

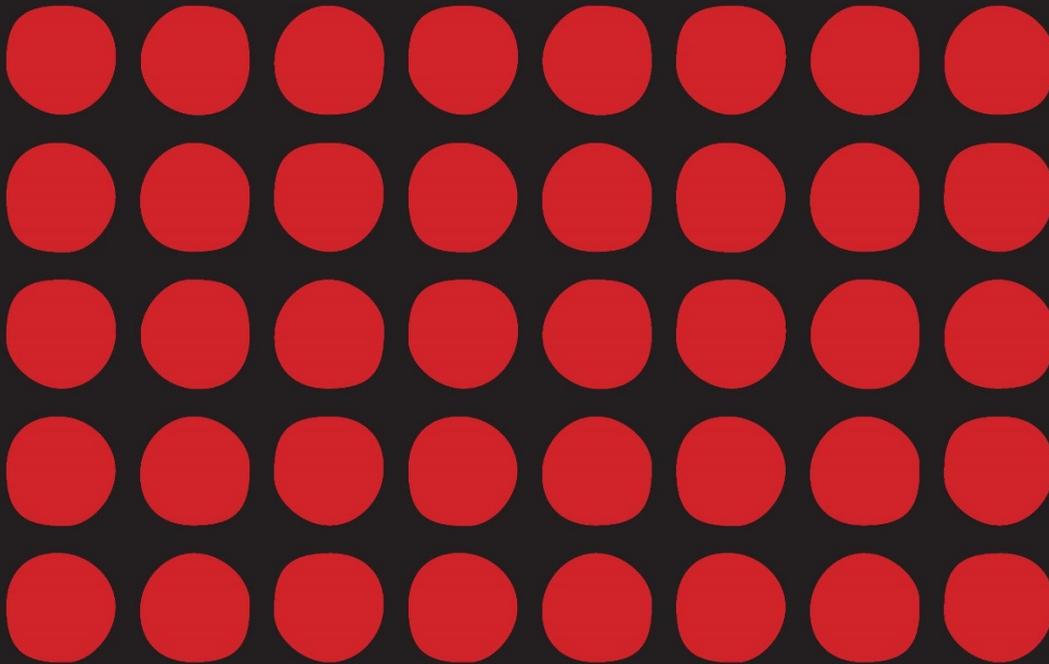
NEWSLETTER OF FPC:ENDICOTT

FIRST PRES PRESS

MARCH 2019 EDITION

RED LETTER

CHALLENGE



A 40 DAY LIFE CHANGING EXPERIENCE

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A Note from the Pastors



A Word of Encouragement

As we write these thoughts for the newsletter, we are making final preparations for our trip to Kenya. One of the things we like to do on mission trips is have each traveler be a “secret friend” to someone else on the trip, to quietly encourage that person with prayer, Scripture, and secret acts of service and affirmation.

The model of an encourager is found in Acts 4:36-37: *There was a Levite, a native of Cyprus, Joseph, to whom the apostles gave the name Barnabas (which means “son of encouragement”). He sold a field that belonged to him, then brought the money, and laid it at the apostles’ feet.*

The leaders of the early church gave Joseph a new name—Barnabas—because of the kind of guy he was. He was an habitual encourager. Here in Acts 4, he sold some of his property and brought it to the apostles to encourage them in their work of sharing the gospel and expanding the church. He was generous, and he gave to encourage. That is a great motive for giving. Gifts of money, time, labor, hospitality, or words encourage others because they meet the tangible and intangible needs of people. Barnabas did not give to get recognition; he did it to encourage others and to give recognition (glory) to God. He was a friend to everyone he met, because his goal was to encourage everyone he met.

During our recent celebration of Heritage Sunday, we asked people to share encouraging words of how God has changed lives through the body of Christ at FPC:E. Many people shared verbally during the service. Here are some of the written responses that were turned in. May these words encourage you in your own life and faith, and also encourage you to be an encourager!

- + FPC:E TAUGHT ME THE POWER OF PRAYER AND ENCOURAGED ME TO LEAD OTHERS IN PRAYER.
- + MY SMALL GROUP HAS BEEN THE SOURCE OF MY GROWTH AND DEEP LOVE FOR JESUS CHRIST. I FEEL BORN AGAIN. PRAISE GOD!
- + I AM GRATEFUL FOR THE PEOPLE WHO ARE SO FAITHFUL IN VISITING MY MOM. YOU DON'T REALIZE HOW BLESSED YOU WILL BE BY SOMEONE VISITING YOUR PARENTS UNTIL YOU ARE THE RECIPIENT OF THAT BLESSING.
- + JOINING A SMALL GROUP SEVERAL YEARS AGO GAVE ME THE COURAGE AND SUPPORT TO TAKE ON THE RESPONSIBILITY OF BECOMING A DEACON. WE HAD JUST READ ISAIAH 6:8- “HERE I AM. SEND ME.”
- + MY FAITH HAS GROWN THROUGH INSPIRATIONAL MUSIC AND THE WORD.
- + I AM GRATEFUL TO BE PART OF A COMMUNITY OF FAITH THAT STICKS TO THE WORD OF GOD. PRAISE GOD.

AMONG OUR PEOPLE

Please pray for:

Linda Glajch's father, who was hospitalized for a serious case of shingles and dehydration | **Ann Driggs**, who was able to return home from rehab | Friends and family upon the unexpected death of **David Forman**. David was the oldest son of Betty and John and grew up in this church | **Tim Devine**, who spent time in the hospital for cardiac testing | **Christine Snyder**, a friend of Claudia Delafield, who is suffering from many health issues | **The family and friends of Mark Bandurchin** (a business partner and friend of Jamie Jacobs) as they grieve his death on Jan. 17 | **Cooper Knapick**, son of Joe (N.S. employee), who had major surgery in Syracuse | **Claudia Delafield**, who was discharged from the hospital after being treated for diverticulitis | **Rev. Brown Naik**, who was in the hospital with pneumonia | **Ford Drake**, who had double hernia surgery | **Erin Schrader and family**, as they grieve the death of her father, **Ray Harrison**, on 2/4 | Friends of Adele Everett, **Dean and his son Stephen Beachey**, who were caught in a random shooting incident in College Station, PA, and killed | **The Whalen family**, upon the death of Kate's grandmother | The following people who are home recuperating: **Gert Campbell**, who had a bad fall; **Jim Murphy**, who had a hip replacement | **Eric Eiche's father, Phil**, who was hospitalized | Janet Pacana's daughter, **Aiyana**, who is being treated for ear trouble | Eric Cady's cousin's 1-year-old son, **Michael**, who has liver cancer | Friends of Char Gebler, **Randy Kerr and Sandy Russell**, who both have stage

4 cancer | **Hemant Tandi**, who has returned from India; pray for him and for our brothers and sisters in Christ who live and work in and around Nanda | We give thanks for the time that 9 FPC:E leaders spent at the **ECO National Gathering**; it was great to have Elder Ed Fiaschi be able to join us, since he has been working in Colorado Springs since September | **Sam Gebler**, who passed her boards and is now seeking God's will for her employment in life | **The family of Larry Hoey**, as they grieve the death of his cousin, **Jim** | **The family of Bev Conklin**, as they grieve the death of her uncle, **Harold** | **David Glajch's mother**, who had a heart attack and subsequently received a stent | **MaryLee Driggs**, who was diagnosed with breast cancer and had surgery on 2/13 to determine treatment plans | Congratulations to **Marina Bates and the Corning-Painted Post Middle School** cast for an excellent production of Mary Poppins! | **The Pierce family**, as they support Larry's sister who has been hospitalized and diagnosed with liver cancer | Prayers of thanksgiving for the good report **Steve Sweeney** received at his follow up appointment after cancer surgery | Lynn Barsigian and family, upon the death of Lynn's mom, **Shirley Wennegal**

PRAYER

Elders prayed for individuals and ministry issues, including leaders for Children's & Youth Ministry, the Growing Young Assessment Team, the Kenya mission trip, JD Paff (who preached on 2/17/19), next steps for FPC:E, the church-wide Lenten initiative, the Schrader family upon the recent death of Erin's father, and the visioning work of the nursery school.

VISIONING

Art Davis, Jamie and Nate Jacobs, JD Paff, Tina Ide, and Jan and Tim Devine briefly shared what had impacted them from their experience at the 2019

ECO National Gathering. Elders and Staff shared what impacted them from the Visioning Retreat in Honesdale, PA.

In order to answer the question, "How do we discover our unique calling as FPC:E, so that we might flourish where we are planted?" we must first understand the unique context in which we are planted and the unique set of gifts and passions this congregation brings to the table. As a next step in the visioning process, elders and staff spent time brainstorming those three areas.

Part of the visioning process includes evaluating the responsibilities given to staff, so that we use their time/gifts in the most fruitful ways possible. As one example, Session blessed staff to decide whether to change the frequency of the church newsletter and communicate any change to the congregation.

LINDA WILLETS CLERK OF SESSION

Each month, Linda provides an overview of the work of our Session. Keep an eye out on this page to see what God is doing through the work of our leadership.



JOINT MEETING

Rev. Dr. Tim Devine opened the meeting by encouraging us to take this time to "Stop, Look, and Listen" as a congregation and as the Body of Christ. He read Psalm 46:1-3, 10, Matthew 17:5, and Micah 7:7 to support the three directives, then followed with prayer.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved to take up to \$55,000 from the Wagner Fund to support the 2019 General/Local Budget.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved to approve the Terms of Call for the Co-Pastors.

Rev. Jan Devine shared the highlights reported at Session about how this congregation responded to the 2018 Goal – "To make sharing the gospel an intentional part of every ministry and mission of FPC:E." Others in the congregation added to the list.

There was a time of reflection from elders/program staff who attended either the Visioning Retreat and/or the 2019 ECO National Gathering.

During open discussion, we acknowledged that we need to be more intentional in our own lives and in the ministries of this church to bring the good news of Jesus Christ to those who do not yet know Him. We have been growing deep; we also need to grow wide.

CONNECT



*“IN HIM WE LIVE AND MOVE AND HAVE
OUR BEING.” – ACTS 17:28*

Recently a Scripture passage, *“In him we live and move and have our being”*, (Acts 17:28) has been resonating with me. I so desire to have this Scripture be representative of my life but this won't happen by accident. I need to be intentional and disciplined with studying the One who made me, to get to know Him better, and to let that knowledge infuse my being in such a way that it becomes who I am. But discipline? Denying myself?! Who chooses that? I recently came across two quotes that helps put this in perspective:

*Ann Voskamp — Life carries pain: either the pain of discipline or the pain of discouragement. Nothing happens without discipline. No music gets played without discipline. No games get won. No finish lines get crossed. No freedom gets tasted. *And we want all that.* Liberation always begins with discipline.*

Mark Crumpler — Every time you resist temptation you show with your life that God is better, more satisfying, than whatever it is that tempts you. John Piper writes that, “In temptation sin comes to us and says, ‘the future with God on his narrow way is hard and unhappy, but the way I promise is pleasant and satisfying’.” When you fight temptation you name the lie and you choose God.

For the past fifteen years, FPC:Endicott has intentionally used Lent as a time to be disciplined and practice being in community with others while studying Scripture together. This year we will be using the *Red Letter Challenge* by Zach Zehnder to focus on Jesus' words He left with us (those red letters in many Bibles). We will begin together as a church on Ash Wednesday (March 6) for our Agape Supper/Sticky Faith Gathering and then meet in groups the following 5 weeks to study his words on Being, Forgiving, Serving, Giving, and Going. If you aren't already part of a small group you have a couple of options:

- + Work with me and see if there is a day/time that you might be able to join one of our Lenten small groups.
- + Grab a few others and start your own microgroup. You will receive support from the small group ministry team for the weekly topics plus many have found this easier to coordinate with busy schedules.

Together, as a community of faith, let's journey through Christ's words so we are known as those who *“live and move and have our being in Him!”*

FPC: YOUTH

SAVE THE DATES!

SAT, MAR 2 | 6:30PM-8:00PM

Younglife Club: Pierce Family Home, Vestal

SUN, MAR 3 | 10:30AM

Family Day: Church Dining Room

FRI-SUN, MAR 8-10

THAW Youth Retreat: Grades 6-12. Subsidized cost is \$40/student.

SAT, MAR 16 & SAT, MAR 30 | 6:30PM-8:00PM

Location TBA

SUN, MAR 31 | 10:15AM-12:15PM

Vestal Nursing Home Visit. Gather in Treehouse Room.

SUMMER CAMPS!

ROCK MOUNTAIN

Dates have been released for summer camps. Be sure to check them out!

YOUNGLIFE

Youth are encouraged to participate in either YoungLife Camp or Rock Mountain Camp...or both!

WHAT IS LENT?

Lent is the 40 days (excluding Sundays) from Ash Wednesday (March 6) to Easter (April 21).

Traditionally, Christians use this period of time to prepare for the coming events of Christ's death and resurrection. In preparation, we make concentrated effort towards spiritual growth and renewal by focusing more on the words of Jesus and each other.

While many see Lent as a time to give up something, it is also a time to begin doing new things. Many Christians have found the spiritual disciplines such as prayer, fasting, repentance, and giving to be a useful way to center themselves during Lent.

WHY INVEST IN LENT?

Traditions provide a predictable rhythm to key events and moments in life. Experiencing familiar traditions, especially ones which young people can see, hear, feel, smell, and taste, provides vivid impressions parents can build on with their children year after year.

Engaging in the tradition of Lent gives parents a yearly opportunity for children to encounter the resurrection story and the way it impacts our daily walk with Christ.

The thought of adding or changing one thing in your busy schedule can be daunting, but Lent is a time for us to evaluate priorities and re-center our lives upon Christ. So, we encourage your families to invest in at least one new practice or tradition this year.

GIVE IT A TRY!

We want to support and encourage your family in creating Lenten traditions. In the chart on the next page, we've offered you a handful of ideas and suggestions for what you might do this Lent. If you want more ideas, or ones more specific to your family, ask Tina or consult the internet. There are a ton of great ideas out there!

Please use these suggestions in whatever way will work best for your family. You may choose to focus on one theme for an entire week or you may find it best to look at the same theme on particular days of the week.

As Lent unfolds, let us know how things are going. Where are you seeing growth and where are you seeing God?

Theme Word	Dates or Day of the Week	Scripture	Description	Lenten Practice
Preparation	March 6	AGAPE SUPPER	Please join us! All ages will gather to eat together, to engage with one another and with God, and to celebrate Communion. The meal has been adapted to be more kid-friendly!	As a family, consider and pray over what you would like to do during Lent. Then, make a plan for those practices. Here are some ideas to consider: Set up a prayer station, make a weekly commitment to serve somewhere, commit to one simple dinner a week, set a daily time for family prayer and Scripture reading, use a devotional like Faithful Families by Traci Smith.
Sacrifice	March 7-9; Thursdays	Romans 12:1-2; Luke 18:28-30; Romans 3:25-26; Luke 9:23-24; Matthew 19:16-30; Philippians 3:7-11; Hebrews 13:15-16	The practices of sacrifice and fasting can be very similar. Often times, though, sacrifice comes at a greater cost and deeply challenges us.	Collectively or individually chose to give up or greatly reduce the use of something you value or use the most. Remove something from the weekly calendar and/or replace it with a time of service. Chose to donate a favorite toy, game, piece of clothing, book, etc.
Prayer	March 10-16; Fridays	Philippians 4:4-6; 1 John 5:13-15; James 5:13-18; Psalm 145; Luke 18:1-14; Matthew 26:36-46; Matthew 6:5-15	Prayer can include praise, thanks, confession, requests and more! As a family explore the various types of prayer.	Throughout Lent, track your prayer though a prayer jar or paper chains. Have little ones use playdough to form things they want to pray for. Use a local or world map to prayer for church members, local needs or missionaries throughout the world.
Forgiveness	March 17-23; Saturdays	Matthew 18:21-35; 1 John 1:5-10; Psalm 51; Luke 23:26-43; Luke 6:37-42; Ephesians 4:17-32; Psalm 103:9-18	Forgiveness is not just something we just give to others but it is also something we must be asking for from God and from others.	Create a simple prayer of forgiveness for your family to memorize and use during Lent. Challenge each other to consider people they need to forgive and encourage them ask forgiveness when they have sinned. Use Alka-Seltzer Tablets and water as a visible sign of how God erases our sins.
Kindness	March 24-30; Sundays	Colossians 3:12-17; Psalm 145; 1 John 3:16-18; Luke 6:27-36; Galatians 5:22-26; Philippians 2:1-11; Luke 10:25-37	We are called to treat all those around us with kindness. How might you show Christ's love and kindness to others?	Write notes of kindness to family members and place them on their bedroom doors. Send or deliver letters of encouragement to teachers, family, friends, church members. Bake cookies to take to a nursing home or church shut-ins.
Fasting	Mar. 31-Apr. 6; Mondays	Matthew 6:16-18; Matthew 4:1-11; Acts 13:1-3; Psalm 42; 2 Samuel 12:7-23; Jonah 3; Matthew 9:14-17	The practice of fasting is about making space for intentional time with God. While most of us think fasting is simply about food and drink, it can extend to so much more!	Have a tech free day or week. For a week, chose to only spend money on immediate needs. Spend one week playing with only non-battery operated toys. Make an effort to fast from whining, complaining or arguing for a day or week.
Generosity	April 7-13; Tuesdays	Matthew 6:1-5; 2 Corinthians 9:6-15; Luke 21:1-4; Deuteronomy 15:7-11; 1 Timothy 6:17-19; James 2:14-17; 1 Kings 17:17-24; 1 John 4:7-19	God has richly blessed each of us with an abundance of resources from money to clothes to time to food and more! He has also called us to share those blessings with other!	As a family go through the rooms of your house and give away several items from each room. Invite a neighbor over to your house for dinner or take complete meal over to their home. Volunteer at a local food pantry or other charity. Spend a month saving your change for a missionary or non-profit organization.
Reflection	April 14-21; Wednesdays	Matthew 21:1-11; Matthew 26:17-35; Matthew 26:36-46; Matthew 26:47-68; Matthew 26:69-75; Matthew 27:11-44; Matthew 27:32-65; Matthew 28:1-15	In this final week leading into Easter, spend time as a family considering the events of Holy Week and its impact upon us.	Print sequential pictures of Holy Week to help guide the week. As a family, create a mission statement about how you want to live differently in the weeks and months following Easter. Join us for the Living Last Supper on April 18 and 19.

FPC:E COMMUNITY

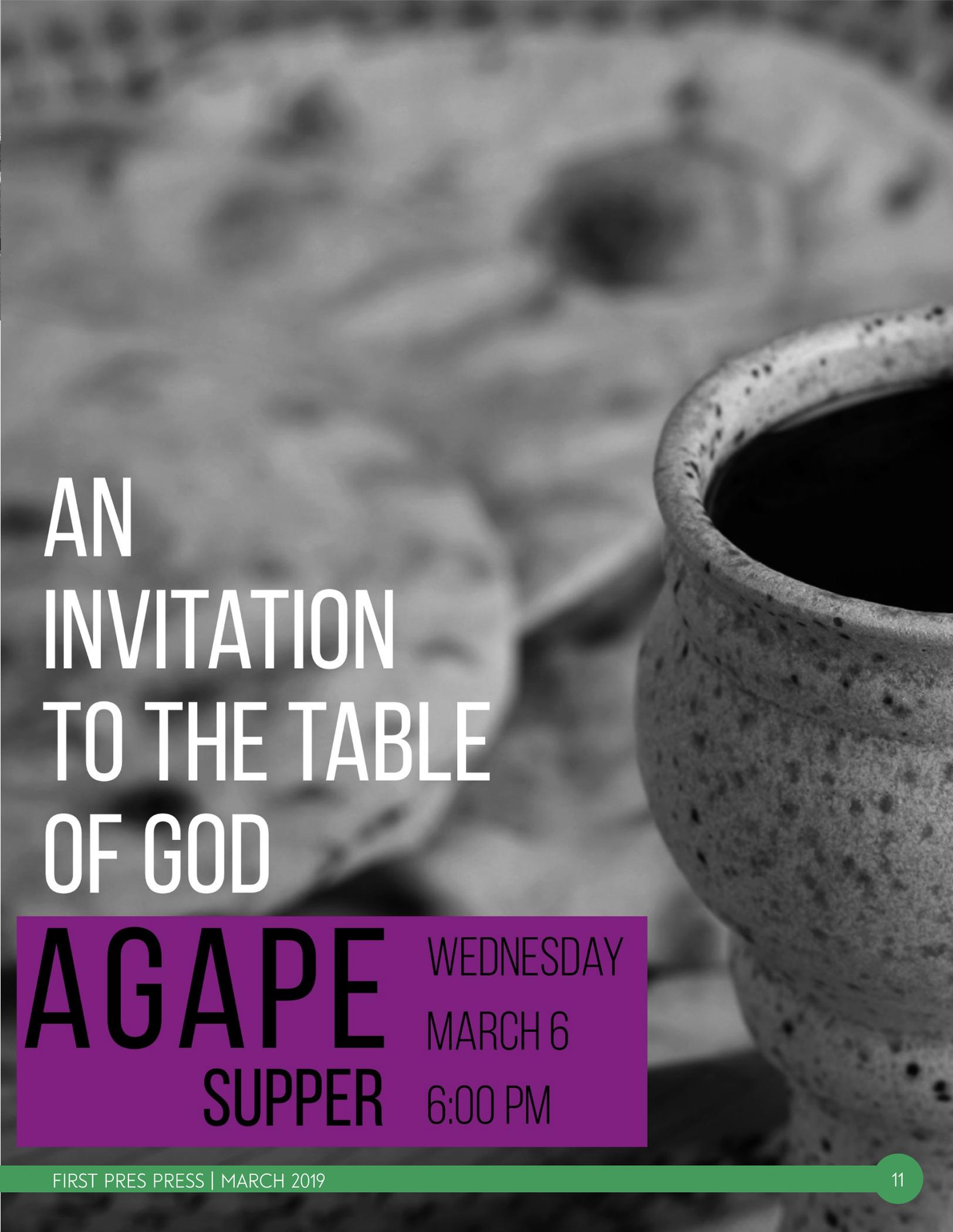
Look here for opportunities to serve the Kingdom and grow in your faith through the missions and ministries of FPC:E

• **For all knitters and crocheters:** our prayer shawl cupboard is in need of more prayer shawls! We would like to revive the group that used to meet and knit/crochet together. Our proposed meeting date is March 13, Wednesday, at 1pm in the downstairs church lounge. We do have a pattern for the prayer shawl, or you may use your own pattern. For the knitters, large circular needles, size 12 or 13, work best. If you are looking for something new and different,

and something that blesses others, come on the 13th. Questions? Call Bonnie Mercia at 239-0354 or Missy Goetz at 785-3720.

• **Our next Sticky Faith Gathering will be on Ash Wednesday (March 6) for the Agape Supper.** The agape feast was a communal meal eaten by Christians in the early church, where they gathered not just for the sake of eating and socializing, but to focus on true Christian fellowship. A good description of this meal is found in Acts 2:46-47, where it says that day by day the disciples broke bread from house to house, taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising

God. Here at FPC:E, our tradition is to share a simple meal together on Ash Wednesday. On that evening, all ages gather to eat together, to engage with one another and with God, and to celebrate Communion. Building on the success of our Sticky Faith Gatherings this past year, we are changing the way we do the meal to give an opportunity for all ages to participate. Responsibility for this simple meal will be shared: please contact JoAnn Betka (bjbetka@yahoo.com) if you are able to contribute to the meal. Childcare will be provided for our youngest children after the meal.



AN
INVITATION
TO THE TABLE
OF GOD

AGAPE
SUPPER

WEDNESDAY
MARCH 6
6:00 PM

A pair of hands, palms up, holding a mound of dark, rich soil. The hands are positioned in the center of the frame, with the soil piled in the palms and some falling between the fingers. The background is a close-up of the soil, showing its texture and some roots. A white rectangular border frames the central text and hands.

MAKE IT YOUR
GOAL TO LIVE A
QUIET LIFE,
MINDING YOUR OWN
BUSINESS AND
WORKING WITH YOUR
HANDS, JUST AS WE
INSTRUCTED YOU
BEFORE.

| THESS.
4:11

FAITHFUL SERVICE

In January, Dan Moore came to the church to give us an envelope of records and his keys to the church. Filled with deep emotion, he reflected on the 40+ years that he has served this church by overseeing the counting, recording, and depositing of pledges, gifts, and donations given to this church. Week after week, year after year, rarely a missed Sunday.

Through his faithful service, Dan has demonstrated this exhortation from Paul to the Christians in Thessalonica:

Make it your goal to live a quiet life...— Dan has served in such an important way, but quietly and behind the scenes. Even now he has asked us to not acknowledge his service publicly before the congregation. (We did warn him that it would appear in the newsletter!)

...minding your own business— The work Dan has done requires confidentiality. The gifts given to the church are handled with integrity and a non-judgmental attitude.

...working with your hands— That part is obvious(!) and it is only one of the ways Dan has served this church and community in Jesus' name.

We are also grateful for others who have served on counting teams under Dan's leadership for many years and are retiring. Many thanks to Dot/Jack Melrose, Janet/Bill Bittner, Lois/Ken Wadman, and our semi-retiree, Ede Sornberger!

As we move forward, the financial and tech folks are working on ways to simplify the procedure, add flexibility to the process, and engage new teams to serve in this capacity. Thank you to Pam Davis, Linda/Jeff Willets, and Gordie Pollard for their ongoing service, and for those who will be added!



SPREAD THE WORD!

OUR OPEN HOUSE FOR PROSPECTIVE
2019-20 STUDENTS IS HAPPENING
THURSDAY, MARCH 14, 6-7:30PM

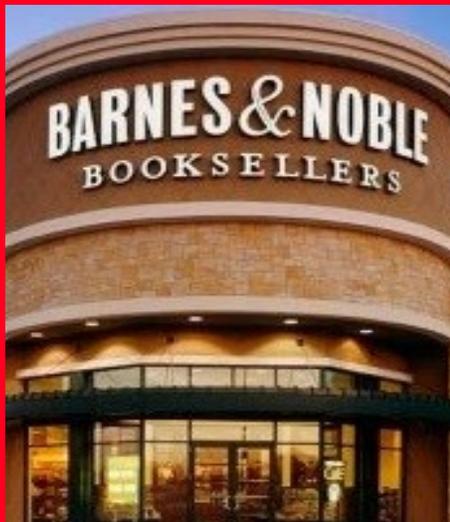
The Sea Turtle class of three-year-olds experimented with shapes and physics while creating a sculpture for the Art Show!



Upon arriving in Kenya, our Derek Washburn took no time at all to become an African giraffe's friend - here feeding it from his mouth...



Stroll in to Barnes & Noble (Vestal) on Sat. March 2 as our Parent Council hosts an all-day nursery school fundraiser. Mention at the register that you are supporting First Pres. and a percentage of the day's sales will benefit our programming!



We are delighted to have Mrs. Laura Parsons take the reigns as the Bumblebee lead teacher for the remainder of this school year. Her compassion for children and experience in Speech Pathology & Special Education are wonderful supports to EFPNS.



MARCH

01

7:00pm Night of Worship

03

9:00am Worship Service
10:30am Children's
Ministry
10:45am Worship Service

04

7:30pm AA Meeting

05

12:30pm Staff Meeting
5:30pm Samaritan
Supper
6:15pm Worship Team
6:30pm AA Meeting
7:00pm Deacons

06 **Ash
Wednesday**

6:00am Men's Group
6:00pm Agape Supper
8:00pm Session
7:30pm AA Meeting

07

7:00pm AA Meeting
7:00pm Chancel Choir

10 **1st Sunday of
Lent
Communion**

9:00am Worship Service
10:30am Children's
Ministry
10:45am Worship Service

11

7:30pm AA Meeting

12

12:30pm Staff Meeting
5:30pm Samaritan
Supper
6:15pm Worship Team
6:30pm AA Meeting

13

6:00am Men's Group
7:00pm STCCC
Rehearsal
7:30pm AA Meeting

14

6:00pm NS Open House
7:00pm AA Meeting
7:00pm Chancel Choir

17 **2nd Sunday of
Lent**

9:00am Worship Service
10:30am Children's
Ministry
10:45am Worship Service

18

4:00pm Endicott Proud
7:30pm AA Meeting

19

12:30pm Staff Meeting
5:30pm Samaritan
Supper
6:15pm Worship Team
6:30pm AA Meeting

20

6:00am Men's Group
7:00pm STCCC
Rehearsal
7:30pm AA Meeting

21

7:00pm AA Meeting
7:00pm Chancel Choir

24 **3rd Sunday of
Lent**

9:00am Worship Service
10:30am Children's
Ministry
10:45am Worship Service

25

1:00pm Women's Club
7:30pm AA Meeting

26

12:30pm Staff Meeting
5:30pm Samaritan
Supper
6:00pm NS Board
Meeting
6:15pm Worship Team
6:30pm AA Meeting

27

6:00am Men's Group
7:00pm STCCC
Rehearsal
7:30pm AA Meeting

28

5:30pm Worship Ministry
Team
7:00pm AA Meeting
7:00pm Chancel Choir

31 **4th Sunday of
Lent**

9:00am Worship Service
10:30am Children's
Ministry
10:45am Worship Service

LIFE CHANGING
A
40
DAY
EXPERIENCE

FPC:ENDICOTT

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