

Dear Saints and Friends of Gregory Memorial,



As he was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” - Mark 10:17

[I invite you to read, for yourself, the rest of this passage in Mark’s gospel, Mark 10:17-31]

Lent is a season for many things, even if we have tended to reduce to the singular aspect of repentance. Repentance certainly is an aspect of Lent, but there are many more aspects to be mindful of, as well, such as preparation, discipleship, focus, awareness, and journey. All of these have in common the ultimate goal of Christ: We seek to draw closer to Christ, to rest our dependence upon God, and to recognize the fullness of life in the Spirit. Saint Ignatius realized this with a prayer (often attributed to him, but which may have come before him), “*Anima Christi*” (Spirit of Christ):

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.
Body of Christ, save me.
Blood of Christ, inebriate me.
Water from the side of Christ, wash me.
Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
O good Jesu, hear me;
Within Thy wounds hide me;
Suffer me not to be separated from Thee;
From the malignant enemy defend me;
In the hour of my death call me,
And bid me come to Thee,
That with Thy Saints I may praise Thee
For ever and ever. Amen.

Overall, Lent is a season in which we are both called and invited to test our lives – our energies and passions, our interests and desires, our vices and virtues – and place them all in relationship to Christ. Is there something that hinders us from the Life Abundant found in Christ? We should consider letting it go. Is there something that helps us more fully realize Christ’s Life Abundant? We should embrace and magnify it. Are there ways in which we create stumbling blocks for others as they seek out Christ? We should change those behaviors and attitudes. Lent, then, is a season for celebrating and

“cleaning house” (consider it spring cleaning of the heart and soul) in order to live life more fully in the One who has brought us Life in the first place. And all of that Life is found in him; every aspect of it.

The world will call to us, and will do so seductively. It will offer us power, authority, comfort, good feelings. It will whisper to us what we want to hear more often than what we need to hear. And all of it will ultimately prove empty and unfulfilling. The season of Lent, particularly, is the time in the life of the Christian to choose again the One who brings full and lasting Life, in Abundance, and to look – truly look – at the things we have listened to in the world which do not actually seek our best interests. This can make Lent a difficult time, perhaps even unpleasant in some instances. But it also makes Lent the time when we can make the greatest efforts and strides toward that which Christ has made possible in his life, death, and resurrection. And it is why we find ourselves, on Good Friday, at the cross with him.

May the remainder of this season of Lent truly be a blessing for you, and may you find yourself fully in the *anima*, the Spirit, of Christ – wholly and completely. Trust me, there really is no other place to be found...

With you on the journey,
Pastor Jason



WORSHIP INFORMATION FOR MARCH, 2021

Sunday, 7 March 2021

“3rd Sunday in Lent” - Liturgical Color: Purple
 1st Reading: Exodus 20:1-17 * 2nd Reading: John 2:13-22
 Sermon: "Covenantal Commands"

Sunday, 14 March 2021

“4th Sunday in Lent” - Liturgical Color: Purple
 1st Reading: Numbers 21:4-9 * 2nd Reading: John 3:14-21
 Sermon: "Covenantal Life"

Sunday, 21 March 2021

“5th Sunday in Lent” - Liturgical Color: Purple
 1st Reading: Jeremiah 31:31-34 * 2nd Reading: John 12:20-33
 Sermon: "Covenantal Hearts"

Sunday, 28 March 2021

“Palm Sunday” - Liturgical Color: Purple
 1st Reading: Isaiah 50:4-9a * 2nd Reading: Mark 11:1-11
 Sermon: "Covenantal Celebration"



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 & Clara Smith Peggy Allen Eddie Frankenstein Grace Cibula Etta Holc Jerry Hasky (health issue) Kay Recher, daughter-in-law of Ron & 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 & Bob Jones (health issues)</p>	<p>Junie "Bug" Treaster (recovering from surgery) Lee Harsh, Valerie Harsh's brother-in-law (health issue) Rev. Paul Luthman, previously our pastor (recovering from surgery) Sharon Reed & 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 (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) Linda Johnson (ankle fracture)</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!

DON'T FORGET!

Bring your nonperishable food items to worship with you each week! As a congregation we are seeking to support the local Food Bank by collecting nonperishable food items, which we will then deliver at the end of the Lenten season. We will be collecting them on the shelving located in the Sanctuary, which we hope to fill up!

Thank you for your generosity, and let's fill these shelves to overflowing, week by week through Easter!

~ Missions Committee

**Daylight savings time begins on Sunday, March 14!
Set clocks AHEAD one hour when you go to bed the night before!**

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

Missed It By THAT Much...

A Sunday school teacher was asking her 6-year-olds about the meaning of Easter. "Children," she said, "Do you know why we celebrate Easter?"

A little girl raised her hand.

"Yes, Jenny," said the teacher.

Jenny said, "Is Easter when we put on costumes and go trick-or-treating?"

"No, Jenny. That's Halloween. Does anyone else know?"

A little boy yelled, "It's when we set off fireworks!"

"No Jimmy, that's Independence Day. Anybody else?"

A shy little girl in the back said, "Easter is when Jesus died."

The teacher replied, "That's right, Shauna. And what happened to Jesus that makes Easter so special?"

"Well, he died and got buried. And every Easter he comes out. And if he sees his shadow there's 6 more weeks of winter."

Palm Sunday - On Palm Sunday, Little Johnny was sick and stayed home from church. When his brothers and sisters came home from church carrying palm branches, Johnny asked where the palms came from.

His father replied, "When Jesus walked by, people held palm branches over his head."

"Just my luck!" Johnny lamented. "The one time I don't go to church, and that's when Jesus shows up."

Mistaken Identity - On Easter morning, the farmer's wife boiled some eggs, colored them, and hid them in the barnyard for her kids.

A little while later the rooster found them. Not knowing anything about Easter, he beat up the peacock.

The Symbolic Easter Egg - Eggs are also representative of new life, and it's believed that decorating eggs for Easter dates back to the 13th Century. Hundreds of years ago, churches made their congregations abstain from eating eggs during Lent, allowing them to be consumed again on Easter.

Origin of the Easter Bunny - Easter is the Christian celebration of the resurrection of Jesus, but the seasonal chocolate eggs and the bunny who delivers them are nowhere to be found in scripture. The exact origins of the Easter bunny are clouded in mystery. One theory is that the symbol of the rabbit stems from pagan tradition, specifically the festival of "Eostre"—a goddess of fertility whose animal symbol was a bunny. Rabbits, known for their energetic breeding, have traditionally symbolized fertility.

According to some sources, the Easter bunny first arrived in America in the 1700s with German immigrants who settled in Pennsylvania and transported their tradition of an egg-laying hare called "Osterhase" or "Oschter Haws." Their children made nests

in which this creature could lay its colored eggs. Eventually, the custom spread across the U.S. and the fabled rabbit's Easter morning deliveries expanded to include chocolate and other types of candy and gifts, and decorated baskets replaced nests. Additionally, children often left out carrots for the bunny in case he got hungry from all his hopping. Sort of like with cookies left out for Santa Claus!

Ever Wonder Why... Easter is on a different date each year? And why is it on April 4, 2021, this year, which is earlier than last year and the year before? The holiday, which celebrates Christ's return from the grave following his crucifixion, can occur on any Sunday between March 22 and April 25. (That's a pretty big range!) Easter's exact date varies so much because it actually depends on the moon. The holiday is set to coincide with the first Sunday after the Paschal Full Moon, the first full moon after the vernal equinox. Though the equinox's exact date can vary each year according to the *Old Farmer's Almanac*, the church always recognizes the vernal equinox as March 21.

So why does Easter come after the Paschal Full Moon? Early Christians wanted Easter to coincide with Passover, because Christ's death and resurrection happened after the Jewish holiday, writes Christian minister Mary Fairchild of **LearnReligions.com**. Because the Jewish calendar is tied to solar and lunar cycles, the dates of Passover and Easter fluctuate each year.

Sources: Alexandra Sifferin, April, 2015, www.History.com; www.Time.com

"While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take it; this is my body.' Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, and they all drank from it. 'This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many,' he said to them." ~ Mark 14:22-24

MARCH, 2021

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 1p Worship Com.	2 1p Circle 7p Cong. Care Com. 7p Facilities Com.	3	4 2p Church Cleaning	5	6
7 9:30a Sunday School 11a Worship service 11a Holy Communion <u>Order Easter Lilies</u>	8	9 7p Christian Ed. Com. 7p Missions Com. 7p Outreach Com.	10	11 2p Church Cleaning	12	13
14 2a Begin Daylight Saving Time 9:30a Sunday School 11a Worship Service <u>Last day to order Easter Lilies</u>	15	16	17 St. Patrick's Day	18 11a <u>Deadline for lily order to florist</u> 2p News articles due 2p Church Cleaning 7p Stewardship & Finance Com.	19	20
21 9:30a Sunday School 11a Worship Service 12p Session Meeting	22	23	24	25 2p Church Cleaning 2p Newsletter out	26	27
28 Palm Sunday Begin Holy Week 9:30a Sunday School 11a Worship service 11a 5 Cents-a-Meal Offering	29	30	31 2p Committee Reports due	MAUNDY THURSDAY	GOOD FRIDAY	HOLY SATURDAY

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MARCH NEWSLETTER



COME AND JOIN US!
Sunday School 9:30 A.M.
WWW.GREGORYMEMORIAL.ORG

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