Sunday? Does there have to be a dark tomb before Easter's first light?

Yes, because without darkness, there can be no light. Without sin, there can be no atonement and forgiveness. Also, we like to keep our sins in those dark corners, out of sight and tucked away. Lent provides the opportunity to pull them out into the light for cleansing. Lent provides a quiet time for listening and growing closer to God while we reflect on those dark and scary tucked away places that are keeping us from Him.

So, yesterday's bright sunlight was a Lenten gift, a little encouragement as we are about to enter the halfway mark, a preview for what's to come. The beautiful moonlight gave me comfort and hope in one of our last cold nights as if whispering, "Don't be afraid, I am with you through this." Or, perhaps, they were there to give a little better light by which to see that there is nothing we can't handle together. And the robins? Now that's just a bonus!

Psalm 51:10

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Happy Spring!

Peggy

REMEMBERING YOU IN OUR PRAYERS:

Gayle Schulte; Norma Willard and her daughters Nancy and Catherine too; Julie Dudgeon; Don Ray; the Sturzenbecker family mourning the loss of their mother, Diane; the flooding in the Midwest, and the families dealing with the shooting in New Zealand and others dealing with senseless violence. AND, give praise for healing and people passing through who have graced us with their presence while we helped them too.

ACP Student for March: Lyanna Confere

Staff Member: Mark Bush

If you need a ride to church or a doctor's appointment, would like a visit from the Pastor, could use support from our Casserole and Cookie Crew, or would like to let us know about a prayer concern, please let the church office know. The Member Care Committee is ready to help you out.

Sunday, March 24th

Sunday School Breakfast 9:00 am

Story time at 9:15, then Sunday school classes at 9:30 am

Chancel Choir Rehearsal 9:30 am

Worship is in the **Chapel** at 10:30 am

Worship Leaders for March 24th

Liturgist: Jetta Wilson

Greeters: Hope Marshall

Ushers: Bridgette and David Winters, Lee and Heidi Marshall

Worship Leaders for March 31st

Liturgist: Joanne Nelson

Greeter: Peggy Hallberg

Ushers: Diane and Rudy Mueller, Jetta and Mark Wilson

Coming Soon!

Lenten Prayer Service and Luncheon at Noon

Join First Pres and First Covenant on your lunch break Wednesdays this Lent at noon for our special Lenten services of reflection in the Bellinger Chapel at First Presbyterian Church.

When we think of darkness, we think of times of confusion, fear, uncertainty, doubts of God. But as we walk in faith through these times, on the other side are Christ's glory, serenity, and union with God.

This year, video liturgy with music and lyrics by *The Brilliance* will focus our reflections on the paradox of life and death, beauty and fragmentation. Through these 40 days of Lent, as we walk through the darkness of temptations taking hold, through the pain and the suffering, through the heartache and trembling of life may we find that there is no need to be afraid of the dark. We are held and loved by God.

Titles from the Lenten Series Coming Up

March 20	Dayspring of Life
March 27	Does Your Heart Break
April 3	Holy Communion
April 10	Have You Forsaken Me?

Help Wanted:

EASTER FLOWERS. If you would like to honor someone by placing an Easter lily in the sanctuary on Easter Sunday, be sure to call the church office by Tuesday, April 16. The cost of a lily is \$10.00 and these Easter reminders will be given to our members who are home bound or aren't able to come to worship to remind them that they are still part of our worshipping community and remembered with love.

DATES TO MARK ON YOUR CALENDAR

Church Business Hours:

Monday – Friday, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

March 20 – TON 3:15 pm

March 20 – Artist Workshop 6:30 pm

March 21 - Aging and Saging 12:00 pm

March 21 – Children’s Choir 5:30 pm

March 21 – Chancel Choir 7:00 pm

March 21 – SCA 7:00 pm

March 24 – Youth Choir Rehearsal 11:45 am

March 24 – Youth Group 5:30 pm

March 26 – Newsletter Assembly 10:00 am

March 26 – Duplicate Bridge 12:30 pm

March 26 – Barbershoppers 7:00 pm

March 27- Healthy Bones First Class 9:30 am

March 27 – Lenten Service and Luncheon 12:00 pm

March 27 – TON 3:15 pm

March 27 – Session 7:00 pm

March 28 – Aging and Saging 12:00 pm

March 28 – Children’s Choir 5:30 pm

March 28 – Chancel Choir 7:00 pm

March 28 – SCA 7:00 pm

March 30 – Images of Church retreat 9:00 am

March 31 – Bell Choir Rehearsal 8:45 am