

The First United Methodist Church of Lowell Tele-Christian March 2025 Edition

The mission of the United Methodist Church is to
make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Mark's Remarks...

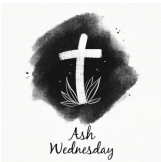


We are fast approaching the Lenten season. What does it mean for us to be in the season of Lent? If you know me, you know that I enjoy finding the history and meaning of words. What does the word, "Lent," mean? Ok, here we go. Lent is the 40 days of preparation for Easter. It begins at Ash Wednesday. If you count the dates on your calendar, there are 46 days. Sundays don't count as preparation days. Every Sunday is an Easter celebration so we don't include them.

It really begins on Tuesday before Ash Wednesday. This is Mardi Gras, which in French translates as Fat Tuesday. You may also have heard it called Shrove Tuesday. This was traditionally the day to use up all of the forbidden foods of Lent, especially fats and sugar. (Hence Fat Tuesday). That Tuesday was the last party before the solemnity of Lent. Shrove Tuesday was observed in northern Europe. It was that party time to get rid of forbidden foods, but shrove meant confess. So in the midst of eating, you should also confess your sins (shriving them off) to be ready to follow the straight and narrow during the Lenten season. It was popular for the northern people to make pancakes with the foods that were to be given up for Lent. Many still call it Pancake Day. You decide -- Do you want Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday) or Shrove Tuesday (Pancake Day)?

Getting back to Lent. The word comes from the Old English, "Lencten". Lencten simply means Spring season. There was no religious connotation connected with it in the beginning. The concept of 40 days goes back to the Greeks. The Greek concept of Lent was translated into Latin as, "Quadragesima." Be thankful we went with the old English and not the Latin. We'd all be having trouble remembering and pronouncing this season of the year. Next month we'll talk about the difficult names from Holy Week.

Pastor Mark



Our Ash Wednesday Service is March 5 at 7 pm. Through hymns, readings and the imposition of ashes from the palms of last year's Palm Sunday, we will prepare our hearts for the Lenten Season.



March Sermon Title and Scripture Schedule

March 2:	Scripture: II Corinthians 3:12-18	Sermon Title: ' <i>Transfigured</i> '
March 9:	Scripture: Luke 5:1-11	Sermon Title: ' <i>Peter's Call</i> '
March 16:	Scripture: Matthew 14:22-34	Sermon Title: ' <i>Peter Takes a Walk</i> '
March 23:	Scripture: Matthew 16:13-23	Sermon Title: ' <i>Peter: Cornerstone or Stumbling Block</i> '
March 30:	Scripture: Matthew 26:31-35	Sermon Title: ' <i>Peter: 'I'll Never Deny You</i> '

Throughout Lent we will be looking at the life of Peter and how his journey with Jesus is similar to our own.



Lent will begin on March 5, Ash Wednesday. We will have a service at 7pm in the sanctuary, which will include an opportunity to receive ashes. The ashes we will be using are created by burning palm fronds from last year's Palm Sunday celebration. The smell of the palms burning is very fragrant as it fills the sanctuary adding to the meaningfulness of this Lenten season. Come and join us as we began our Lenten journey and prepare for Easter.



LYFT is our Thursday evening worship service. We start at 5:30 pm with dinner and go right into worship at 6 pm. Worship includes music, a lay person or Pastor Mark speaking, prayer and communion. LYFT is a casual worship service where each week we enjoy food, fellowship and fun! Everyone is welcome! Bring a friend!

Remember...if you can't arrive in time for dinner, you can still come for worship!



Lenten Book Study

We will be having a Lenten book study that follows our Lenten sermon series. It will be about Simon Peter and how his life and relationship with Jesus mirrors our own. The book is called *Simon Peter*, by Adam Hamilton. You can buy the book and read ahead, or just come to the studies and receive outline materials. We will meet on **Wednesdays starting March 12 at 10:00 AM** on the 3rd floor in the Friends Sunday School **room 304**.



Mission of the Month

In March we are supporting a United Methodist mission. Our Mission of the Month is **Africa University**. Africa University began in 1984 with the call for the UM Church to build a university in Africa. At the 1988 General Conference the work on Africa University was approved in Old Mutare, Zimbabwe as a United Methodist institution. The first students were enrolled in agriculture. New colleges have since been added as well as dormitories, libraries, and other buildings. Students from all over Africa come and receive a top-quality education. Most of them then return to their country of origin and help build the economy. Your donation will help many Africans receive a university education. On March 9 there will be envelopes in the bulletins and we will accept donations all month to help this mission. Giving to missions should be above and beyond your giving to the ministries of the church. It is called second-mile giving. Don't feel bad if you don't feel you can afford to support any of these monthly missions.

Lent Mission Project

Every year we collect different items, usually at Lent. It is often food for our local food banks. This year we are going to switch it up a bit. We will be creating flood buckets. These are used by UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) around the country and even around the world. Each week during Lent we will collect 3 of the 15 items to fill a flood bucket. It will cost you between \$45 and \$70 to make a complete bucket over the 5 weeks. Dollar Tree has most of the items, so many will just be \$1.25. You can give money instead of items if you wish and someone else will do the shopping for you. You can also just give what you can afford and we'll put it all together and create more buckets.

March 9 we will gather:

5 scouring pads (no soap or metal in them) (Dollar Tree)
50-100 foot clothesline
24 roll of heavy duty trash bags 33-45 gal. size



March 16 we will collect:

\$7 for a 5 gallon bucket with a lid (church will purchase with your \$7 donation for you on-line)
2 pairs of kitchen gloves (Dollar Tree)
36-50 clothespins (Dollar Tree)

March 23 we will receive:

32-64 oz. bottle of liquid laundry soap (Dollar Tree)
16-34 oz. bottle of dish soap (Dollar Tree)
1 pair work gloves (leather palm or all leather) (\$3.60 on Amazon)

March 30 we will take in:

5 - N95 masks (church will purchase with your \$7.50 donation for you on-line)
18 reusable cleaning wipes (Dollar Tree \$2.50)
Scrub Brush (Dollar Tree)

April 6 we will finish with:

16-40 oz. liquid all-purpose cleaner (Dollar Tree)
4-8 oz. pump bottle of air freshener (Dollar Tree)
6-14 oz. bottle of pump Insect repellent (we can get on Amazon for \$7.50)

Please ask Pastor Mark or Kim lots of questions. If you get the wrong thing it will not be able to be included. Look for the insert in your Sunday bulletin that will show you a picture of the items.



Are you over 70 ½? and Do you have a traditional IRA?

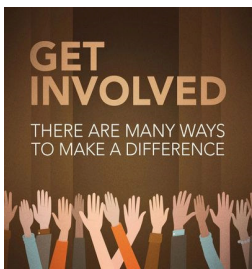
Are you concerned about 2025 tax planning?

You can do non-taxable distributions from your IRA, save federal and state income taxes and contribute to your church...ALL at the same time!!!

There are specific guidelines to follow, so talk to your tax preparer/accountant and/or your investment counselor. Ask these questions:

- What is my RMD (Required Minimum Distribution)?
- How can I gift my RMD and/or more to my church?
- How can I send monthly tax-free withdrawals to my church?
- How does it save federal and state income taxes?
- How can I prepare for my 2025 taxes?

Have a blessed March while planning for 2025!



Opportunity Fair

On Sunday, April 6, the church will be hosting an Opportunity Fair. What is an Opportunity Fair? It is a way to present all of the different ways you can be involved at the church. Each committee and organization will have a display set up in the Narthex to explain what they do and have sign up sheets for you to sign up for what God is leading you to do in ministry.

It can be ushering, singing in the choir, helping with Vacation Bible School, changing burnt-out light bulbs, or helping serve a funeral dinner. The opportunities are varied. Some must be done at the church at a particular time; some can be done at home on your time. The booths will open at 9 am on April 6 and be open after the service for a time. The booths will be up at some different events in the coming months if you are not in town on April 6.



On Saturday, February 15th, the Education Committee hosted a kids Valentine Party. We had approximately 10 participants and had a lot of fun decorating cookies, coloring pictures, eating popcorn, and watching Winnie the Pooh's Valentine movie.

The highlight of the evening was the Bales' boys balloon creations. The balloon swords were in high demand and entertained the boys all evening! We had a small group, but big fun....it is amazing how kids can come together and make their own fun!





The Church Mouse is taking a trip to visit their cousin in the city. The Church Mouse will be back next month. Watch out when you are doing good, you never know when the mouse is watching you.



Chili Cook-off and Dessert Auction



On Palm Sunday, April 13 we are planning a chili cook-off. See if you can beat Pastor Mark's patented chili recipe! Also we'll be auctioning off desserts to raise money for Outreach ministries this year. More information will be in the next newsletter.



SENIOR BINGO

Young at Heart Sr. Bingo meets on the fourth Tuesday. The next gathering will be March 25 at 1 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Invite someone to come along with you. This is a free Bingo with dessert and snacks and prizes for the winners. It's a fun time!



Spring Care Packages

Our church provides final exam boxes to our college students and everyone can be a part of this ministry!

What is a final exam college box? It is a box filled with goodies including snacks, gum, highlighters, prayers and uplifting notes to support a college student during the stressful week of final exams.

Who are the college students? Please submit the names and addresses of your children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews who are enrolled in college and will be preparing for finals this spring. Please submit names to the church office by March 15.

How can I be a part of this ministry? Everyone can participate in the college ministry!!

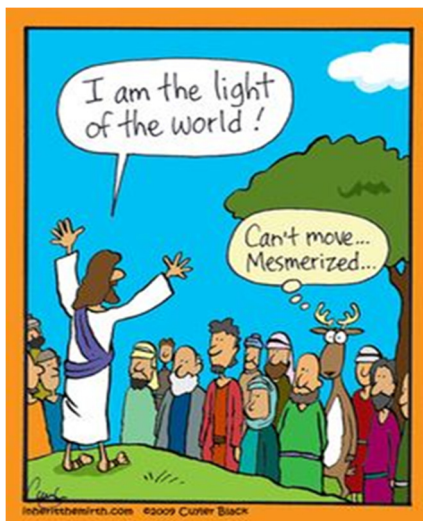
1. Pray for the college students.
2. Write a note of encouragement to them.
3. Donate items for the college boxes. Look for a list of the items needed for the boxes in the narthex starting mid-March.
4. Help pack the college boxes at the end of April. Watch for details in the April Tele-Christian.

Any questions, contact the church office or Trudy Corning at 219 613 1787.



Pastor's Comic Corner

In case you haven't noticed, I love humor. Below are comics that I've come across. Enjoy and smile! Pastor Mark



The famous question is asked for the first time.

WEEKLY EVENTS

Sunday - Adult Sunday School 8:15am ~ WINGS (300), FRIENDS (304) *Worship* ~ 9:30am (in Sanctuary), **Mon.** - A/A 12pm (303) **Wed.** - A/A - 8pm (Fellowship Hall), Al/Anon - 8pm (library) **Thursday** - Dulcimers 10am (303), *LYFT* Dinner 5:30pm/ *Worship* 6:00pm (F.H.), Godsbells practice 4:30pm, Chancel Choir practice 7pm (sanct.) **Sat.** - A/A 11 a.m. (303)

March 2025

<h1 style="margin: 0;">March 2025</h1>						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 Communion Sunday	3 Women's Book Study 3 pm (library) Tri-Kappa 6p (FH)	4	5 UWF Exec. Mtg 5:30 (lib.) Ash Wed Service 7 pm	6 LYFT Speaker: Rick Bachman	7 Working Together Circle 1:30 pm (lib.)	8
9 Daylight Saving Time begins. Spring forward! Mission Sunday: Africa University	10 Susanna Wesley Circle 1pm (library) Women's Book Study 3 pm (library) Outreach Mtg. 6 pm	11	12 Lent Study 10 am (304) Worship Mtg. 6 pm (300) Education Mtg. 7 pm (300)	13 LYFT Speaker: Susan Wells	14	15
16	17 Women's Book Study 3 pm (library)	18 Household Pantry 9-12 & 5-6 (curbside)	19 Lent Study 10 am (304) Finance Mtg. 4:00 pm (FH)	20 LYFT Speaker: Kim McGinley	21	22
23 United Women of Faith Sunday	24 Women's Book Study 3 pm (library) Ad-Council 6 pm (FH)	25 Senior Bingo 1pm (FH)	26 Lent Study 10 am (304)	27 LYFT Speaker: Pastor Mark	28	29
30	31 Women's Book Study 3 pm (lib)					