



February 2021

Good News

Mt Zion – St Luke Lutheran

February 2021

2-7 Worship 11:00 a.m.
Online Only
until further notice

2-9 Centering Prayer 8:30

2-10 Bible Study 6:00 p.m.
Lingle Room

2-14 Worship 11:00 a.m.
Online Only
until further notice

2-16 Centering Prayer
8:30 a.m.

2-17 **Ash Wednesday**
Online Worship Service
posted by 6:00 p.m.

2-21 **Lent 1 Morning**
Worship 11:00 a.m.
Online Only unless
County numbers change

Newsletter Deadline

2-23 Centering Prayer
8:30 a.m.

2-24 **Lent 1 Evening**
Online Prayer Service
6:00 p.m.

2-28 **Lent 2 Morning**
Worship 11:00 a.m.
Online Only unless
County numbers change

Self-Denial; a lost practice?

It was February 14, 1961. I was 10 years old, and the newness of my Christmas presents had not yet worn off. I'd watched the ball drop on New Year's Eve in Times Square, and the sound of champagne corks popping and fireworks booming still rang in my ears. My Valentine Cards from school friends lay strewn across my dresser. And all was right with the world. Eagerly, I looked at the calendar on the wall in the kitchen, wondering wondering what the next fun thing would be that I could look forward to. I crossed off the 14th and squinted at the tiny lettering next to February 15th. "Oh, no!" I cried, as I fell back onto a chrome and vinyl kitchen chair and laid my head on the table. "*Not Ash Wednesday!*" Ash Wednesday was the beginning of the Dreaded 40 Days of Lent - *forty days of deprivation* in which I was expected to suffer, right along with Jesus, as a way of thanking him for dying for me. He gave up his life. I gave up sugar. At ten years old, the sacrifice was comparable.

I knew from experience that I was not going to be able to hold out from sweets the whole forty days, so I made a bold plan. I gathered up several sugar-coated gumballs, which would hold up under pressure and not melt, and carefully stuck them between my mattress and box springs, where they would be hidden from my mom, who could sniff out contraband candy like a blood-hound. I would try my hardest, but when I couldn't stand it anymore, and my sugar-craving got too bad, I could reach under my mattress and get a gumball. Maybe God would be more forgiving than my mom. After all, they were purple, like the color of Lent. That had to count for something! And, so, I went to bed that night, secure in the knowledge that I was prepared to make it through another Lenten season, with visions of chocolate Easter bunnies dancing in my head.

I was glad when many Churches turned from urging their members to give something *up* for Lent to taking something *on*: a worthy cause, more prayer, daily devotions, volunteer work. These things may not produce the same suffering as giving something up, but they are sacrificial, all the same, and admirable. And I found it much easier to *do more* than to *give up* something I really liked. But, this year, I have wondered if we have lost something by no longer practicing the Lenten discipline of self-denial. Forgoing life's pleasures, be they sweets or meat or time spent on social media, is not something many of us want to embrace, especially when we are experiencing deprivation in many ways because of the pandemic. Instead of giving things up, we are trying to find little ways to reward ourselves to make up for things we miss. Taking one more thing away may be just too much. But, this year, I intend to give up something I will truly miss for Lent. I hope that in doing so, I may come to understand like never before the magnitude of the suffering that Jesus endured for me, and the love behind it – which is, of course, what Lent is all about.

May your Lenten journey bring you closer to an understanding of the love of Jesus, no matter how you choose to experience it. Blessings, Pastor Barb <><

(See Ephesians 3:18-19)



February 2021

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.
	1	2	3	4 Grady English	5	6
7 Worship 11:00 a.m. <i>Online Only</i>	8 Wendi Martin	9 Centering Prayer 8:30 a.m.	10 Bible Study 6:00 p.m. Lingle Room	11 Bobby Martin	12	13
14 Worship 11:00 a.m. <i>Online Only</i> Valentine's Day	15	16 Centering Prayer 8:30 a.m. Al Coogle, Sr	17 Ash Wednesday <i>Online Worship Service</i> 6:00 p.m.	18 Grady & Patsy English	19	20
21 Lent 1 Morning Worship 11:00 a.m. <i>Online Only</i> <i>Newsletter Deadline</i>	22	23 Centering Prayer 8:30 a.m. Grady & Patsy English	24 Lent 1 Evening <i>Online Prayer Service</i>	25	26 Glenn Brannan	27
28 Lent 2 Morning Worship 11:00 a.m. <i>Online Only</i>				27	28	29

Serving Our Lord in February

Ushers	Will Haigler and Duck Koch
Altar Guild	Duck Koch and Bobby Martin
Lectors	Katie Felker and Max Wood

Family Day: *No Family Day Meal until further notice.*

Coffee Hour: *No Coffee Hour until further notice.*

Flowers:

2-07 Diane Cagle in honor of her mother, Myrtle Joiner

2-14 Diane Cagle in honor of her mother, Myrtle Joiner and in loving memory of her father, Ralph Joiner and her husband Charles.

2-21 Karen Hatten to the Glory of God in memory of Rick Hatten

2-28 Max Wood in honor of Brandon and Langdon

Soup Kitchen: *No Soup Kitchen until further notice.*

Sunday School: *No Sunday School until further notice.*

February Birthdays and Anniversaries

2-04 Grady English

2-08 Wendi Martin

2-11 Bobby Martin

2-16 Al Coogle, Sr.

2-18 Grady & Patsy English

2-26 Glenn Brannan

A word from Pastor Barb about our Ash Wednesday Service and Lenten observance.

Dear Friends, last year at this time, the pandemic was just a blip on the horizon, for most of us. We held our Ash Wednesday Service in the sanctuary on the evening of February 26th with the Imposition of Ashes, as was our tradition. A month later, we were sheltering in place, and held our first *online only* worship service, which carried on through Easter till June 7th. We never expected the shutdown to last that long! We *certainly* never expected that a *year later* we would *still* be struggling with this virus and struggling to find new ways to observe our faith traditions while worshipping online only once again. And, so, this year, as with so many of our rituals, our Lenten observances will be different. Good, I believe, but different, none the less.



There will be a little preparation for you to get the most out of our Lenten time together. Prior to Ash Wednesday, I invite each family unit to go out into your garden, yard or farm and fill a bowl or pot with soil. Set up a sacred space in your home where you can watch the worship service online each week. Have a candle, an oil lamp or a light source there to represent God’s presence with you. Keep the bowl of soil in the center of that space all through Lent. You will also need a seed of your choosing.

The sign of the cross made in ash on the forehead on Ash Wednesday is to remind us that we are dust – that we are from the earth and will return to the earth. In collecting soil, you have gone directly to the source - to the ground from which we are made. During the Ash Wednesday worship, I will pray with you over your soil, and invite you to plant your seed. On each of the five Wednesday evenings of Lent, we will gather *online* for a 15–20-minute service with music and evening prayer. During the 40 days of Lent and through Holy Week, as you ‘tend’ your soil, the seed will sprout, symbolizing that we have gone from death to new life in Christ, which we will celebrate on Easter Sunday.

If anyone needs help getting a bowl of soil and a seed, please let me know, and we will bring one to you so you may participate in this prayerful exercise. And, even if you miss the online worship, you will find your spiritual life maturing through this meaningful Lenten discipline.

Blessings on your Lenten Journey, Pastor Barb

Looking Ahead – Lent and Holy Week Schedule for 2021 is as follows:

Ash Wednesday, Feb 17th: Online service at 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday Evenings:Online service at 6:00 pm on *Feb 24th, March 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th*.

Palm Sunday, March 28th:Online service live at 11:00 am

Maundy Thursday, April 1st:Online Service at 6:00 pm

Good Friday, April 2nd:Online Service at 6:00 p.m.

Easter Sunday, April 3rd: We will assess the situation and decide on how we will celebrate Easter closer to that date.

January 2021 Council Meeting Decisions

The congregation Council held its first meeting of 2021 on Sunday, January 10. All members were in attendance. The following congregational officers were elected for 2021:

President – David Haigler

Vice President – Wendi Martin

Secretary – Julia Snipes

Treasurer – Joseph McNutt

Max Wood will continue in his role as Assistant Treasurer. Standing committee chairpersons were appointed as follows:

Worship and Music – Wendi Martin

Fellowship – Julia Snipes

Education – Angela Cannon

Social Ministry and Evangelism – Karen Hatten

Property – Joseph McNutt

Stewardship – Diane Cagle

According to the MZSL bylaws, the treasurer serves as chairperson of the Finance Committee and the president serves as chairperson of the Personnel Committee.

Due to the dramatic increase in COVID-19 cases in Macon County, the council decided to suspend in-person worship services, moving to online only services, beginning on Sunday, January 17. Pastor Barb and the Worship & Music committee will work out details for conducting the services and make decisions as to when we can return to in-person worship. The council will conduct its meetings via Zoom until further notice. The regular meetings of the council are scheduled for the second Sunday of each month at 9:30 a.m.

Joseph McNutt reported that the renovation work on the Parish House is almost complete. Joseph and Wendi Martin will work out plans for straightening out furniture and other materials in the Parish House in a way that is safe for members during the pandemic. They will be in touch with congregation members as to how they can help in this process. If you have questions about congregational activities you should contact the appropriate committee chairperson or Pastor Barb.

David Haigler, Council President

Mt. Zion – St. Luke Lutheran Church

P.O. Box 187

401 Randolph Street

Oglethorpe, Georgia 31068

Please help keep this prayer list current. Contact Tracy Choppla to add or remove names.

Pray for Members: Franchelle Arnold, Callie Coogle, Al Coogle, Mary Jane Ethridge, Brenden Fitzgerald, Jr, Emily Harvill, Myrtle Joiner, Zack Martin, Helen Smith, Tricia Trask, Tony Webb, our college students, and for all the ministries of our church.

For Friends and Family: Susan Brennen, Caroline Burdette and her son, Rob, Bonnie Goodrich, CT Harvey, Janice Haugabook, Ricky Haugabook, Mary Jane Kanajawa, Bob Melvin, Crystal Miller, Buddy Murph, Charlene Oliver, Don Oliver, Leigh Powel, Karen Weathersbee and family, for Marina's friend Chrystal, for our nation, and the world.

Serving Our Nation: John Edwards