

## *Greetings from the Pastor*



March is upon us and the weather and the earth is beginning to warm. Yes, we can expect days of weary cloudiness and freezing temperatures which may or may not bring snow or ice storms and there always seems to be strong winds which belie the warming effects of the sun as it inches higher and higher into the sky. Still, what a wonderful time of the year this is as we come out of the dormancy of winter and we are filled with the expectation of spring. As I write this newsletter I have heard rumors of a big fat robin in someone's back yard. Yes, spring is nearly sprung.



If we look to our Bibles, we could make an analogy between the dormancy of winter and the coming of spring to the long wait that the Hebrew people had to endure between the time when the last prophet had been raised up and the birth of Jesus. You see, there had been well over four hundred years between the time of the last prophet and the birth of Jesus and the people were hungrily waiting for God to speak or send them the messiah that God had promised. As Jesus began his ministry and the news of his words, teachings and the miracles that he was performing reached the ears of the people near and far, the effects were like the winds of March where some of the people were warmed and some wished that the winds wouldn't blow at all.

In our everyday lives, in the here and now, many may be going through times of late fall and winter. There may be times when they cannot see or feel the presence of God or Jesus. Maybe some of you reading these words today might be going through one of those times right now. There may be others who have gone through a season of winter and are now, either feeling the winds of March and anticipating an early spring or hopefully well into the wonderful time of spring and new growth. If you are enjoying the new warmth of a spring or even the fullness of summer in your lives right now, then God Bless You! But, if you are still in a period of winter, Henry Nouwen wrote a prayer in his book "A Cry for Mercy" which may help you to overcome your winter.

*Listen, O Lord, to my prayers. Listen to my desire to be with you, to dwell in your house, and to let my whole being be filled with your presence. But none of this is possible without you. When you are not the one who fills me, I am soon filled with endless thoughts and concerns that divide me and tear me away from you. Even thoughts about you, good spiritual thoughts, can be little more than distractions when you are not their author.*

*Every day I see again that only you can teach me to pray, only you can set my heart at rest, only you can let me dwell in your presence, no book, no idea, no concept or theory will ever bring me close to you unless you yourself are the one who lets these instruments become the way to you.*

*But Lord, let me at least remain open to your initiative; let me wait patiently and attentively for that hour when you will come and break through all the walls I have erected. Teach me, O Lord to pray. Amen.*

It is by prayer that we let God and Jesus and the Holy Spirit back into our lives. It is only through them that the hold of a personal or spiritual winter can be broken. It is only through the wisdom of our Gracious God, the Love of Jesus Christ and the warming power of the Holy Spirit that we can begin working our way back towards spring and the fruitfulness of summer. May everyone have a meaningful and blessed Lenten Season and a joyous Easter!

Pastor Allen



## Lay Leader Notes

By Cindy Morse

When this newsletter comes out, we will have already had Ash Wednesday and our first Sunday in the Lenten season. I want to share the words of a song by the Ball Brothers, entitled "It's about the cross." I found and have listened to this song several times on You Tube. I hope that you find it as meaningful as I did.

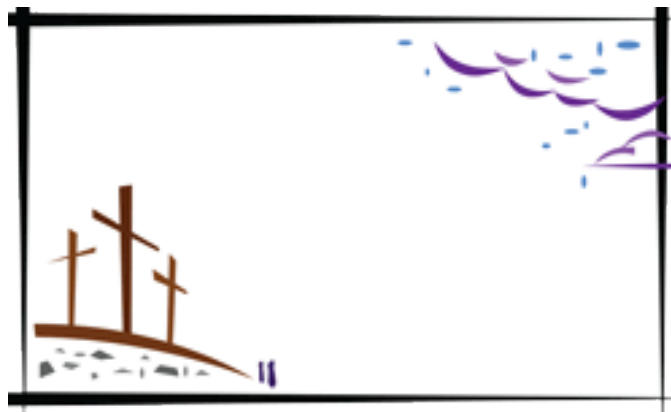
It's about the cross  
It's not just about the manger where the baby lay.  
It's about my sin.  
It's not all about the wisemen who traveled so far  
It's about the cross  
It's not about the angels who sang for Him that day  
It's about the stone that was rolled away.  
It's not the good things in this life I've done.  
It's not about the shepherds who saw the star that day.  
It's about God's son nailed to a tree.  
It's all about his precious blood that saved my sin  
So that you and I can have a real life someday.  
It's the ending that can save you ----

That's why we celebrate.

A pray for our Lenten Season-  
Almighty and everlasting God, because You hate nothing You have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent, create in us new and contrite hearts that we, worthily repenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain from You, the God of all mercy, perfect remission, and forgiveness, through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord. Amen.

When you carry out acts of kindness, you get a wonderful feeling inside. It's as though something inside your body responds and says, yes, this is how I ought to feel.

A quote by Rabbi Harold Kushner





## Outreach Opportunities



During Lent this is a season to draw spiritually closer to God. We would like to give the opportunity for helping God's children who have physical needs. As in the past we have three causes to help:

The Heifer Project will make a difference in generations to come. They give living animals and seeds to enable families to start a small business. This income provides a better life for them and their children.

Henderson Settlement in Frakes, Kentucky. This outreach in the Appalachian Mountains has greenhouse and farm support as well as a food pantry, thrift store and help for infants and seniors.

Iowa Emergency funds are available to help Iowa churches and communities after disaster strikes their area.

Pray for missionaries' safety with Love a Child in Haiti. These gangs control the country so getting food to starving children is more difficult. Our Noisy Sunday offering goes to this project. May God bless you as you bless others.

## Chains Interrupted

LPC Women's Club is sponsoring this event to raise awareness around human trafficking and the impact to our communities. Supported by a representative from Chains Interrupted, this presentation will give you the tools to recognize trafficking, empower our children to respond and build your own response to the human trafficking experience. This event will be held at the FFA Historical & Ag Museum, 408 Main Street on Wednesday, March 22 at 6:30 p.m.

## Come Join Us

The Chosen." to help prepare our hearts during the Lenten Season. These gatherings will begin at 7:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall for the following Sundays; March 5, 12, 19, 26, and April 2. Light refreshments will be served.

### Finance Update

February 5	\$4,702.00
February 12	\$1,996.00
February 19	\$4,073.00
February 26	\$1,893.00

**Thank you  
for your  
faithfulness in  
all the ways  
you give to  
God's work.**



# United Women In Faith

## March 2022



February 22, we celebrated Ash Wednesday, the beginning of our Holy Lenten Season. Starting March 5th, we will be gathering to watch the movie "The Chosen." to help prepare our hearts during the Lenten Season. These gatherings will begin at 7:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall for the following Sundays; March 5, 12, 19, 26, and April 2. Light refreshments will be served.

Special thanks to Meekness Circle and to all who helped or attended our Delicious Soup Luncheon.

Senior High School Recognition will be held April 23. We will be awarding our Senior Scholarships at this time. If you know of a High School Senior who should apply for this scholarship, please let us know. We will be sending our applications to the Seniors that we know of. Applications must be turned into the church by April 19, 2023.



This month I would like to share some thoughts from a 1984 Lenten Devotional our church put together. The reading was by our minister at that time.

### A FEW WORDS ABOUT LENT

The word, LENT, comes from an old English word, Lenten, which meant the returning of Spring. It is a time of renewal for things that appear to be dead— trees, plants, bulbs, and seeds. In a similar way, it is a time for the renewal

of the spirit. The people of Bible times had their seasons of preparation for the great religious festivals. It was a time for purification of the heart so that one might worship worthily on the holy day. For many of our forefathers, Lent was a time for fasting and self-denial. You and I ought to do more of this sort of thing than we do. However, it seems to me that Lent is better observed by adding a plus to our lives during the season than by abstaining from something we didn't need anyway. The church color for Lent is purple, symbolizing repentance— and symbolizing the Kingship of Jesus in our lives. As we repent, confess, and receive God's pardon, we are purified and made worthy of the Easter celebration of eternal life. The prayer that we send with this book is that Lent 1984 may be a time of spiritual encouragement for you.



### A PRAYER FOR LENT

Almighty God, who gives us our quiet seasons of thought and prayer, help us during this Lenten season, and at all times, to find in thee our true peace. Save us in the hour of trial, deliver us from evil thoughts and desires and from the tyranny of outward things. May we learn of Christ to be strong and brave in the struggle with temptation and to overcome even as He overcame. In His name we pray. Amen.

Our Bible Verse for March is found in Isaiah 40:31.

"But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint."

God's Blessings to all of you as we travel together through this wonderful Season of Lent.

I have seen



the Lord!

John 20:18

Pat and Charlene

## Education News



### Calendar of Events:

March 26<sup>th</sup>: Children's Choir sings at church service

April 9<sup>st</sup>: Easter Sunday (No Sunday School)

April 23<sup>rd</sup>: **Senior Sunday** (recognize our seniors)  
Children's Choir sings at church service

May 14<sup>th</sup>: Mother's Day!

LAST day of Sunday School for 2022-2023 year.

### Heifer International Project

Our youth will participate in our church's mission this spring! The Heifer International Project continues! The First Sunday of the month Quarter Collection will happen for our Sunday School friends through May. Have your children bring their quarters to donate for this important mission project of our church.

Our monetary gifts help to support the lives of families in need. That money will be used to give animal(s) to families in even the direst of circumstances. Heifers (and other animals) have many uses and can bring stability to the lives of people struggling with hunger. Our gifts help to provide nutrition, self-reliance, fertilizer, milk, warmth, and more. SEND those quarters!



## Save the dates!

### Vacation Bible School (VBS)



**“STELLAR” Shine Jesus' Light!**  
**June 19-22, 2023**



# M A R C H 2023



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
					World Day of Prayer	
5 <b>Worship 10:00 am</b> Holy Communion  The Chosen @ 7:00 p.m.	13  Bible Study @ 1:30 p.m. Shawl Ministry @ 7:00 p.m.	7 <b>Worship Mtg. @ 9:00 a.m.</b>  <b>Outreach @ 5:30 p.m.</b>	8 Chimes @4:15 Jubilation @ 5:00 pm.  Confirmation @ 6:00 p.m.	9 <b>Finance @ 6:30 p.m.</b>	10	11
12 <b>Spring FORWARD</b> <b>Worship 10:00 am</b> The Chosen @ 7:00 p.m.	13  Bible Study @ 1:30 p.m. Shawl Ministry @ 7:00 p.m.	14 <b>Trustees @ 5:30 p.m.</b>  <b>Ad Council @ 6:30 p.m.</b>	15 Chimes @4:15 Jubilation @ 5:00 pm.  Confirmation @ 6:00 p.m.	16	17	18
19 <b>SPRING begins</b> <b>Worship 10:00 am</b> The Chosen @ 7:00 p.m.	20  Bible Study @ 1:30 p.m. Shawl Ministry @ 7:00 p.m.	21	22 <b>Joy Circle @ 9:00 a.m.</b> Chimes @ 4:15 Confirmation @ 6:00 p.m. Praise Service @ 7:00 p.m.	23	24	25
26 <b>Choir Practice 9:15 am</b> <b>Worship 10:00 am</b> <b>Children Sing NOISY SUNDAY</b> The Chosen @ 7:00 p.m.	27  Bible Study @ 1:30 p.m. Shawl Ministry @ 7:00 p.m.	28  <b>Meekness Circle @ 7 p.m.</b>	29 Chimes @4:15 Jubilation @ 5:00 pm.  Confirmation @ 6:00 p.m.	30		

St. Paul United Methodist Church ~ 501 Sycamore St. Box 187 ~ La Porte City, IA 50651  
 319-342-2208 ~ Church email: [ipcumchurch@gmail.com](mailto:ipcumchurch@gmail.com)  
 Website: [www.lpcsaaintpaulumc.org](http://www.lpcsaaintpaulumc.org) ~ Facebook: LPC St. Paul UMC  
 Pastor Allen Craft ~ Email: [revac1955@gmail.com](mailto:revac1955@gmail.com) ~ Cell phone: 319-231-5213

St. Paul United Methodist Church  
501 Sycamore St. Box 187  
La Porte City, IA 50651

**MARCH**  
**NEWSLETTER**



## Notes From the Office

Look for:

*Updated church information*

*Sunday Services on our Facebook page, Website and YouTube.*

*Sunday School 8:45 a.m.      Worship Service 10:00 a.m.*

*Traditional Music 1st, 4th & 5th Sundays    Praise Music 2nd & 3rd Sundays*

Please join us for worship here at:  
St. Paul United Methodist Church - La Porte City, Iowa

Office Hours  
9:00 AM -12:30 PM Tuesday - Thursday

Office Phone ~ 319-342-2208  
Pastor Allen Craft - 319-231-5213  
Email: [lpcumchurch@gmail.com](mailto:lpcumchurch@gmail.com)  
Pastor Allen's email address: [revac1955@gmail.com](mailto:revac1955@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.lpcsaintpaulumc.org](http://www.lpcsaintpaulumc.org)  
Facebook: LPC St. Paul UMC