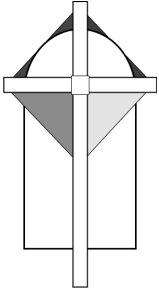


# Happy St. Patrick's Day



## **IRISH BLESSING**

May the road rise to meet you,  
may the wind be ever at your back.  
May the sun shine warm upon your face,  
and the rains fall soft upon your fields.  
And until we meet again,  
may God hold you in the palm of his hand.



**ST MARK'S**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

# ST. MARK'S MESSENGER

---

March 2024

Valley, Nebraska

[www.StMarksValleyNE.com](http://www.StMarksValleyNE.com)

402.359.2315

*from the Pastor...*



*Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. - John 15:4*

Here we are, already smack dab in the middle of the season of Lent! In another month, we'll be preparing ourselves to celebrate Easter! Lent is typically the time where we give up something or take on some work of service for others—but why is that?

Historically, works of service, or of abstinence (whether of certain foods, or behaviors) have been undertaken in order to spiritually 'prepare' oneself for Easter. It has been a way to honor the ways in which the Lord Jesus suffered and gave up his life for all humanity, on the cross. Lent has been a time of heightened devotion for Christians, drawing people back to their Savior. For some, it has been a time of pilgrimage to a special or holy place. To others, it has been a time of increased Bible study or prayer.

On Ash Wednesday I tried to explain why I as a pastor, don't expect or ask anyone to abstain from foods, shopping, or Facebook—although if folks want to do this—because they have identified ways in which these things come between themselves and the Lord, then that's good. I said that I hoped that instead, we might pay attention to Jesus' words in the gospel of John, where Jesus councils us to '*abide in Him*'—John 15:4-7.

So, if this scripture of John's were to be our guiding advice in our spiritual life and also in our Lenten devotion—what might that look like?

For some it might look like journaling: writing down thoughts, prayers, or reasons for gratitude to God. This can be an excellent way for some who like to write, to come closer to God. Not only that, but it provides one with a sort of spiritual diary or history. When things are difficult or not going as one wants—or one is fearful—this gratitude journal can truly be spiritual medicine.

Others, with a more artistic bent may want to take pictures of special parts of creation that cause them to be grateful or generate a feeling of wonder! An album of sorts can be compiled. This can be done to and for God, and for oneself...inspired by the Lord.

Another person may just want to take a walk everyday as if the Lord is with you—you may walk in silence, or keep a conversation with him as you walk. Daily concerns, prayers, worries, or things you're thankful for—can be topics! You are spending time with the Lord! Abiding!

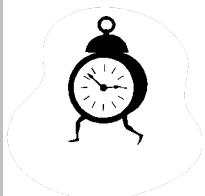
Most Christians feel like failures in their prayer lives; feeling that they don't really know how to pray, or like a failure because they fall asleep doing so, or because they just can't make the time, afraid that there are certain things they should be saying or doing that are a mystery to them. Let me dispel that thinking! 'Sometimes simply sighing, 'oh Father, help' is all we can muster—and if that is so—it is enough! Christians have been concerned about 'how to pray' ever since Jesus' disciples asked him to 'teach us to pray'. He didn't give them lessons—he gave them a short prayer—called the Lord's Prayer—a prayer you can learn and keep and use, always. It is an excellent prayer, of course.

If you are interested in learning a way to pray, and way to perhaps abide more closely with the Lord through Lent and

afterwards—I want to recommend an ancient way of prayer that is simple but also deep. It can be done in 10 minutes or longer if you wish. It is the Prayer of Examen, that St. Ignatius taught . It is a way of ‘abiding in Christ’ no special words-but a practice of inviting Jesus into your life by reviewing your day with him-much as you would look at a picture album of your day-good and bad, with him. It is a grace-filled practice. And it is also a way of *really* inviting Jesus into our everyday lives. He’s not just there for emergencies-but for you in ALL your life. I have found a free app that is especially helpful and easy to use called: **Reimagining the Examen** (both on android and iPhones). You can find many books and articles written about this practice, but this little app helps you review your day, with Jesus quite deeply but efficiently. It might be a way for you to ‘*abide*’ with Jesus as he asks us to do in John’s gospel. Whatever you do; walk, journal, pray, study, abstain—there is no right or wrong thing to do or way to pray—*whatever helps you draw closer to the Lord* of your life, is *the best way* for you to do so! Not only that, but Jesus never said, “only draw near me during Lent”, he wants us to draw near always. I hope that this Lent will be a good one for you all, and that you won’t let perfectionism doom you to not try something new-for fear of failing. You cannot fail-the Lord is always with you and loves you for the long haul!

All glory and thanks to God!

+Pastor Barbara



**DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME**  
Remember to spring forward on  
March 10<sup>th</sup>!

*from the PMA...*

## **CHURCH OF THE PBC**

Recently a friend referred to our congregation as being the Church of the Perpetual Blue Crates. It certainly seems accurate. The generosity of this congregation is apparent by the continual ingathering of items for a variety of ministries. There is a great effort to coordinate ministries so as not to overlap or compete with one another. Most of the BC (Blue Crate) ministries are of limited time increments of several months. Some are seasonal. There are also ongoing ingathering opportunities such as the COPE grocery cart and supplies for the Little Pantry.

We appreciate those who sponsor these ministries and applaud their creativity in displaying them. And, we appreciate all of you who donate to these ministries on a “perpetual” basis. God bless you all.

PMA Karen

### **OFFERING COUNTERS, USHERS & ACOLYTES**

During Lent, if you are scheduled to count offering, help with sign in, usher or acolyte on Sunday morning, we ask that you also perform the task at the following Wednesday evening Lenten service.

*Thank you!*

### **A PRAYER FOR ST MARK'S COUNCIL**

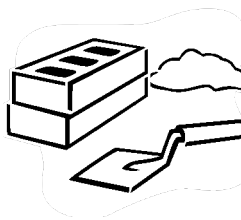
Loving Lord, give courage to our council to believe that you have an important mission for our congregation at this time. Help us look beyond our own walls and reach out to others. Amen.

## **PRAYER GARDEN BRICKS**

**New bricks will be installed in the  
Prayer Garden in April.**

Deadline to order a brick is March 31.  
Order forms are available at the front desk.

Please turn order form(s) in to Jan.



## ***THANK YOU***

Dear Friends,


Thank you so much for the kind words, hugs, prayers and cards we have received during my sister, Janet Pennington's cancer diagnosis and surrounding her death on February 13th. We are both so grateful for our St. Mark's parish family.

Howard and Sharon Renshaw

## LENTEN WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Day/Date	Time	Theme
Sunday March 10	9:30 a.m.	Fourth Sunday in Lent
Wednesday March 13	7:00 p.m.	Wednesday Lenten Service
Sunday March 17	9:30 a.m.	Fifth Sunday in Lent
Wednesday March 20	7:00 p.m.	Wednesday Lenten Service

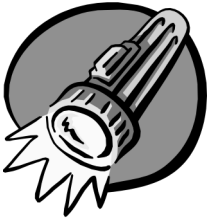
## HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Day/Date	Time	Theme
 Palm Sunday March 24	9:30 a.m.	Palm Sunday Worship/ Communion*
 Maundy Thursday March 28	7:00 p.m.	Maundy Thursday Worship/Communion
 Good Friday March 29	7:00 p.m.	Good Friday Worship
 Easter Sunday March 31	9:30 a.m.	Easter Sunday Worship/ Communion*

**ALL SERVICES ARE IN PERSON AND ALSO LIVE STREAMED**



**Quilting** dates are March 11 and March 21.



# COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

**This is a synopsis of the Council meeting  
held on February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

- There will be a Leadership Training event for Council members on Saturday, April 13, from 9 a.m. to 12 Noon. The event will be done via Zoom.
- The commercial dish washer that was in the kitchen was sold for \$1500 cash. The money was placed in a special account to be used for remodeling a portion of the kitchen.
- Vacation Bible school will be held June 24, 2024 to June 8, 2024 at the Faith Community Church.
- Great Plains will be furnishing the internet, phone, etc. to replace Cox. Great Plains is able to give us a faster internet.
- Council will provide and serve the Lenten Meal on Wednesday, February 21. The menu is fried chicken, baked beans, potato salad, coleslaw, rolls, and dessert furnished by the congregation.
- The following is the schedule for the remaining Lenten Meals:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Menu</b>
February 28	Sunday School/Chris. Ed.	Soup & Salad
March 6	WELCA	Soup & Salad
March 13	Men In Mission	Burgers and Brats
March 20	Worship & Music	Spaghetti & Salad



## MARCH NEWS FOR WOMEN OF ST. MARK'S

### FAITH CIRCLE NEWS

FAITH Circle will meet on **Tuesday March 5 in Fellowship Hall at 1 p.m.** with Mary DeGoei leading our study on Anna.. Ann Crabtree will provide refreshments.

### FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE NEWS

### JOY/PEACE CIRCLE NEWS



St. Mark's Project Warmth will be closed March 15th. After that date, should you have items, please store them for when we once again resume October 1st. Faith Circle thanks everyone who participated in our annual project. It was such a success this year. There is always such a need and the items are distributed to various facilities, including Cope in Elkhorn. Thank you again.



### **“CAKES FOR COPE”**

We all love to have a cake at celebrations of every kind. There are those who visit our COPE food pantry who are looking for a cake mix and can of frosting but we don't often have those in stock. Our Sunday School children will be collecting these items for our mission project this year. Every 50 cake/frosting bags that we collect will trigger a cupcake day at Sunday School. It all starts January 14th and runs through March 24th. Let's bring a smile and a cake to those who need one!!! Watch for our display in the entry!!

## Birthdays in March



It has been requested to have personal birthdates put in the newsletter. If we are going to do this we need you to be sure that we have your birth date.

Please let the church office know your date if you have not already done so.

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE FOLLOWING"

- |                       |                         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 – Rachel MacDonald  | 16 – Carson Stanzel     |
| 2 – Jaeda Bakken      | 17 – Travis Glidden     |
| 2 – JoAnn Hardman     | 18 – Raven Leal         |
| 3 – Chad Camenzind    | 18 – Jessica Petersen   |
| 4 – Darlene Brummels  | 19 – Forrest Goff       |
| 5 – Sharon Elske      | 22 – Barb Smith         |
| 5 – Brian Petersen    | 22 – Caleb Trost        |
| 5 – Lauren Ueckert    | 25 – Mallory McGaughey  |
| 6 – Annie Hurt        | 27 – Addison McKamy     |
| 6 – Frank Kirchmann   | 28 - Connor Hamsa       |
| 7 – Kyle Johnson      | 28 - Barb Munson        |
| 7 – Ethan Karloff     | 29 – Karen Flynn        |
| 7 – Marilyn Ramsey    | 29 – Sam Lathrop        |
| 9 – Chet Ryan         | 29 – Paige Winkler      |
| 10 – Jennifer Kreager | 31 – Jeffrey Flynn, Jr. |
| 13 – Kari McGaughey   | 31 – Natalia Menard     |
| 14 – Ann Crabtree     |                         |



On Sunday, February 25, 2024, St. Mark's welcomed Rick and Jennifer Bohnhoff into our family of faith. They are transferring here from St. Thomas Lutheran in Omaha. Please seek out these new family members and introduce yourselves! Welcome, Rick and Jennifer!

We are Rick and Jennifer (Jennie) Bohnhoff. We moved to Valley 4 years ago (after the flood but before the pandemic) and absolutely love the community. We previously were members of St. Thomas Lutheran Church in Millard.

Rick works in sales for CooperVision and Jennie works in Compliance for Molina Healthcare.

We've been married almost 37 years and have been together since we were teenagers working at an Omaha McDonald's.

Our two sons live in Omaha. Michael works for BuilderTrend and Matt works for the Post Office.

We feel blessed to have found a new church home at St. Mark's.

## SCRIPTURES FOR SUNDAYS IN MARCH 2024

March 3

Third Sunday in Lent

First Reading	Exodus 20:1-17
Responsive Reading	Psalms 19
Second Reading	1 Corinthians 1:18-25
Gospel Reading	John 2:13-22

March 10

Fourth Sunday in Lent

First Reading	Numbers 21:4-9
Responsive Reading	Psalms 107:1-3, 17-22
Second Reading	Ephesians 2:1-10
Gospel Reading	John 3:14-21

March 17

Fifth Sunday in Lent

First Reading	Jeremiah 31:31-34
Responsive Reading	Psalms 51:1-12
Second Reading	Hebrews 4:5-10
Gospel Reading	John 12:20-33

March 24

Palm Sunday

First Reading	Isaiah 50:4-9a
Responsive Reading	Psalms 31:9-16
Second Reading	Philippians 2:5-11
Gospel Reading	Mark 11:1-11

March 28

Maundy Thursday

First Reading	Exodus 12:1-4 [5-10] 11-14
Responsive Reading	Psalms 116:1-2, 12-19
Second Reading	1 Corinthians 11:23-26
Gospel Reading	John 13:1-17, 31b-35

March 29

Good Friday

First Reading	Isaiah 52:13-53:12
Responsive Reading	Psalm 22
Second Reading	Hebrews 10:16-25
Gospel Reading	John 18:1—19:42
	March 31
	Easter
First Reading	Acts 10:34-43
Responsive Reading	Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
Second Reading	1 Corinthians 15:1-11
Gospel Reading	John 20-1-18

**JANUARY MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT**

January Budget = \$23,361  
 January Expenses = \$21,689  
 January Giving = \$14,004

**YEAR TO DATE FINANCIAL REPORT**

January Budget = \$23,361  
 January Expenses = \$21,689  
 January Giving = \$14,004

End of year 2023 Balance in Savings = \$24,282  
 End of January 2024 Balance in Savings = \$24,782  
 End of January 2024 Balance in Checking = \$12,145  
 End of January 2023 Worship Enhancement Total = \$413.83



CREATED BY YOGI ON PORTAL.COM

## From Laughing with Lutherans

A 5-year-old granddaughter was overwhelmed by the large attendance on Easter. She whispered to her mother, "Are some of these people in the wrong church?"

Parents attended Easter worship with their son and his family. Their son handed his 5-year-old son his offering, but he looked down the pew and saw his grandfather holding his money. He looked up at his dad and said, "That's OK. Grandpa's buying."

## **PRAYER CONCERNS**

Bill & Louise	John & Lorrie Denker	Wylie James
Gwen Rittgarn	Steve Whitley	Tom
Madison Laughlin	Robert Peacock	Gregg
Toni Peacock	Ruth	Jean Krahmer
Charlotte	Maxine Nash	Eryn Hamke
Cindy	Lawrence Bonacci	Julie Dunn
Lois Schaefer	Kari	Curt Tate
Fred Fogle	Shelia Dreessen	Caregivers Among Us
Care Center Residents	Care Center Staff	All Those Grieving

## **ALL OUR HOMEBOUND MEMBERS**

Chet Ryan	Donna Fintel
Joan Kahlandt	MaryLou Finn
Dee Christiansen	Annie Hurt
Millie Richards	Donna Hovendick
Bert Samson	

For all military serving at home and around the world. We include prayers for their families as they hold things together in their absence.

## **PRAYER BOX REQUESTS**

We discovered these prayer requests in our Pray Shawl request box.

- Someone requesting prayers for each member of the family (2 to 3 times – including for Pastor - thank you! Much needed!
- Prayers requested for a friend's brother who has cancer (child)
- Prayers for a sister going through difficulties. (May she be reminded of God's love and constant care.)
- Prayers requested for a friend with a painful sports injury who's in a boot – help for the pain.
- Prayers requested for a great grandma who recently lost her husband – help her be happy and know she's loved.
  - For a friend having surgery