

March 2017

NEWSLETTER



23 Church St
Shelby, Ohio 44875

Sunday Worship 10:00 AM

Reflections from the Rev.

Hi Friends! The Season of Lent is here! This is a time in which we are called as believers to fast, pray, give, deny our “Un-Christ-like ways, and most of all repent. If you have been in church or have been watching the sermons on Facebook LIVE the last few weeks, you will notice that we have been focusing on Jesus’ teachings in what is known as “The Sermon on the Mount.” What an appropriate series of teachings for us to study as we enter Lent. If I had to put Jesus’ teachings from Matthew 5 in a nutshell (a very hard task indeed) I would use the following words: “When we love without limits we love as our God loves.”

A few Sunday’s ago, I share a story with the congregation about the Hindu religious leader Mahatma Gandhi. Although Gandhi was not a Christian, I believe there is a lot that we can learn from the life of peace and love that he lived. Gandhi studied Christianity in England but never became a Christian because he claimed Christianity didn’t seem to work even for Christians. Gandhi was never really impressed by the Christians he met but he was very impressed with Jesus, especially His teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. Gandhi tried to incorporate Jesus’ wisdom into his own life.

At one point in history, civil war broke out between Pakistan and India. The war stemmed from divisions between the Muslims of Pakistan and the Hindus of India. At one point during the battle, Gandhi was lying on a cot after weeks of fasting in protest to this war. A distraught Hindu man approached him. The man’s only son, still a little boy, had been shot and killed in the conflict. His heart was filled with sadness, bitterness, and revenge towards the Muslims. Gandhi could barely speak, but told the man how to heal his own heart. “Find a little Muslim boy whose father has been killed. Take that boy as your son, and raise him as a Muslim.” The distraught man walked away completely confused and disappointed.

Friends, if Gandhi could seek to live out the Sermon on the Mount the way he did, how much more so can you and I as a believer in Jesus Christ live out the Sermon on the Mount? When we set no limits to the amount of grace and love that we show to others, we are truly living out the Sermon on the Mount. When our love, forgiveness, and mercy does not depend upon whom the recipient may be, we are then living out the beatitudes.

Let us Pray:

Almighty God, help me during this season of Lent. As I fast, pray, give, and repent, may I cast aside every un-Christ-like way that hinders my wellbeing. Help me to give myself to you entirely, so that I may live out Your teachings and share them with others. Amen

Fast, Pray, Give, Deny, Repent

+Pastor James

The Reverend James Robinson

Reflections for Lent

Matthew 6:25-33

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told his listeners not to worry about life, about food or drink, about body or clothing. We moderns might want to argue with Jesus. "Oh, Jesus, you just don't understand. Life is infinitely more complicated for 21st Century Americans than it was for 1st Century Palestinians. I have a mortgage, a car payment, student loans, and utility bills. I have a history of cancer in my family. My boss is always riding my backside, and there's a drug-house two doors down! And you're telling me not to worry? Yeah, right." Trust me, in the crowd gathered around Jesus, people were having similar thoughts. Someone on that hillside was likewise thinking, "Oh, Jesus, you just don't understand."

No, we're the ones who don't understand. We're the ones who have created idols of ourselves. We rely solely upon our own knowledge and abilities and, therefore, deny the benevolence, the providence of a loving God. We have come to accept "God helps those who help themselves" as scripture - it is not - and refuse God's undeserved grace. The venerable Heidelberg Catechism teaches that each of us is so well protected "that without the will of my Father in heaven not a hair can fall from my head." Sisters and brothers, that is good news indeed!

Prayer:

Great and glorious God, you have provided for all your children in all times and in all places. May we recognize that you surely provide for us. Amen.

Garland John Gates

Associate Member- 1st UCC Shelby, Ohio

Thank You!

Laundry Pods

A big thank you to everyone who brought in laundry pods for us to donate to FISH Food Pantry!

Blanket Sunday

Blanket Sunday was a HUGE success! Thank you for \$312.77 in the offering which translates to 62 blankets for Church World Service to distribute to those in need!

Evolution Sunday

Pastor James and the congregation would like to extend a BIG thank you to Rev. Pam Easterday and her husband Bill Brandes for joining us on Evolution Sunday. Rev. Pam's Sermon was inspired, thought provoking, and prophetic. Thank you for sharing with us!

Fundraising Committee

At the February council meeting the decision was made to create a fundraising committee here at 1st UCC. This committee has been working hard to come up with ideas and ways to reach out to the community and bring local monies into the church to help support both short and long term projects. Keep your eyes peeled for future events here at 1st UCC and out in the community that will be sponsored by this committee. Have a fundraising idea? Contact one of your committee members! Fundraising Committee Members: Cindy Metzger, Elaine Spangler, Shelli Laser, and Pastor James Robinson.

March Happenings

Ash Wednesday Service

You are invited to join us in the sanctuary of First Church on Wednesday March 1, 2017 at 7:00 PM for our Ash Wednesday Service. We will sing, read scripture, and hear a short homily on Ash Wednesday. Worshippers will then be invited to receive ashes on their foreheads or on the top of their hands. Choir practice to follow Ash Wednesday Service.

Sunday March 5th- Sunday April 9th- Lent Lunches

During the season of Lent we will be hosting Lenten lunches following Morning Worship. Someone in the congregation will lead a 5-8 minute devotional for Lent following the lunch. The following groups will be responsible for providing lunch on the following Sundays. These lunches are free of charge and serve the purpose of bringing our faith community together for fellowship and conversation during the season of Lent. Please join us for food and fellowship!

March 5th- Elder's

March 12th- Trustee's

March 19th- Deacon's

March 26th- Choir

April 2nd- Board of Christian Education

April 9th- Pastor James and Katie

Wednesday- March 8th- Lent Lunch at First United Methodist Church

Our church has been asked to lead prayer and prepare food for the Community Lenten Lunch at 1st United Methodist Church on Wednesday March 8th at Noon. Mary Kay Steele will be leading the group preparing food, Steph Morris and Pastor James will be handling the prayer portion of the service. If you would like to help Mary Kay prepare the food, please check in with her and see what she needs help with. The more hands that help, the easier it will be!

Sunday March 12th- Change the Church Offering

Support our church youth by giving to the Change the Church offering on Sunday March 12th. Bring your loose change to throw into the children's cans as they support the missions of our church.

Monday March 20th - Church Council 6:30pm

Church Council will meet Monday March 20th at 6:30pm in the parlor. Church members are welcome and encouraged to attend to keep up on what's going on here at the church.

Sunday March 26th- One Great Hour of Sharing Offering

On Sunday March 26th we will participate in the UCC offering for the One Great Hour of Sharing. This is one of the offerings that makes us a 5 for 5 UCC church! We will talk about the Great Hour of Sharing offering and what missions the offering goes to support.

Sunday March 26th- Happy 100th Birthday Harry Keplinger!

On Monday March 27th Harry Keplinger will be turning 100 years old. We will be having a surprise birthday celebration here at the church on Sunday March 26th during the 10:00am worship service. Cards and well-wishes may be sent to: Harry Keplinger 1051 Bibich Court Crestline, Ohio 44827

Other Announcements

Wednesday 2/1 & 2/15- Choir Practice

The Choir will be practicing this month on Wednesday March 1st and 15th at 7:00pm at First Presbyterian Church. Come and join the choir, you will be glad you did! (Please Note: The choir will not begin practice on the 1st right at 7:00, practice will take place after the Ash Wednesday Service).

Thursday 3/2/17- Women's Guild 11:00am

The Women's Guild will be meeting on Thursday March 2nd at 11:00am at Martha Grimwood's house. Need more details? See Martha.

Sunday 3/12/17- Change the Church Offering

Support our church youth by giving to the Change the Church offering on Sunday March 12th.

March Non-Food Item for FISH Pantry

For the month of March we will be collecting rolls of toilet paper and tooth brushes for the FISH food pantry. As always we encourage you to bring in food items for the pantry table. Thank you for helping FISH feed hungry people in Shelby!

Lent and Holy Week 2017 Worship Opportunities

Ash Wednesday

March 1st - 7:00pm

Sunday Worship Services with Lenten Lunches Following

March 5th- 10:00am

March 12th- 10:00am

March 19th- 10:00am

March 26th- 10:00am

April 2nd- 10:00am

April 7th- 10:00am

Maundy Thursday

Seder Meal- April 13th- 7:00pm- Fellowship Hall

Good Friday

April 14th- 7:00pm

Easter Sunday

April 16th- 10:00am