**South Milwaukee United Methodist church**

1327 Marshall Ave, South Milwaukee, WI 53172

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## *The Chimes*

##   *March 2017*

***Why Observe a Lent?***

The Lent starts with Ash Wednesday on March 1st and we take another journey to the cross and the Easter. Have you ever given thoughts on what the cross really mean to us? If not, why don’t we make this Lent a season of delving into the mystery of what God has done for us in giving his beloved Son Jesus on the cross and how we will benefit from it!

The cross is crucial for all Christians; it is as important as life and death question for you and me and to the whole world. If the cross is of that important to our life, certainly it would be worth investing our time into it. Jesus said: the Son of Man must be lifted up just as Moses lifted up the bronze snake in the desert, so that everyone who pays attention on it will find eternal life (John 3:14-15). That means the cross has become a life-saving plan of God, which is, inevitable to save people from perishing eternally. Let us also learn lessons from what happened to the Israelites under Moses’ leadership (Numbers 21:4-9); and Israelites’ deliverance from Egyptian bondage (Exodus 12:22), a prefigure of God’s perfect plan for you and me on the cross.

Monthly Prayer Day: Do you feel you are in constant touch with God? How close is the relationship between you and God? If you do have that relationship, you will certainly seek him often and you eagerly long to spend time with him. It could be a conversation in prayer or seeking his face in everyday encounter with others, or listening to him from his Holy Words.

A prayer day will help us set apart a time with God, a time devoted to prayer and silent meditation. The prayer room will be set up in the parlor, first Thursday of every month starting from March 2nd from 9 am to 8 pm. You are encouraged to make use of this opportunity and spend your precious time with the Lord.

Pastoral Visits: As indicated in my last month’s letter, I will be making 2017 a year of building relationships. I believe that caring for people’s spiritual life is one of my primary tasks as a pastor. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, says: “I know my sheep and they know me” (John 10:15). My meeting with you could help us know each other better and build healthy relationship with God. I would appreciate you indicating me a possible time to meet.

Finally let us make this season of Lent a time of devotion, self-reflection and a time of returning to faithfulness to God and to his Word.  Let us lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely and run with perseverance the race that is set before us. Paul’s letter to Timothy makes a lot of sense here: “Rather train yourself for godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and for the life to come” 1 Tim. 4:7.

Harsha

**EDUCATION WORK AREA**

 **Who Can Serve them?**

With the start of a new second service, the need for Sunday school teachers has now increased.  Please consider volunteering to teach a class.  This is not a weekly commitment.  If you have availability in your schedule, please consult the teaching calendar for available dates when teacher help is needed.

The youth will perform in church on 3/26/2017, 4/30/2017, 5/21/2017.

 ALLUMINUM CANS

 Please bring in your old aluminum cans for recycling. Proceeds from your donations benefit our youth.

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**THANK YOU**

The family of George Bink would like to thank everyone for their thoughts and prayers and all the cards. A special thank you to the ladies for serving the luncheon. God’s blessings to all of you.

The family of

George Bink

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 **Phil Curry** passed away on January 25th. Our condolences to his family and friends. His Memorial service was held at our church on February 4th.

***Our Sympathy***

It is with great sadness that we bring this news, John Reynolds passed away on Tuesday, February 7th.

The service was held at Heritage Funeral home on Saturday February 11th. Our deep and prayerful condolences to his family and friends. Keep Jeanne, Bailey and Alex in your prayers.

**MISSION WORK AREA**

**South Milwaukee Human Concerns**

Is our Mission project for March.

Their needs are **Chef Boy-R-Dee, pasta & pasta sauce.**

**Winter Wear Tree**

The Winter Wear Tree was beautifully decorated again with 5 scarves, sweater & top, 1 scarf and hat, 2 sets headbands and gloves, 10 caps, 2 caps and gloves, 10 pair of mittens, 1 scarf hat, and glove sets. In addition, 2 boxes and several bags of groceries were delivered to Human Concerns. The most ever. Thanks to all for your continued generosity!

**Valentine Cookie Sale**

The Valentine Cookie Sale was a big success. 100 plates of cookies were packaged, but we received 147, thanks to the bakers, buyers, and donaters!

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**Chocolate Schnibbler Cookies**

1 cup butter, cubed 1 tsp. baking soda

1 cup granulated sugar 1 tsp. baking powder

1 cup brown sugar 2 ½ cups

 2 eggs chocolate schnibbles

 2 cups flour 1 tsp. vanilla

1 cup oatmeal

1 cup rice krispies

1 tsp. salt

 Preheat oven at 375 degrees. Sift flour, salt, baking soda and baking powder together in a mixing bowl. Set aside. Combine butter, sugar, brown sugar, eggs and vanilla in a seperate bowl. Mix well. Add dry ingredients. Add oatmeal, rice krispies and chocolate schnibbles. Mix well. Scoop tablespoon of mixture onto an un-greased cookie sheet. Space 2 inches apart. Bake for 10-12 minutes. Let cool 1 minute before removing from cookie sheet.

**RUMMAGE SALE**

**Help! Help! Help!**

I hope we aren’t being too subtle. The die is cast! We have decided to proceed with a spring rummage sale to be held on **April 29th**, but in order for this event to suceed, we’ll need help and lots of it. Obviously, we’ll need your donations, but we also will need help displaying, pricing and selling those items and then we need to put away the items that don’t sell. We need you to commit some time during the days before the sale even and maybe especially if you have never volunteered before. So in the vernacular of the old commercial “Try it you’ll like it”. If you have any questions or would like to offer your service to help make this sale a success, contact Jim Gentil at 744-3689.

**Ash Wednesday**

There will be a joint service here on Ash Wednesday, March 1st with Cudahy UMC at 7:00 PM. There will be snacks and fellowship in the donut room after the service.

Al & Marie Beckers new address.

200 Country Brook Dr # 2428

Keller, TE 76248

Phone: 682-593-7603

**Dates to Remember**

**March 1,** Ash Wednesday

**March 3,**  World Day of Prayer

**March 5,** First Sunday in Lent

**March 12,** Daylight-Saving Time begins

**March 20,** First day of spring

**April 9,** Palm Sunday

**April 13,** Maundy Thursday

**April 14** Good Friday

**April 16** Easter Sunday

**Scripture Readings for March, 2017**

**March 1, Ash Wednesday**

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

Psalm 51:1-17

Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

**March 5**

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

Psalm 32

Romans 5:12-19

Matthew 4:1-11

**March 12**

Genesis 12:1-4a

Psalm 121

Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

John 3:1-17

**March 19**

Exodus 17:1-7

Psalm 95

Romans 5:1-11

John 4:5-42

**March 26**

1 Samuel 16:1-13

Psalms 23

Ephesians 5:8-14

John 9:1-41

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**Easter Lilies**

This year we will be offering the white lily. The cost will be **$11 each.** Orders are due to the office by Monday, March 20, 2017.

White Lily \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_­­

Memory Of:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Or

Celebration

Of:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

NAME\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Flowers are from Custom Grown Greenhouse, 4507 S. 6th St. Please pick up your flower after the Easter Service.

**15 Ways to Make the Most out of Lent**

 (Warning: These are challenges—accept only as many as you can handle)

1.) **Write down your goals, and review them every day**—what would you like to accomplish during Lent (the 40 days between Ash Wednesday and Easter)? Would you like to get closer to God, develop a prayer or Bible study routine, cultivate stronger relationships with your friends and family, challenge yourself to attend church services or activities more faithfully? Do you intend to accept some of the challenges below? Whatever your goals are, put them down on paper and be sure to look back at them each and every day to help you remember what you want, and motivate yourself to succeed.

2.) **Practice thankfulness**—Lent is a time to take stock of where we are and where we are going. When you look at where you are and what you have achieved this year, take a moment to think about what part of your achievements you owe to other people, and to God. Get in the habit of expressing your gratitude to other people for the ways that they have impacted your life. Write an overdue card; say thank you whenever you can. Take a moment each morning during these 40 days to jot down one or two things you are grateful to God for providing or making happen in your life. These simple exercises may help you to focus on the good things in life, and make you better able to help others in return.

3.) **Spend more time in your Bible**—Lent was developed as a time to grow closer to God, so it is the perfect time to push yourself to develop spiritual disciplines, such as daily Bible reading. Pick up that dusty devotion book that's been decorating your shelf for years, check out your church's devotional resources, take a trip to the local Christian book store and ask the clerks for help, or develop your own plan. Whatever it is, commit to spend some amount of time with the Bible every during these 40 days. Just 40 days. You can do it

4.) **Do one thing to make your body stronger**—God doesn't just care about our minds and souls. Our physical health is important to God as well. Could you commit to eating less sugar, or going to the gym every day (or maybe twice a week), or drinking more water, or getting more sleep, or any number of healthy activities for 40 days? We all know health goals are important, so try it and see.

5.) **Learn to say “no”—**Lent is a time of self-reflection, and along with self-reflection comes the reevaluation of our priorities and commitments. Have you overextended yourself anywhere? Most of us have at one point or another. Some of us make a lifestyle of it. But God cares about our mental health, and God cares about our time, too. When we cut back on our commitments, we often find ourselves more productive, and certainly more satisfied, in those few important things that we choose to do. Over the next 40 days, instead of quickly saying “yes” to everything, practice saying “no,” or at least practice using phrases that allow you time to really thing about the commitment—phrases like: “I'll get back to you tomorrow,” “I have to think about it,” or “I'll pray about that.” Just try it out for 40 days. You can always go back to you overextended routine after Easter break.

6.) **Spend Wisely**—As should be clear by now, God cares about our health, spiritual, mental, physical and even financial. If you struggle in the area of finances, consider using Lent as a time to get back on track, limit your spending, develop a debt management plan, find a partner who will pray with you specifically over your financial needs, or even meet with a qualified financial planner if necessary. Lent corresponds roughly to the time when many of us will be filing taxes, so many of us have money on the brain anyway.

7.) **Spend more time in the real world, less in the virtual**— between work, television, email, and social media, most of us spend not a lot, but the majority of our day in front of a screen. How much is too much? Only you can answer that for yourself. But however much screen time is appropriate in your life, chances are you have exceeded that amount in the past weeks. When that happens, not just our human relationships, but our relationship with God can suffer. Try this exercise during Lent to refocus on things that will have meaning ten years from now, not just ten seconds for now: set aside one hour each day for NO screens. You can spend this hour alone or with other people, at the beach, or around the dinner table. If an hour a day is too much, try an hour a week. If an hour a day is too easy, try an entire day each week.

8.) **Stop Multitasking**—this probably isn’t entirely possible for most of us, but the point, going along with challenge #5, is to make sure you can handle all of the activities in front of you, that you can put your best effort into them, and produce something to actually be proud of. The Bible tells us that, “Whatever you do, do it all to the glory of God,” (1 Cor 10:31). How can you best glorify God in your life, your family, your work? To throw another old adage at you: Anything worth doing is worth doing right. If you’re trying to do too much at the same time, you will not do any of it right.

9.) **Try one new activity**—try something new this Lent, just for fun— something you’ve always wanted to do but never got around to. Who knows, you might discover something important.

10.) **Take rest seriously**—God created the Sabbath because rest is important, yet so much in our everyday lives demands that we ignore this fact. Along with challenges #5 and #8, try to get serious about rest this Lenten season. Don’t let your free time be a haphazard thing—and do not use free time as an excuse to schedule additional activities. Establish a specific and consistent time when you will do no work. God usually speaks to us in peace and quiet, and you might just have to find peace and quiet before you can find God.

11.) Take time to reflect—this is, after all, what Lent is all about: Reflection. Particularly self-reflection. Think about where you were at this time last year. What has changed? What hasn’t? What were the highs and lows? What do you want to see happen in the coming months and years? And where have you seen or experienced God moving in your life? These are perfect questions to pair with goals #2, #3, #6, or #10.

12.) **Forgive and let go**—we are told in the Gospel that if we fail to forgive others, God cannot forgive us. With all the self-examination going on, Lent is a perfect opportunity to reflect on our relationships and mend where mending is needed. Do you need to forgive someone? Do you need to be forgiven? Take the challenge this season to make things right with other people. Give the negative things in your life to God, and move on into the future.

13.) **De-clutter**—Lent not only corresponds with tax season, but with the tradition of spring cleaning. Do you need the sixteen-year-old dress in the back of your closet, or the extra coffee maker crammed between the spare tarp and your grandmother’s crochet needles in the basement? Maybe. But maybe not. The well-known phrase “You can’t take it with you” is based on several biblical passages reminding us that our human obsession with possessions can sometimes interfere with more important things, like our relationships with other people, and with God—not to mention the daunting task of packing should you ever move. Challenge yourself to get can sometimes interfere with more important things, like our relationships with other people, and with God—not to mention the daunting task of packing should you ever move. Challenge yourself to get rid of a few unused items during Lent. You may find that clearing space in the closet clears space in your head, too.

14.) **Give generously**—the Bible compels us to serve others in the same way and with the same selflessness that Jesus did. How well are you living up to that standard? Generosity of spirit includes and requires more than just money—though money certainly can be a start. In what ways are you best qualified to serve others? What do you have to give? You may already be living out the answer to this question, or, just maybe, the answer will surprise you. Regardless, the world needs you. So take some time to consider what you have to give, and commit to give it, generously.

15.) **Give yourself a break**—it’s been said many times, and bears repeating many times more: We are our own worst critics. Lent has a reputation as being that time of year when Christians beat themselves up over sin, but that’s not the point of these 40 days. Self-reflection is not about beating yourself up, but about being honest (which, yes, can sometimes feel like the same thing). So in all the self-reflection, all the weighing of your strengths and weaknesses, be quick to remember that you are only human. If God judged us as harshly as we often judge ourselves, there would be no hope of salvation. Strive for perfection in all things, but recognize that perfection is entirely impossible for us here on earth. God knows this, that’s why he sent his son to live out the events of Easter—the great holiday that these 40 days are leading us to.



UPDATING EMAIL ADDRESSES

 We are updating our email addresses and home addresses for our new directory. You could just send a quick message to the church office; either smumc50@sbcglobal.net or officetim@gmail.com.

 We plan to send our newsletter out in a new way but this will not happen immediately. Please let us know your preference: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_E-Mail, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ web-site \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ pick it up at church \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Post Office.(for those who are unable to attend church) NAME\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Thanks for your help.





