

Dear Saints and Friends of Gregory Memorial,



*"The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, 'Come, follow me.' "*  
*-John 1:43 (NLT)*

I recently heard an interview of a professional tightrope walker, and while I can't remember his name, he was well-known for the high profile places he had strung a tightrope on and crossed. The interviewer asked him if he ever got partway across and froze up, unable to take another step, and how stressful it must be in the middle of the line across a chasm. His response was not quite the one the interviewer expected. "That's not the hardest part, believe it or not. Once I'm out there, taking the next step is the natural thing to do, keeping my focus on where I'm headed. The harder part, the thing I really need to motivate myself to do, is to take the first step at all."

A well-experienced and veteran tightrope walker offers the perspective that it's not the continuing of an attempt that is difficult, but rather starting it at all. From a physics standpoint, that makes sense; it takes more energy, more effort, more intentionality to get something moving from a standstill than to keep it moving. That initial overcoming of stationary inertia is more difficult than keeping the movement inertia going.

While we may not be professional tightrope walkers (though if you are, even as a hobby, I definitely want to hear about it!), we all have experienced this truth, and not just with physical movement. Think of a time you needed to change the way you lived your life, or needed to start a project (or even restart one), or had to do the work to change the way you viewed a situation or thought about something...it's always more difficult to change the inertia of something in your life (physical, mental, emotional). And this is true for our spiritual lives, as well.

We've been looking, recently, at the call stories of the first disciples in the Gospels: Simon and Andrew, James and John, Philip and Nathanael. And we'll be looking at some others this month, such as Elisha and Abram/Abraham. Looking backward at these pillars of faith, we always

view them as people who, without hesitation or resistance, got up and followed when they were called. I have to wonder about that, whether it was truly that easy for them. I'd hazard a guess that it wasn't. But rather than make their story less meaningful, it actually makes it more meaningful. If they hesitated, questioned, resisted...if they had to overcome their own spiritual inertia in order to follow and do a new thing, then I am just as capable of faithfully following even when I encounter my own hesitations. And the call of Christ is still just as present to me, despite my need to overcome that stationary spiritual inertia. It is still just as present to each of us. And it's always harder to do a new thing.

And sometimes, we're dealing not just with our own 'getting up and doing something new.' Sometimes, we're also dealing with past experiences that did not go well, and left us hurt, disillusioned, uncertain...sometimes, our hesitancy is based off more than just a resistance to change course. We must acknowledge this, and accept that it happened, if we are to move on – doing so allows to be healed in the Spirit of Christ and able to move on from these painful experiences. And the greater truth is that Christ still calls, and offers us the possibility to follow in faith, even when we feel we've been hurt before.

A line from Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* comes to mind. As the main character is reflecting on journeys, he remarks that "the road goes ever on and on, down from the door where it began..." And in truth, there is no way to know where the road will take you, or will take us. Oftentimes, putting our first foot out and onto the path can be the hardest step of all, but it can also be the step that leads to wondrous things, such as the Kingdom of God.

With you on the journey,  
Pastor Jason



**WORSHIP INFORMATION FOR FEBRUARY, 2021**

**Sunday, 7 February 2021**

“5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany” - Liturgical Color: Green  
 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Isaiah 40:21-31 \* 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: Mark 1:29-39  
 Sermon: "To Heal and Renew"

**Sunday, 14 February 2021**

"Transfiguration of the Lord" - Liturgical Color: White  
 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: 2 Kings 2:1-12 \* 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: Mark 9:2-9  
 Sermon: "Witness to Divine Glory"

**Wednesday, 17 February 2021**

"Ash Wednesday" – Liturgical Color: Purple  
 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 \* 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

**Sunday, 21 February 2021**

“1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Lent” - Liturgical Color: Purple  
 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Genesis 9:8-17 \* 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: Mark 1:9-15  
 Sermon: "Covenantal Nearness"

**Sunday, 28 February 2021**

“2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Lent” - Liturgical Color: Purple  
 1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16 \* 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: Mark 8:31-38  
 Sermon: "Covenantal Identity"



**OUR PRAYER IN TIMES OF JOY AND CONCERN...**One of our great joys and responsibilities to each other and to God here at Gregory Memorial is the regular practice of praying for each other and our community.

<p>Amy Townson, Josh Ingram’s sister                  Becky Scott Smith                  Russell Heiser, Ingrid Phoenix’s grandson (health issues)                  Butch Meade, Glenda Mayhew’s brother                  Steve “Dee” Shortt, Kim Helmer Shortt’s husband (health issue)                  Verne &amp; Clara Smith                  Peggy Allen                  Eddie Frankenstein                  Grace Cibula                  Etta Holc                  Jerry Hasky (health issue)                  Kay Recher, daughter-in-law of Ron &amp; Judy Recher (head-on crash in Oklahoma)                  Pam Henry, Mary Holc’s family member                  Sandra Elder, Kelly Knupp's mother (health issues)                  Adele Linkenhoker, Barbara Taliaferro's friend (health concerns)                  Jane &amp; Bob Jones (health issues)                  Junie "Bug" Treaster (recovering from surgery)</p>	<p>Lee Harsh, Valerie Harsh's brother-in-law (health issue)                  Rev. Paul Luthman, previously our pastor (recovering from surgery)                  Sharon Reed &amp; family, Susan Shockley's co-worker (health issue)                  Jennifer Caldwell, friend of Grace Cibula (health issue)                  Reese Etheridge, Wayne Powers' uncle (health issue)                  Randy Warthan (health issue)                  Inez Paul, Mary Holc's mother (health issue, rehab)                  Floyd M. Brown, Sr. (health issues)                  Pam Landrum, Doris Harmison's daughter (orthopedic issue)                  Trevor Fine, Susan Shockley's neighbor's son (health issue)                  Traci Wells, Glenda Mayhew's friend (health issue)                  Morgan Ingram                  The Rolley Family, Marguerite Bishop's friends (health issues)                  Jeanette Shady, Linda Brown's aunt (health issues)                  Judy Recher (recovering from surgery)                  Family/friends of Evelyln Lichvar (d. 1/5)                  Family/friends of Terry Angle (d.1/12)</p>
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## AS WE MOVE FORWARD IN WORSHIP...

Although we are still in the midst of the global pandemic, we have begun to "re-gather" in worship, with some specific considerations in mind and practice.

### Please note the following:

- ~ Worship continues each Sunday at 11:00 a.m.
- ~ On-line worship offerings will continue via Zoom (Meeting ID: 756-330-772, Passcode 6300) and Facebook Live From the church's Facebook page; or those without reliable internet may dial 1-253-215-8782 and enter Meeting ID# 756-330-772, Passcode 6300.
- ~ If you are experiencing fever or other symptoms/illness, please stay home and worship with us virtually.
- ~ If you feel comfortable doing so, you may join us in person with the following considerations:
  - Cloth masks are still in effect for public spaces. If you plan to join us in person, please join us as well in wearing a mask for the health of us all.
  - Please make liberal use of the hand sanitizer placed at each entrance to the Sanctuary.
  - Family units are asked to keep physical distance of 6 feet. Pews are marked off for this.
  - Worship information will be available on the weekly "bulletin" handout. This will also be available digitally on the church website for those who wish to worship from home.

Above all and through all, remember this: Jesus loves you and loves us; we are not abandoned; this will last some time, but is still temporary in the grand scheme of life; the more we do our part the quicker we will be on the other side of it.

Love and Peace to You All!

### A Few Tips To Enhance Your Virtual Worship Experience

- Turn off all other electronics and devices;
- Have your Bible ready to read along with the morning's scripture;
- Light a candle to represent Christ's Light during the service.

### Celebrating Communion

We will continue to celebrate communion on the first Sunday of the month. If you are worshipping in-person, the elements will be prepared ahead of time and made available to you as an individual serving. If you are worshipping with us at home/on-line, I invite you to have ready during these services a bit of bread and juice, so that you may commune with us in Spirit, as well!

Ash Wednesday this year may be slightly different.  
We are considering offering "Drive-Thru Ashes" as opposed to a full service.  
More information will follow.

## THOSE WHO SERVE

The Worship Committee has temporarily suspended publishing the Sunday Servants schedule due to constraints imposed by Covid-19 Pandemic.

## TO BRIGHTEN YOUR DAY

### CHURCH FOOTBALL

Quarterback Sneak - Church members quietly leaving during the invitation.

Draw Play - What many children do with the bulletin during worship.

Halftime - The period between Sunday School and worship when many choose to leave.

Benchwarmer - Those who do not sing, pray, work, or apparently do anything but sit.

Backfield-in-Motion - Making a trip to the back (restroom or water fountain) during the service.

Staying in the Pocket - What happens to a lot of money that should be given to the Lord's work.

Two-minute Warning - The point at which you realize the sermon is almost over and begin to gather up your children and belongings.

Instant Replay - The preacher loses his notes and falls back on last week's illustrations.

Sudden Death - What happens to the attention span of the congregation if the preacher goes "overtime."

Trap - You're called on to pray and are asleep.

End Run - Getting out of church quickly, without speaking to any guest or fellow member.

Flex Defense - The ability to allow absolutely nothing said during the sermon to affect your life.

Halfback Option - The decision of 50% of the congregation not to return for the evening service.

Blitz - The rush for the restaurants following the closing prayer.

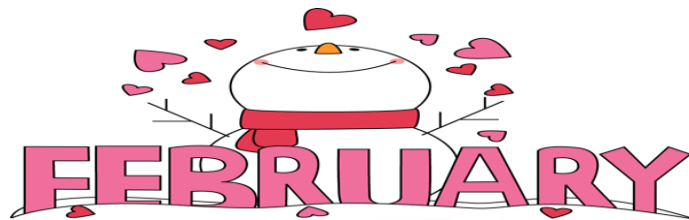
## FEBRUARY, 2021

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b> 1p Worship Com. <i>(called meeting)</i>	<b>2</b> 1p Circle  7p Cong. Care Com.	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> 9:45a Sunday School  11a Worship service  11a Holy Communion	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> 7p Missions Com.  7p Outreach Com.	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 2p Church Cleaning	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> <b>TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD</b>  9:45a Sunday School  11a Worship Service	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> <b>SHROVE TUESDAY</b>	<b>17</b> <b>ASH WEDNESDAY</b>  Begin Lent	<b>18</b> 2p News articles due  2p Church Cleaning  7p Stewardship & Finance Com.	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> <b>1<sup>st</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT</b>  9:45a Sunday School  11a Worship Service  12p Session Meeting	<b>22</b> <b>Washington Birthday</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>  2p Mail annual reports to POJ	<b>25</b>  2p Church Cleaning  2p Newsletter out	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> <b>2<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT</b>  9:45a Sunday School  11a Worship service  11a 5 Cents-a- Meal Offering  2p Committee Reports due						

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***FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER***



**COME AND JOIN US!**  
Sunday School 9:45 A.M.  
[WWW.GREGORYMEMORIAL.ORG](http://WWW.GREGORYMEMORIAL.ORG)

We're on: [Facebook.com/gmpcva](https://www.facebook.com/gmpcva)  
Worship 11:00 A.M.