



St. Mark's United Methodist Church

February 2024

We live to embrace and serve all with the courage of Jesus Christ to heal and reconcile ourselves and the world.

Journey Through Lent

Mark 9:2-16:20

Is it really time for the season of Lent? The calendar says yes, by my mind says, it can't be here already. The calendar is correct, the season will soon begin when we pause to carefully look at the last days of Jesus' life on earth. Tradition tells us that during the Lenten season we are called to give something up, to make a sacrifice of something important to us. Tradition also shares that we also take on something that will intentionally pull us closer to God. We give up a special tv show or fast through a meal so that time can be spent reading scripture, going to a bible study, in prayer etc. I would say the number one thing, in my thirty years of ministry has been giving up chocolate. (I'm still not sure how one replaces chocolate with time with God.) The purpose of these traditions is to set aside time in our lives to engage in our spiritual journey. This year, I invite you to join me in studying Mark's perspective of these last days of Jesus' life on earth and how this story applies to your life today.

The journey through Lent is one that is more than gaining intellectual understandings of culture, physically what happened to Jesus, and affirming that Jesus came to save us from our sins. This story is designed to dig a deeper well into our souls where God can feed our lives. While Sunday worship sermons will focus on various parts of this story, you are also invited to come to studies for conversation. (Studies will begin February 11 th at 1:00pm and Wednesday mornings at 10:00am). More details in this newsletter.) This will be your opportunity to see the story from the perspective of how this journey of Jesus' life connects to your life today. You can come with questions intentionally to stump me as Pastor, but I'm confident we will find the answers together.

As you may be able to tell, Lent is one of my favorite times of the year. It is when I find myself closest to God, building stronger connections with other Disciples like you, and when I can challenge my own understandings of God. I hope you will join me in this journey, not only on Sunday mornings, and during the studies, but especially during Holy week, but more about that next month. Please let me know if you have any questions about this adventure. It's a special time for me and I hope it can be a special time for you as well. The only tools you will need are a bible and an inquiring mind.

Let the journey through Lent to Easter begin.

In Christ,
Pastor Alberta